Appendix 1 – Draft East Midlands Rail Franchise consultation response

Q1. *How do you think closer co-operation between staff in Network Rail and the operator of the next East Midlands franchise can be achieved?*

As the railway in the UK is split between those who provide and maintain the tracks and those who operate the services, it is important that these organisations work collaboratively to deliver services. It is also important that the different franchisees work collaboratively.

This collaboration/co-operation is required to ensure that the franchise delivers continued performance improvement, with a passenger focused approach to service delivery and maintenance/enhancement works.

Ultimately it is for the DfT, as procurer of these services, to determine how to/ensure that the most effective co-operation takes place but this may be achieved through co-location of these organisations; and a greater role for those with a responsibility for the local transport and economic strategies to ensure that decisions concerning balancing the needs to maintain/improve the infrastructure and operate services are made that support such strategies and retain a passenger focus as the highest priority.

Q2. *How can the operator of the next East Midlands franchise engage with community rail partnerships or heritage railways to support the local economy to stimulate demand for rail services in the region?*

DfT's National Community Rail Steering Group research suggests that CRPs can increase annual rail patronage by 2.8% (above the equivalent annual background rail growth) by promoting and marketing the rail offer. Station supporter/friend groups and CRPs can also help make the railways safer and more welcoming.

Within Nottinghamshire there is the Poacher Line CRP; and a recently formed North Notts and Lincs CRP; and these, as well as potential future CRPs should be encouraged and facilitated by the future East Midlands franchise operator, working in partnership with local authorities and the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership.

Funding of CRPs should not, however, fall to the local authorities in which the CRPs operate. Given that it is the rail operator that benefits financially from such patronage growth it is considered that they should therefore be funded wholly by the successful franchisee (but recognise that there should be agreed criteria that a CRP should meet to be eligible for such funding).

Q3. *Do you think that the operator of the train service, stations and support services should take the following into consideration when they run the franchise:*
- *The environment?*
- *Equality?*
- *Communities in the areas they operate?*

If so, how should they do this?

Government and the operator should consider all of the above when carrying out their business.

The environment

The environmental impact of all the services and facilities delivered by the operator should be considered by the operator and they should be carried out in such a way that they:
- Improve air quality and reduce emissions (of carbon and all other particulates) through both its day to day business activities and by offering an attractive alternative to the car
- Minimise waste and pollution, including procurement, maintenance, operation and cleaning
- Improve the built environment especially at and around station environments

Where any operations would adversely impact the above they should be offset with appropriate and proportionate mitigating measures.

One of the most important potential impacts on the environment is the decision, without consultation, to abandon the procurement of electric rolling stock and electrification of the Midland Mainline which passes through a number of air quality management areas (AQMA), including those at Nottingham, London, Sheffield, Derby and Leicester, and close to the AQMA in Trowell. Government's own publication "Improving air quality in the UK: tackling nitrogen dioxide in our towns and cities" states "Electric trains are zero-emission at the point of

use, which makes them ideal for areas at risk of air quality problems". Government has missed the opportunity to show leadership through train specification to help tackle these air quality issues.

Equality
The operator should ensure that the jobs, services, information, ticketing (including costs), and all infrastructure within its operations/on its network are accessible and available to all users. The operator, when making decisions concerning the above, should demonstrate that they have shown due regard to:
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Protected characteristics include age, disability, gender reassignment/identity, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race/ethnicity, religion or belief, gender, and sexual orientation.

Equality impact assessments should be undertaken when necessary to assess the potential impact that proposed decisions or changes to services could have on the community and those with protected characteristics; and to identify potential ways to reduce any impact that a decision/change in service could have.

Communities in the areas they operate
The winning bidder can make a real difference to communities and businesses by conducting business responsibly and in a way which engages with and supports its neighbours, communities and customers. For example, through:

Employment opportunities
Rail can support local businesses, connect to workforce and customers, share industry learning to other industry and engage with schools and colleges to promote the industry.

Operators should be incentivised to engage with the business and education sectors across the regions within which they operate by setting targets for:
- working with local schools and colleges to promote a career in the rail industry and rail safety
- apprentices and local employment – especially from backgrounds which find it harder to access the job market (e.g. people with disabilities, from deprived or disadvantaged backgrounds)
- seeking to address diversity gaps through recruitment
- local work placements and graduate trainee positions
- ensuring that apprenticeships lead to permanent jobs and a career in the rail industry
- paying the living wage as a minimum and not use zero-hour contracts

Training
In addition to the training offered through apprenticeships and graduate trainee positions the operator should seek to upskill its existing workforce.

Investing locally
The rail industry has a strong base in the East Midlands, this directly and indirectly supports many jobs within Nottinghamshire. We would like to see the operator support and grow the local economy by for example, active engagement with the D2N2 LEP, investing in the local economy by using local suppliers whenever possible (also reducing the impact of travel on the environment and creating local social value), and paying suppliers promptly.

Community engagement
The operator should take responsibility for their customers and the impact of services on communities who live adjacent to the railway and near stations. The operator should work with local communities to add value to these communities and at the same time promote the railway, the industry and messages of safety. The operator should actively engage with communities on any plans that may impact on the community (including non-rail users); and to resolve issues caused by the railway and its operations.

Q4. *Do you agree with our proposed approach, which could reduce journey times on long distance services and increase the likelihood of getting a seat?*

In order to support the continued economic growth by increasing connectivity, for residents and businesses across the county and the East Midlands there needs to be investment during the franchise to:

- improve intercity connectivity from Nottinghamshire to the major cities in the UK, especially London, Birmingham, Manchester and Liverpool, Leeds and Sheffield, Cambridge and Scotland, as well as to key air and sea ports
- improve services between Nottinghamshire stations (including Nottingham) and the East Midlands regional cities of Derby, Leicester and Lincoln
- enhance local services providing access for outlying communities into the key towns and East Midlands regional cities.

This requirement to improve intercity, regional hub and local rail services is consistent with both the Midlands Engine and Midlands Connect initiatives. These improvements to routes, capacity and quality will help make travel attractive to people and increase use of the regions railway, not only for commuter and business trips, but also leisure, retail and other trip purposes which support the regional economy.

The County Council therefore supports the proposed approach to reduce peak journey times on long distance services between Nottingham and London and increase the likelihood of getting a seat. As the consultation document points out, there are two key markets on the Midland Mainline – the long distance intercity market and the commuter market from stations closer to London. It is important that the long distance intercity market is not disadvantaged to benefit the London commuter market and that the County Council is consulted on any proposed changes to such services.

Midland Mainline intercity services are essential to support the economic vitality of the region, this is because it is important to connect businesses to their customers and core markets. Nottinghamshire depends on good (i.e. fast, efficient and comfortable) links to London and the south, but also the West Midlands, the north (including Yorkshire, Lancashire, and further afield), and the east (including Lincoln, Cambridge and Norwich).

Faster journeys are essential to make the region economically efficient and competitive as well as ensure rail journeys are car competitive. In terms of journey times we would like to see the following achieved:

- Nottingham to London in 90mins
- On limited stop services to the key economic centres of Birmingham, Cambridge, Leeds, Liverpool and Manchester we are looking to secure at least 60mph overall journey speed, meaning rolling stock must be able to travel at 90mph or faster for most of the journey.

The journey speed improvements should be secured by procuring/utilising rolling stock with improved performance and through infrastructure investment. The County Council does not wish to see the journey speed improvements achieved through the removal of existing stops due to the detrimental impact this will have on the communities affected, unless robust mitigation measures are planned and put in place. It is therefore assumed that existing calling patterns would be retained, although the spacing of some service calling patterns could be improved and made more regular.

We feel that the franchisee is best placed to make the operational and commercial decisions regarding calling patterns, provided that when considering changes they:

- Survey passenger flows to inform decision making
- Consider the impact of any change on all station pairings
- Ensure that services are well timed for connections in both directions and convenient for travellers to interchange
- Align their proposals to Network Rail's improvement plans, so that this investment benefit is fully unlocked
- Demonstrate that the service has adequate capacity to accommodate predicted and future passenger numbers
- That mitigation is put in place for disadvantaged passengers, and that services they are displaced onto similarly has adequate capacity, especially important are time sensitive education trips, and
- Consult with the County Council, and others, before making a decision on any change.

The services into and out of London require later departure and arrival times into London, and on Sundays increased frequency which would allow the slow journey time to be addressed, avoiding every train having to call at every station.

Q5. *What are your suggestions about how to mitigate the potential loss of some direct services between Oakham, Melton Mowbray and London?*

No comment.

Q6. *What are the particular services, routes and times of day when you think additional space for passengers are most needed?*

Ensuring the network has sufficient capacity to address both the existing problems of over-crowding <u>and</u> be able to accommodate the anticipated growth of each town/City throughout the life of the franchise is a primary strategic objective as failure to deliver the required capacity will harmfully hold back economic growth.

Existing problems
Below is a list of the existing services that are regularly overcrowded which are in need of increased capacity, longer trains or (preferably) more frequent services:
- Nottingham to London – commuter services
- Nottingham to Liverpool – this service is frequently over-crowded, especially when two-car units are deployed rather than four-car units
- Nottingham to Birmingham – along the length of Cross-Country service (appropriate if this service is re-mapped)
- Nottingham to Derby – weekday am-peak
- Nottingham to Matlock – weekday am-peak
- Matlock to Nottingham – weekday pm-peak
- Nottingham to Leicester – weekday am-peak
- Nottingham to Skegness (direct services and via Grantham) – all school holiday periods (including bank holidays), particularly Mondays, Fridays and Saturdays, peak demands are driven by holiday accommodation change over. Currently buses are used to increase capacity, as a solution this is less than ideal, but is clearly better than leaving large numbers of passengers behind. Very large quantities of luggage add to capacity issue
- Newark to Grimsby – weekday-am and pm-peaks (luggage also an issue)
- Grimsby to Newark – weekday Mid-morning and pm-peak (luggage also an issue)
- Nottingham to Worksop – weekday pm-peak
- Nottingham to Mansfield – weekday pm-peak

Solutions to existing problems
To address the capacity issues above we would like to see the following service enhancements as a minimum to address current overcrowding:
- Increased Sunday frequency enhancements to services to/from London
- Funding the two trains per hour between Nottingham and Lincoln currently supported by stakeholders; and faster journeys from Lincoln and Newark to Leicester with limited stops south of Nottingham
- A new Nottingham to Grantham stopping service to provide at least peak hour stops at all stations, and ideally throughout the day too. This would help free up capacity on the overcrowded existing services, which could be accelerated to become semi-fast limited stop trains
- Longer trains on the other services listed.

Future capacity issues
The potential growth across the county (and East Midlands) will likely cause additional overcrowding on many services. Therefore the franchise specification should model the anticipated growth by line of route. We understand that East Midlands Councils has provided the DfT with details of employment and housing growth sites in the proximity of stations to enable them to do so. Such modelling should consider the growth impacts ond suitability of services on the different types of rail users including commuters, business travellers, family groups, leisure/retail users, people with disabilities and those travelling with luggage such as to airports or on holiday.

Special events

The operator should also work with event organisers and the police to provide adequate services to enable people access events by rail (e.g. sports events, such as football, rugby and test cricket matches; horse races; and other annual events). This could include service enhancements (regularity, later/earlier services etc.) to extend the service offer so people can travel to or from the event by rail.

Q7. Which on-board facilities in order of preference (these are listed in the response form), are most important to you:
- *On short distance journeys (up to 60 minutes)*
- *On long distance journeys (over 60 minutes)*

Short-distance services:
Baby changing facilities 4
Catering 12
CCTV 2
Cycle storage 7
First class areas 13
Free wi-fi 6
Luggage space 3
Power sockets 9
Pushchair space 5
Seat-back tables 10
Table seating 11
USB sockets 8
Wheelchair space 1

Long-distance services:
Baby changing facilities 2
Catering 9
CCTV 3
Cycle storage 11
First class areas 13
Free wi-fi 6
Luggage space 4
Power sockets 10
Pushchair space 5
Seat-back tables 7
Table seating 12
USB sockets 8
Wheelchair space 1

Q8. Which other on-board facilities should be:
- *Introduced?*
- *Improved?*

Well maintained, clean and operational toilets should be provided on all trains.

Prior to procuring new rolling stock, luggage storage solutions need to be explored to provide secure luggage/pushchair/cycle space for users. Overhead luggage facilities need to be able to accommodate cabin-sized luggage accepted on all popular airlines as a minimum (and potentially larger bags) as is already the case on mainland European rail services.

In the procurement of new trains it is worth noting that issues about speeding up boarding and wheelchair access through the use of on-board seat availability information and wider doors should also be considered.

With new intercity rolling stock not expected until 2022, it is essential that a refurbishment programme is put in place to upgrade the existing high speed train fleet.

Q9. *How could your local train services be changed to better meet your current and future needs? (a number of options are listed in the response form)*

At peak and/or off peak periods?
- All Nottingham to London services to be 90mins or less
- Limited stop services to the key economic centres of Birmingham, Cambridge, Leeds, Liverpool and Manchester to secure at least 60mph overall journey speed, meaning rolling stock must be able to travel at 90mph or faster for most of the journey
- Address capacity issues as detailed in the answer to question 6

During the early mornings, late evenings, or at weekends?
There is a need to enhance Sunday train services across the region, reflecting modern leisure, retail and short break markets. These services should mirror the weekday offer and address capacity concerns on services to/from London. The services into and out of London require later departure and arrival times into London, and on Sundays increased frequency which would allow the slow journey time to be addressed, avoiding every train having to call at every station.

At Christmas and New Year periods?
Services need to be able to accommodate the increased passenger and luggage space demands on intercity and regional services.

During the Summer period?
Services need to be able to accommodate the increased passengers and luggage space demands on services to popular holiday destinations, airports, and on intercity and regional services.

There are particular seasonal peaks on the Nottingham to Skegness service. The operator also needs to engage with Butlin's for Skegness services to develop a joint plan to manage holiday travel patterns and create a positive combined customer experience. Overcrowding takes place at the following times, and needs addressing by special services and existing service strengthening:
- Easter Holiday
- May Bank Holidays
- Summer half term holiday
- Summer period. Typically the summer period could be deemed as being weekend from the beginning of July to mid-September, as it extends beyond the school holiday.
- Autumn half term holiday; and
- During the week at the busier times of the year.

For students travelling to local schools?
No comment.

To special events? (and let us know which events you are thinking of)
The operator should also work with event organisers and the police to provide adequate services to enable people access events by rail (e.g. sports events, such as football, rugby and test cricket matches; horse races; and other annual events). This could include service enhancements (regularity, later/earlier services etc.) to extend the service offer so people can travel to or from the event by rail

New housing, employment or retail developments?
The potential growth across the county (and East Midlands) will likely cause additional overcrowding on many services. Therefore the franchise specification should model the anticipated growth by line of route. We understand that East Midlands Councils has provided the DfT with details of employment and housing growth sites in the proximity of stations to enable them to do so. Such modelling should consider the growth impacts ond suitability of services on the different types of rail users including commuters, business travellers, family groups, leisure/retail users, people with disabilities and those travelling with luggage such as to airports or on holiday.

On journeys where interchange is poor?
Consider changing the timings/scheduling of local services to better connect with regional and intercity services to maximise the accessibility of the services (but not to the detriment of existing service standards).

Q10. *What additional services would you wish to see provided in the next franchise?*

The County Council would like to see the following additional services (further details and the reasons for the following requests can be provided if required):

Intercity

To London:
- The journey time between Nottingham and London to be reduced to 90 minutes
- An hourly service between Lincoln and Newark Northgate focused on enhancing connections at Newark to/from London. This might be done by providing an hourly service from Grimsby (possibly Cleethorpes). The service should be integrated with VTEC's proposed Lincoln to London service. Similarly timings at other north and south bound East Coast stations should be planned to enable interchange

To other regions:

The network should have a target of 60mph average speed for journeys between key East Midland cities and to key economic centres outside the region operated by rolling stock capable of achieving 90mph

Manchester/Trans-Pennine
- An hourly service between Leicester/Derby extended to Manchester, to run via Dore South Curve to minimise journey time. This could be linked to a new service from Cambridge (possibly Stansted Airport) to Leicester and Nottingham
- Improving the speed and timetable connectivity of the existing hourly Norwich to Liverpool service, including a review of the current stopping pattern and timetabling. Any proposal to split this service should be subject to joint user and stakeholder consultation, and full and meaningful dialogue with EMC, who do not wish to see detriment through a split service (for example)
- For capacity reasons, providing two trains per hour between Derby and Crewe, potentially by restoring an hourly limited stop service of through trains between Nottingham, Stoke-on-Trent and Crewe via Derby.

Birmingham and the West Midlands
- An hourly limited stop service of through trains between Lincoln and Birmingham via Derby, this would be in addition to the stopping service. This might be via the restoration of an hourly service between Lincoln, Newark and Birmingham via Nottingham and Derby but with limited stops
- An hourly service between Nottingham and Coventry via Leicester with limited stops. This might potentially be linked to a second Lincoln to Nottingham service to provide faster Lincoln and Newark journeys to/from Leicester).

Yorkshire and the North
- Improved journey times to Leeds from Nottingham.

Regional hubs

The network should have a target of 60mph average speed for journeys between key East Midland cities and to key economic centres outside the region operated by rolling stock capable of achieving 90mph.
- Funding the two trains per hour between Nottingham and Lincoln currently supported by stakeholders; and faster journeys from Lincoln and Newark to Leicester with limited stops south of Nottingham.
- An increase in service frequency and therefore capacity between Nottingham and Derby; Nottingham and Leicester; and Nottingham and Lincoln.

Local

We wish to see enhanced local services to enable communities to access employment, training, retail and leisure opportunities in larger urban areas to help improve economic activity in the county and the region. Newer roiling stock with better acceleration would help offset the increased journey times resulting from stopping at intermediate stations. Improved signalling and crossing upgrades should also allow for increases in journey times. We would wish the franchisee to:
- Reduce journey times
- Increase frequency
- Introduce newer rolling stock

- Increase capacity.

To increase capacity, strengthened trains, or better additional hourly peak-hour services in each direction should be provided between:
- Nottingham to Grantham stopping service to provide at least peak hour stops at all stations, and ideally throughout the day too
- To increase capacity, there is a need for additional vehicles on some services to/from Skegness during the summer and at bank holidays to support the tourism based economy of the Lincolnshire Coast.

Q11. *Do you support the proposal to reopen the line between Shirebrook and Ollerton to passenger trains? If so, what sources of investment could be identified to fund this proposal?*

The County Council has already invested over £200,000 on feasibility work to help progress the opening of the line between Shirebrook and Ollerton (no other organisation has funded any of these works). It is estimated that it will cost a further £1m to undertake the remaining feasibility works which the Council is unable to fund. The feasibility work to date has identified the capital costs at over £20m and likely ongoing revenue costs approaching £1m per year to reopen the line and again the Council is unable to fund these itself. The Council therefore considers that it is up to Central Government, if it supports the scheme, to lead on the identification and pooling of funding resources for the remaining feasibility work, as well as the capital works and ongoing running costs. The County Council therefore supports the reopening of the line but only should a funding package be assembled by the DfT that does not require the County Council to fund the majority of the capital costs, and does not require the County Council to fund the ongoing revenue liability.

Q12. *Do you think that the current number of services on the Midland Main Line to and from Luton Airport Parkway is adequate?*

Access to international markets for people and goods is important to Nottinghamshire businesses. Research undertaken by East Midlands Chamber (Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire), however, suggests that businesses in the region mostly use East Midlands airport, followed by Birmingham airport, and Luton airport is only the 7th most important airport. The story is similar for freight.

Given the relative lower importance of Luton airport to businesses in the East Midlands, when compared to other airports, additional stops at Luton Airport Parkway station by services to/from London is in conflict with the County Council and regional aspiration to improve journey speed to London from Nottingham.

Faster trips to London is expected to have a greater impact on economic growth across the county and the East Midlands and as such Nottinghamshire County Council does not support the airport's aspirations which if implemented would either extend journey times or result in a reduced calling pattern to offset the new call at the airport. The need for faster journey times from Nottingham to London is especially important in the medium term, mindful that the West Midlands will secure an economic advantage by being connected to HS2 before the East Midlands.

Luton airport is well served by services from London, although would benefit from more frequent and faster journey times from London and the proposed 1.4 mile rail shuttle service which the local Council is proposing will improve connectivity between Luton Airport Parkway station and the airport terminal building.

The London to airport improvement is best delivered through the Thameslink franchise and the plans that Thameslink are currently developing, the Council promoted rail shuttle service, rather than through increased stops on Midland Mainline services. The criticality of a 15 minute journey time saving to the airport needs to be put in the context of the requirement to then transfer between the station and the airport, plus the check-in time, these trips are much less time sensitive than business trips between the East Midlands region and London.

Q13*. Would you like additional fast trains from London each hour to call at Luton Airport Parkway if this meant that, as a trade-off:*
- *Some services are withdrawn from other stations, such as Luton?*
- *Journey times to other stations may increase?*
- *Freight capacity and/or frequency is reduced?*

The County Council does not support additional fast services stopping at Luton Airport Parkway station as this will impact on journey times. Instead an enhanced, faster and suitably branded Thameslink service is seen as the better solution to meet the needs of the airport to serve the London market.

Q14*. How could the train service be better at meeting the needs of passengers travelling to and from airports within the East Midlands Franchise*

There is a need to provide better connectivity to airports served by the East Midlands franchise – East Midlands, Birmingham, Luton and Manchester airports. These routes include the Nottingham to London (East Midlands Parkway and Luton); Nottingham to Birmingham; and the Nottingham to Liverpool-Norwich service which is used as access to Manchester Airport, albeit involving a change at Manchester Piccadilly. The improvements to these services are detailed elsewhere in this response but includes regularly spaced services; faster, more reliable services; capacity improvements; and luggage space improvements on services to these destinations. Increased stops at airports should, however, only be provided where they do not reduce existing journey times, or stops at stations on existing services.

Q15*. What ideas do you have for improving the current service on the Liverpool – Norwich route?*

The Liverpool to Norwich service provides a key link between Nottingham and a number of cities. There are, however, a number of problems on the route that need to be addressed:
- Lack of capacity between Liverpool and Nottingham, particularly when the operator provides shorter trains (i.e. two carriages rather than four as is often the case currently). This should be improved by firstly providing services with sufficient capacity, as well as new rolling stock with significantly increased capacity
- Slow journey times – Journey times and average speeds along the route are poor. The journey from Nottingham to Manchester is an 80mile journey but takes 109minutes undertaken at an end to end speed of only 44mph despite the trains operating on the route being capable of 90mph; and their being long distances between a number of stops. Options to improve journey times should include the investigation of:
  - missing out local stations on these services, with these lost stops being replaced by a local service at the same frequency (or better)
  - working with Network Rail to identify and implement line speed improvements
  - better/more efficient co-ordination of services
- Not connecting the East Midlands to the key market in Cambridge. Passengers travelling east from Nottingham currently have to change at Ely for connections to Cambridge and Stansted Airport. Cambridge is rapidly growing in importance as a centre for high technology and a direct rail link would be of benefit to Nottinghamshire. A direct rail link to Stansted Airport would also be of benefit. Such links could potentially be achieved by alternating trains either going on to Norwich or via Cambridge to Stansted Airport
- The service is also complicated along the Hope Valley where it shares the Sheffield to Manchester route with other operators; and by the fact that the current route is extended by 9½ miles (and 17 minutes), by trains leaving the direct route at Dore to go into Sheffield and then retracing their steps back out again to Dore.

Any option for improving the route must help address the issues listed above.

Q16*. Would you support changing the destinations served by the existing Birmingham – Stansted Airport service, such as serving Norwich instead of Stansted Airport?*

In order to provide strong economic links between Nottinghamshire and Cambridge, as well as the international gateway via the airport, the County Council support the proposal to vary the current service to Norwich to call at Cambridge and Stansted delivered by splitting the Liverpool – Norwich service at Ely, rather than replacing it by a diverted Birmingham to Stansted service.

Any changes to the services should be designed with conveniently timed interchange at Ely. It is our understanding that the improvements being planned for Ely North Junction would provide service resilience to this and other existing services as well as facilitate the enhanced services being sought by the East Anglia regional partners.

Q17. *Are you in favour of these route changes?*
- *Liverpool – Norwich*
- *Birmingham – Nottingham*
- *Birmingham – Leicester/Stanstead*

Liverpool to Norwich
See the answer to Q15 above.

The Liverpool to Norwich service crosses a number of regions, and therefore could fall into a number of franchises. Our view is that it is best left in the EM franchise due to its central location with other regions and because the majority its length (both miles and time) are within the Peterborough to Sheffield area. It allows for similar ticketing through a single operator arrangement for much of the route; in contrast to the northern route which is served by three operators (East Midlands, Transpennine and Northern). Improving the speed and timetable connectivity of the existing hourly Norwich to Liverpool service, including a review of the current stopping pattern and timetabling, is however required. Any proposal to split this service should be subject to joint user and stakeholder consultation, and full and meaningful dialogue with interested parties.

If there is to be a split to this service (including a split between operators) then this needs to reflect the existing capacity needs between Nottingham and Sheffield/Manchester.

It is, however, important that there is no deterioration of existing services for rail users through a split service or split operators. Whoever the operator, it is important that they offer a co-ordinated, competitive and high quality intercity service; and that the route should have an integrated ticketing offer, improved/sufficient rolling stock and improved journey times.

Birmingham to Nottingham
The role of the services on these lines need to fit in with the regional (semi-fast) and local (commuter) services set out in EMC's Strategic Statement.

Although this route is currently not part of the East Midlands franchise rail services to and through Birmingham are extremely important for Nottinghamshire business and leisure travellers. New Street Station, as well as being the principal gateway to Birmingham from Nottingham also offers critical interchange opportunities for onward services, in particular to the South West and to Birmingham International (for the airport and NEC). This route, connecting the largest urban areas in the east and west Midlands, is therefore extremely important and should be maintained and enhanced to ensure the continued economic prosperity of the connected regions.

The current rail service between Nottingham and Birmingham is slow and we would like to see journey times between Birmingham and Nottingham reduced to at least 60 minutes, to allow it to be competitive with the same car journey. Services are also frequently over-crowded at peak times, with passengers having to stand for at least 15 to 20 minutes on a number of sections of the Birmingham to Nottingham route on pm peak services.

We believe that this route should be brought within the East Midlands franchise and this route treated as an inter-city route between two core cities rather than a slow regional route; with the introduction of new rolling stock with significantly increased capacity and reduced journey times.

If the above arrangement is accepted, a further reason for the Nottingham to Birmingham regional service transferring to the EM franchise from Cross-Country is that this would facilitate the restoration of through trains between Lincoln and Birmingham, by providing the option to coordinate the timetable or potentially even convert the two services into a single through service.

Q18. *Would you like to see any other routes transferred to or from the East Midlands franchise? If so, which routes?*

None

Q19. *Do you support increasing the frequency of train services in Lincolnshire despite the impact this may have on level crossing users?*
No comment

Q20. *How can we improve all aspects of your door-to-door journey experience?*

Rail stations needs to be accessible by all modes of transport, how this is done depends on the station location and scale of use, it is recommended that the operator develops 'station travel plans' where necessary in partnership with the local highway/transport authority that has responsibility for the local road and bus network. Key to this is providing better integration between the rail station/train services and all other modes of transport:

- **Bus/tram** – up to 25% of rail users access the station by bus (or tram). Bus and tram options need to be well signposted in the stations, describing which bus to catch, where to catch it, and the hours/days of operation. Where a rail station is not visible from the nearest bus/tram stop then the rail station needs to be sign-posted too. Multi-modal ticketing on a standard ticket platform is key to improving the door-to-door experience; and delivering seamless journeys
- **Cycling and walking** – well lit, safe, sign-posted walking and cycle routes should be provided wherever possible (including within station grounds), with adequate cycle parking provided in a secure environment, ideally staffed, but at the very least over looked by staff at the larger stations, and covered by CCTV at all stations. Cycle hire schemes at train station could also be considered where there is a business case for such schemes (and where private scheme operators are prepared to fund such schemes). Adequate cycle facilities also need to be provided on trains to enable cyclists to complete their 'door to door' journey by bicycle
- **Car parking** - needs to be managed to promote its use for rail users, but the pricing of car parking (if any) needs to be no higher than nearby town or city centre parking. Car parks should be safe and secure, this can be achieved by installing CCTV and through good maintenance. Car parking provision should also ensure that parking does not negatively impact on local communities
- **Ticketing** – Ticketing options need to be easy to understand and clearly communicated. 'Smart' ticketing should be made available allowing multi-modal travel to/from the station as well as rail travel. Such smart ticketing should also be available on a pay-as-you-go and/or capped basis to encourage its use. Ticket machines at rail stations need to recognise all ticket types available. Ticket options also need to be reviewed to help people access jobs and training, such as new ticket options for passengers who travel fewer than five days a week; and/or discounted ticket options offered for those in training, apprentices or those attending job interviews
- **Information** – real-time information and staff support is needed for every leg of a customer journey, not just the train leg (or legs). The rail industry needs to provide information and help beyond its boundary (e.g. people who miss their specified train should be able to travel on the next train without penalty if they can show that this was due to the failure of another public transport mode or operator)

Q21. *What more could be done to improve access to, and provide facilities at stations, including for those with disabilities or additional needs?*

The rail network should be accessible for all people regardless of ability/disability. The needs of people living with disabilities needs consideration both in accessing the rail network and also travelling on the rail network. To improve the door-to-door journey, stations also need to be easy to access by all modes of travel and perceived as safe by users.

Therefore, all stations in Nottinghamshire should be accessible for all rail users and station investment funding should be made available to make access improvements at rail stations; prioritised on delivering step-free access without crossing tracks. A station investment programme needs to be put in place and adequately funded through the franchise to achieve satisfactory station standards as detailed below. This is important to improve safety and the attractiveness of rail. Key barriers to address include:

- step free access to platforms (e.g. Kirkby in Ashfield and Netherfield stations both have stepped access to the platforms; and access between the two platforms is difficult at Beeston and Bingham stations)
- appropriate safer, covered waiting facilities
- accessible ticket office or ticket vending machines
- set down points and parking for people with disabilities
- provision of car parking facilities at rail stations outside urban areas to assist in the modal shift from road to rail; and to prevent intrusive commuter parking
- appropriate safe, secure cycle parking

- visible staff to assist passengers
- information assistance available in different formats, including about onward journeys.

Q22. *How could the next franchisee operator make better use of stations for community and commercial purposes?*

Community use of disused station buildings can add real value to the railway. Rather than allow station buildings to remain empty, it is considered better to bring them back into use creating a community asset and at the same time creating activity at the station which increases the stations welcome and perception of safety.

Stations generate footfall and this presents an opportunity which the franchisee should encourage the local community to embrace. Ideally the use of station buildings will add value to the station user (e.g. coffee shop, post office or corner shop, taxi office etc.), but could alternatively offer other community uses (e.g. community group meeting place).

Many stations are now unmanned and changes in technology and ticketing has the potential to enable a reduction in space given over to the ticket office where these are still provided which could be utilised for alternative uses.

Q23. *What could be done to improve the way tickets are sold and provided?*

Fares need to be easily understood by customers and offer an appropriate range of ticket options so that ticketing provides affordable, value for money travel for commuters, passengers making business trips, plus leisure and social trips. This means that ticket options need to be very well communicated to help simplify the options.

Tickets need to be easy for customers to research and purchase; and be available through a wide range of retail channels, including ticket offices, machines, and mobile/internet channels.

Smart ticketing should be provided across the whole Midlands Connect area and be comparable with the Greater London scheme with smart ticketing used on the regions buses, trams and all other TOCs services.

Station barriers must also be capable of recognising all available ticket types.

Q24. *What changes to the fares structure would be of benefit to you?*

The key challenge with fares is to make them value for money in terms of their costs, the journey distance/time and the comparable costs of travel (e.g. car use). Operators need to get the right balance between cheaper advanced fares and walk-up fares as it is not uncommon for walk-up fares to be expensive at times when many seats remain empty so more flexible and competitive fares could be considered at such times.

Information provision, designed to simplify the option message(s), must support the fares and ticketing offer. There is, however the need for products to meet different customer needs, for example those who work part-time, for whom a carnet solution may be more suitable. Smart ticketing, especially with pay-as-you-go and fare capping allows these options to be developed without the appearance of added ticket complexity, provided there is operator/customer trust.

The purchasing of tickets must be easy for customers and where refunds are payable, due to cancellation or delays, then ideally these should be repaid automatically.

Q25. *What additional information would be useful to you when planning or making your journey, such as seat availability, journey times and connections? How would you like it to be communicated to you?*

The need for additional information should ideally be linked to strategic objectives. The information should be issued through the full range of channels and adapted so that they are accessible for people of all abilities.

ECML have introduced platform indicators saying where available seating is on longer trains, this is a helpful innovation that supports efficient boarding. This could helpfully be utilised on the EM services and developed not just so that it reflects booked seats, but also seat utilisation in real-time. Such indicators could also be used on-board trains (as they are in other European countries) to help people find the exact location of available seats once on-board.

Providing customers with live information based on the customers' regular or expressed travel pattern could help customers plan their journeys more efficiently/effectively thereby reducing compensation payments, complaints and dissatisfaction.

Improved onward connectivity announcements and information is also needed, this includes rail connections, but also access to other public transport modes.

Q26. How could staff can be more effective in providing the service and assistance that passengers need on a modern railway network?

Customers value staff for many reasons, they are especially important for people with disabilities and at times of disruption and service problems. Their role varies from passenger assistance, information provision, tackling and reducing crime and reducing fear of crime. This is just as important on train as well as at stations. It is essential that staff are visible, well-trained and empowered to address passenger issues. It is also important that staff are briefed and knowledgeable on the performance of both East Midlands Trains services and other operators' services so that they can provide accurate up to date information on all operators' services that serve the station.

Q27. How would you prefer the next operator to engage with:
- *You as an individual*
- *Your organisation (if applicable)?*

The next operator should engage with local authorities through a partnership between the operator, DfT, East Midlands Councils and representatives from each of the local authorities to ensure effective franchise management, service/delivery improvements and performance overview.

Q28. What would make you feel safer and more secure on your journey in relation to:
- *Trains?*
- *Routes?*
- *Stations?*
- *Other?*

Feedback from passengers is that safety, and the perception of safety, is very important. TOC staff provide an important role at both deterring crime and moderating offensive behaviour as well as helping victims. It is therefore important that staff numbers are maintained and that they are visible to customers both on train and at stations, especially at times when customers can feel isolated or vulnerable (for example late evening trains or on isolated platforms).

A station investment programme needs to be put in place and adequately funded through the franchise to achieve the station standards described above. This is important to improve safety and the attractiveness of rail, measures such as CCTV (covering platforms, access routes and car/cycle parking areas) and the removal of Barrow Crossings along with appropriate investment such as a bridge/lift, to maintain station accessibility, will help improve safety, as will the reopening of disused station buildings by community groups.

On routes to stations, well-designed safe walking and/or cycling facilities will help people feel safer when making journeys on foot or by cycle.

On train, more thought needs to be given to the design and location of luggage storage to prevent theft (and/or concerns about theft), and the design needs to contain a degree of natural surveillance.

Q29. How do you think more investment might be put into the railways to match money already coming from government through Network Rail?

The County Council already commits funding to rail improvements through its capital programmes (e.g. integrated transport block funding), such as over £200k already spent on developing the business case for the opening of the rail line from Shirebrook to Ollerton. The limited funding available to the Council means that it is difficult to increase the levels already being allocated for such work.

The D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership also already commits funding to rail improvements such as a contribution towards the MML improvements at Market Harborough.

Private sector/developer funding contributions could be sought from developments close to stations and rail lines (e.g. s106 developer contributions). There may also be the opportunity to secure funding from local major businesses/employers where there is a proven benefit of improvements for the business; and through 'business improvement districts' where these are in place and the improvements are considered a priority for them.

Q30. Are there any other areas that you think it is important for us to consider that have not already been discussed in this consultation?

Funding arrangements during the delayed award
The County Council, along with Nottingham City, Lincoln City, Lincolnshire County, Newark & Sherwood District and the D2N2 LEP are currently jointly contributing £205,000 per year towards the Castle Line (Nottingham to Lincoln) service enhancements. This funding contribution will expire in May 2018 (when the new EM Franchise was due to commence). As the delay in letting the franchise was outside the control of the LEP and councils it should not fall to them to continue to fund this line until the new franchise begins. The DfT will therefore need to fund any shortfall for the period from May 2018 until the new operator takes on these costs.

Midland Mainline Electrification
Nottinghamshire County Council is disappointed by the Government's decision to cancel the electrification of the Midland Main Line (MML), less than two years after the frequently delayed scheme was given the go-ahead. Decisions on investments like electrification should be taken in consultation with affected authorities and not simply led from London. The Council believes that the DfT is being short-sighted, as the proposed replacement bi-mode trains – designed to run on both existing lines and electric lines – are untested on such services, represent a poor replacement and are not as environmentally friendly. Furthermore, the Council believes that the Government's decision to cancel electrification of the MML, whilst continuing to fund the £30 billion Cross Rail 2 project in London, is unfair to the East Midlands and will limit our ability to capitalise on the investment opportunities linked to HS2. The County Council will therefore be writing to the Secretary of State for Transport asking him to recognise the importance of electrification of the MML to the Nottinghamshire economy and reconsider this decision as a matter of urgency; and will be seeking a meeting with the Secretary of State with the aim of delivering the electrification of the MML.

Planning for HS2
The franchisee must work with each of the local authorities (Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Derby city and Nottingham city councils) to ensure good future rail connections from across Nottinghamshire to the Toton HS2 station (e.g. developing plans for a frequent heavy rail shuttle service running direct from Nottingham station to Toton HS2 station; and the potential to operate services from Mansfield and Ashfield).