

London Assembly Transport Committee – 13 June 2018

Transcript of Item 5 – Future Rail in London

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Let us move on to our item, Future Rail in London. We have a fantastic panel of guests before us today. This is the first of two hearings, as well as a number of site visits and other roundtables we are holding looking at this.

Let me introduce our guests. First of all, Niall Bolger is the Chief Executive at Sutton Council but is here today as the Transport Executive Lead at the South London Partnership, which covers a number of boroughs in that part of London. Stephen Joseph is the Chief Executive of the Campaign for Better Transport. Dr Helena Titheridge is from University College London. David Leam is the Infrastructure Director at London First. Thank you very much indeed for coming before us today.

We have been doing - obviously, it is unofficial - a little poll on Twitter and we have been asking Londoners what would improve their train journeys. Just to give you a flavour, probably not that much of a surprise: improved reliability 39%, more trains and more space 52%, better information 3%, nicer stations 6%. Really, it is reliability and more trains and space. That is one of the things that we will be looking at this morning.

We know that our rail network is under huge strain and we know, back in 2017/18, we were ranked in terms of rail infrastructure as 19th out of 101 countries. We have some way to go to be the best. In terms of London, nine out of the 10 busiest stations in Great Britain are in London, and overcrowding, frequency and reliability are some of the real concerns for passengers.

My opening question is: for you currently, what are the main challenges for London's rail network? Who would like to start? Niall, shall I come to you first?

Niall Bolger (Chief Executive, London Borough of Sutton, and Chief Executive Lead for Transport in the South London Partnership): Yes, of course. I will take a south London perspective, which echoes some of our data as well.

The scale and size of the problem for south London is encapsulated in some key facts. Five of the 10 busiest and most congested routes in the country in 2017 were in south London. Five of the 10 busiest trains in the country are in south London. That is also related to the fact that there is a 12% increase in ridership in relation to south London and two of the boroughs have no Transport for London (TfL) infrastructure whatsoever. There are more Underground stations outside London than there are in the sub-region.

As a consequence of that, we have an issue relating to accessibility and environmental consequences. That is encapsulated in the fact that 80% of journeys in my borough take place by car; only 22% of residents regularly use public transport for getting to work or accessing other services, including town centre facilities. That is replicated in the other boroughs as well. There is a significant deficiency in relation to reliability. We rely on southern, main line and coastal services and, in the period in 2017, 29.5% of those trains were late or delayed for some reason or cancelled. In the period between 11 December [2016] and 7 January 2017, that rose to 35.4% of trains late, delayed or cancelled. Given the fact that a lot of our residents are very dependent on rail

infrastructure for accessing jobs and employment in the Central Activities Zone, that is having an adverse impact on their quality of life and also the economic prosperity of the sub-region.

The south London sub-region has been working to develop a growth proposition for our area and we have identified that transport and infrastructure is resulting in a 15% sub-optimisation in the economic potential. That is also replicated in the context of the fact that during the recession the sub-region lost more jobs than any other sub-region in London and has been slower to recover. Now, that is hidden by the fact that we have quite economically active residents who are relatively wealthy in London terms, but actually most of that employment is in the Central Activities Zone and not in the sub-region. As a consequence of that, we have an issue related to accessibility to central London and also across the sub-region itself to access employment areas within the sub-region and growth areas, which have been identified by the Mayor in the draft London Plan.

Some of the information about the economic performance which may be of interest to Members of the Assembly are that Kingston, which is a strategic town centre within London, is the fourth highest retail centre in terms of value with £2.1 billion of retail expenditure per annum. It is dependent on Kingston Station, which has four trains an hour from Waterloo, and some of those are the busiest trains I have mentioned earlier on. Part of our solution going forward, rather than describing the problem, has been very much about working with the Mayor to develop an infrastructure for good growth plan for south London. We are also working with our sub-national partners on the Sub-National Transport Board in the greater southeast in looking at what the impacts are for our sub-region. Frequently, our residents, who complain about this quite regularly in the resident surveys, feel they cannot access trains because they are already full by the time they get to the London border. As a consequence of that, there is a need for us to work across the region and into the southeast region and work with the new southeast Sub-National Transport Board. We need to look at that in terms of a holistic system.

Metroisation was keenly supported by all of five boroughs in the South London Partnership across all political parties at that time, and it was deeply disappointing that that was cancelled by the current Secretary of State when that was not progressed after [The Rt. Hon] Patrick McLoughlin [MP, former Secretary of State for Transport] agreed to do so with the previous Mayor. That would have enormously relieved access for our residents and it would have improved, relatively cheaply, access and development opportunities for further development in certain parts of the sub-region. The example I would use is the London Cancer Hub, which is in my borough. It is a nationally significant intervention. It is identified as a strategic regeneration area under the new London Plan. That is dependent on a station which receives one train an hour outside peak hours, Belmont Station. The previous Commissioner for Transport [for London], when we came to the previous London Enterprise Panel - I had to check it on his phone - and he found it extraordinary that heavy infrastructure which exists in London is not being exploited to its fullest effect. The intervention which will be required for that to have four to six trains an hour would cost £21 million, but that is absolutely dependent on metroisation and absolutely dependent on the investment which will come from TfL of an oversight in order that that infrastructure can be supported better. The South London Partnership strongly supports the metroisation of south London infrastructure.

I will finish my final point on this, which is a point that was made by the Assembly in 2002. The Assembly considered transport in outer London at that time and it talked about metroisation and the necessary need for infrastructure improvements across all of the areas in the south London sub-region, particularly in relation to the Brighton Main Line. We are talking about the future needs for infrastructure improvement. Associated with that are sub-national board and the interests of south London. The Brighton Main Line improvement for Croydon particularly but more widely for the southeast and for south London is crucial. Metroisation of the

south London transport infrastructure for the heavy rail will be highly sub-optimised unless that infrastructure is improved because it occupies the space already. Even with Thameslink, by 2041, that route will be completely full, standing-room-only and overcrowded. There is a need for us to look at this as a whole with our partners in the greater southeast.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Thank you very much for that. You have made some interesting points also about the need for the orbital routes, not just always getting into the central zone. I am sure we will pick that up later. Stephen, do you want to outline the main challenges as you see them?

Stephen Joseph (Chief Executive Officer, Campaign for Better Transport): Yes. I would echo Niall's point, really. The overwhelming challenge for London's rail network is capacity or lack of it. That is capacity, as well as for passengers, for freight as well. There is a strong case for rail freight in London. There is a strong debate between TfL and the rail freight operators about what freight should operate at what time, but I do not think there is any disagreement that having more freight by rail in London is important because it reduces lorry traffic on the roads.

Capacity is the overwhelming challenge. The metroisation point is a clear one, but it is what that leads to. TfL and successive Mayors have tried to join up rail and development, and the Barking Riverside scheme is a good example of that. I would say that that is not well done at national level and, because national Government controls - at the moment - most of the London rail network, that means that the priority of siting new development and improving rail services in London so as to enable housing and other development is not given the priority that it needs. Capacity is clearly the big challenge and going forward.

I would say there are three other main challenges. One is service quality. The fact is that the service quality on London's railways -- I am a Thameslink user and so I can speak from personal experience.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): You are scarred at the moment.

Stephen Joseph (Chief Executive Officer, Campaign for Better Transport): I have the scars on my back and all that. Linked to that, too, is the quality of the stations. The work we have done has overwhelmingly shown that the quality of service provided, not just when TfL controlled national rail services on London Overground but when other devolved authorities do it -- Merseyrail, which has had much less investment than London Overground, went from being 'misery rail' to being one of the best performing railways in the country. That is because there is a local focus and a proper contract. The Welsh Government has just gone down a rather similar route with a long-term concession. That is because there is much more immediate accountability to the likes of this Committee among others, and that means that the quality of the stations -- stations are being staffed from first to last train compared with a lot of outer London and Home Counties railway services, even at quite big stations. It feels like a free railway after about 8.00pm or 9.00pm in the evening; there are no staff around. Service quality is a huge issue for passengers particularly late at night but just generally.

A third challenge is fares. This is not an issue for London directly, but it is an issue indirectly because the failure to provide flexible smart ticketing outside of London has an impact on London. We have talked to people who drive in from Kent to, say, Rotherhithe to get on the TfL network because they are, for example, women working on job shares two days a week and the Anytime fare is simply unaffordable for them. I know TfL has its financial challenges, but if you look at what has been happening to fulltime season ticket, revenue and travel in the Home Counties, in London and the wider southeast, you will see that this is a really big issue with the lack of flexible ticketing. Arguably, it discriminates particularly against women who work part-time. Fares reform seems to be an issue.

The final issue is accessibility. There has been a move towards greater accessibility at the stations in London, but it has not been matched. We are just starting to see some accessible humps go in at the new Thameslink stations. They are having to be retrofitted, which gives you a sense of the failure to think about this compared with, say, Crossrail or the some of the other TfL services.

Therefore, those are the four challenges: capacity, service quality, fares reform and accessibility.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Thank you very much indeed. That is very helpful.

Dr Helena Titheridge (Senior Lecturer, Department of Civil, Environmental and Geomatic Engineering, University College London): There is not much more I can say, apart from endorse the challenges that Niall and Stephen have both put forward.

One thing that binds issues around reliability, accessibility and fares together is the challenge which does not affect central London so much but will be affecting areas around London, which is that of the aging population. That, combined with changing work patterns and more older people working longer in the future, is going to have an impact on what users want from our rail systems as they come into London. That affects accessibility of the rail systems, it affects the quality of service, and it affects fares because it may well mean more off-peak working and more part-time working.

Reflecting a little bit more on the reliability aspect, it is not just about trains running on time. This matches with some of the points that Stephen was saying. If you are undertaking a journey, you do not just want to know that this leg will work; you want to know that the whole journey from start to finish will work for you. For some passengers, that will mean knowing that there is going to be a taxi at the rail station at the far end once they are in more rural areas, knowing that there is going to be station staff on hand to help, knowing that the lifts are working so that they know they can do that journey. If you are a very confident traveller with a disability at the moment, you can probably just about manage, depending on your confidence and your type of disability, but it can be very difficult. We need to start thinking about how we get away from thinking that everybody is young and working from 9.00am to 5.00pm in central London.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Yes, think about the whole population, really.

Dr Helena Titheridge (Senior Lecturer, Department of Civil, Environmental and Geomatic Engineering, University College London): The whole population, yes.

David Leam (Infrastructure Director, London First): From the business perspective, the mission-critical thing really for the rail network is that it connects the homes in London and around the southeast with the jobs, particularly those jobs in the highly productive centre of London. That is the most critical thing of all.

In terms of that, I thought your unscientific Twitter poll sounded about right to me, to be honest. The reliability figure struck me as higher than it should be. I suspect that it is partly related to some of the issues that Stephen mentioned, some of the terrible failures largely of planning around some of the commuter routes coming into London, but capacity continues to be the big challenge.

Our biggest fear, to be perfectly honest, is that we succumb to complacency, almost. London has improved very significantly over the last couple of decades, linked particularly to the emergence of this institution, the mayoralty, TfL and all the associated architecture. We have done much better in planning for the future and

investment. However, if we look back at the decades preceding that, the story was one of very real failure and considerable underinvestment in the London transport infrastructure. We have spent two decades making good on that, to be honest, and playing catch-up. The worst thing we could possibly do now is to think, "OK, Thameslink is coming to an end and Crossrail is almost done. Now is the time for an investment holiday". That would be completely wrong. What we need to do here in London is to keep planning and keep investing for the future.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Absolutely. It is too tempting for people to put their feet up now and think, "We have done London". Are there any other comments about the impact of these challenges on passengers and around accessibility to the network that anyone else wants to add? Niall?

Niall Bolger (Chief Executive, London Borough of Sutton, and Chief Executive Lead for Transport in the South London Partnership): Yes. It is absolutely definitely the case that transport and access and rail in particular in the sub-region is one of the top priorities for our residents. When we asked them, as we have recently in my own borough, what the top priorities for residents are in terms of the public services they receive in the context of everything else that we do, transport was second. We have no role particularly in transport commissioning other than advocating and lobbying, but it is something which we need to respond to.

Echoing what my colleagues said earlier on in relation to the infrastructure improvements within London, they are undoubtedly being welcomed and are incredibly successful and they have made a big difference, but that is principally for central London and for people to get into central London. We need to make sure the Mayor's strategy around polycentric cities, about the fact that the sub-regional economies are as important to London's future wellbeing and wealth, then we need to start thinking about the infrastructure of outer London. Certainly, that is a source of resentment for residents as well. This comes up in relation to, believe it or not, the precept for Crossrail and about how that has not been applied to the outer London issue and problem. People who are more informed do talk about that.

There are undoubtedly stories which I can tell you about. For example, we had an investor conference in Sutton, which was for a showcasing of key development sites. On that day, of course, Southern Rail decided that they would have a strike. Obviously, those investors did not come and we could not showcase the opportunities. These are the sorts of things that we need to address. That has a genuine, real impact on the ability for us in south London and Sutton specifically to meet our objectives and the mayoral ambition for housing growth, for example. If investors cannot come, residents cannot come.

As a consequence of that, we need to think very carefully about how we deal with outer London's requirements for better connectivity within sub-regions - and that would be the case in some of the other sub-regions as well - but also in terms of recognising that there is connectivity into London and also out of London and within sub-regions for us to be making sure that we maximise the opportunities for residents to access jobs and employment and also to have a good quality of life and minimise the environmental consequences of being so car-dependent.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Does anyone else want to come in on that? Stephen?

Stephen Joseph (Chief Executive Officer, Campaign for Better Transport): There is a thing here about joining up rail strategy with wider mayoral objectives; for example, the issue of air quality and, as Niall has said, reducing car use into London. Rail should be part of that and there are opportunities to improve that. The Mayor's Transport Strategy talks about more orbital rail and there are opportunities in west London for that. It is also about applying the Healthy Streets priority that is in the Mayor's Transport Strategy to rail, which is

about good links to stations. As Helena has said, this is really important. This is about door-to-door journeys. It is about making sure that people can get to and from stations easily. That is one of the things that puts people off in outer London. Sometimes stations are across dual carriageways. There is not proper thinking about this.

We did some work with Abellio based on its Dutch parent body called Fixing the Link, which is work they have done across the Dutch railway network looking at how to make the links between stations and the surrounding areas better for pedestrians. We did a bit of work in places like Colchester where the main station is on the north side of the town and there are dual carriageways, roundabouts and things. Simple things can be done to make those things work better.

There is a need to give more thought to how the railway stations relate to the surrounding areas - that is true of the Underground as well as main line stations, by the way - so as to make them genuinely accessible in the broad sense and to think about ways in which those can be accessed easily by foot and by bike so that we do not get so much car travel to stations. That could make a real difference in the outer London story, too, really.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): That is a great suggestion. I am going to move us on, just to pick your brains about how London's network compares internationally or even nationally to other cities. Do you have any information? Maybe I will go to David first. How do we compare? It always feels like we have such a creaking, aging infrastructure, but do we, in reality?

David Leam (Infrastructure Director, London First): If we went around the country, we would probably get some strong responses on that from other parts of the country --

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Yes, I am sure.

David Leam (Infrastructure Director, London First): -- who feel rather strongly that they have been relatively neglected, and they do have a point. We have been under investing in transport infrastructure elsewhere in the country.

At the international level, it is probably a mixed picture. I was flicking through the *New York Times* yesterday, of course one of our principal global competitors, but their transport infrastructure is in a terrible mess. They are only now really trying to think about how they modernise their subway system and they have someone with TfL experience to try to help them to do it.

Elsewhere, in Europe, I guess the picture is a bit more mixed. Some of the European capital cities have good public transport networks. If we go to smaller European cities, it is a slightly different challenge, but it is somewhat easier in terms of the geography and the scale.

We are doing respectably, but these things have long timescales. If we do not continue to plan and continue to invest, then in five years' time and in 10 years' time, we are storing up terrible problems for ourselves.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Helena, do you have any examples, internationally or nationally, where there is better practice than London?

Dr Helena Titheridge (Senior Lecturer, Department of Civil, Environmental and Geomatic Engineering, University College London): There is nowhere I would say was completely better practice. The picture is mixed. There are other cities with similar aging infrastructure that is operating at or over

capacity. There are some cities where the infrastructure works better from the crowding perspective and the reliability perspective but is not perhaps performing still on the accessibility angle and meeting everybody's needs. It is more a case of drawing bits of best practice from different aspects of different cities, rather than one being above or below on every aspect.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Stephen, you look at internationally. Do you have any places we should be looking at?

Stephen Joseph (Chief Executive Officer, Campaign for Better Transport): There is some good practice, as Helena has said, in other places. London does have a very dense rail network.

The issue of devolution and the boundaries between different authorities and between local, regional, sub-regional and national bodies seems to be a common problem, but it is the case that, say, German and French cities seem to have more ability to manage their local and regional rail networks than London does. I take Niall's point about transport from the southeast. Hertfordshire suggested the need for a grouping to manage London's railways and the London southeast rail network with the surrounding counties, and there has been quite a lot of interest in that.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): We are going to come on to that in a bit.

Stephen Joseph (Chief Executive Officer, Campaign for Better Transport): If you go to German cities, you find there are what are known as *Verkehrsverbund*, which are in fact that: they are, say, Munich City Council and the surrounding local authorities and transport operators coming together to arrange the transport network and let contracts to Deutsche Bahn or indeed to bodies like National Express and Arriva to manage and run the local rail network. That devolution you see in greater Paris as well. That is one area where, in stopping the devolution of local rail services and refusing to really think about sub-regional management, the current Government policy is flying against what is happening elsewhere in the world.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): That works.

Stephen Joseph (Chief Executive Officer, Campaign for Better Transport): And it works. I would just say that it is almost inconceivable that if TfL had been in control of the Thameslink project it would have ended up like this because TfL would have had an incentive - not being, among other things, hauled before this Committee - to call a halt when it was clear that the new timetable was not going to work. I take David's [Leam] point. Your Twitter poll is influenced by some of the mess that has happened there and complete unpredictability. None of the railways which are managed by the devolved bodies could have possibly made such a mess of it as has happened here.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): We are looking forward to Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR) and Network Rail coming before us on 25 June [2018]. Niall, briefly, do you want to come in on this before I move on?

Niall Bolger (Chief Executive, London Borough of Sutton, and Chief Executive Lead for Transport in the South London Partnership): Yes, just in terms of the international comparisons, as the Committee will be aware, we are looking - we and TfL in partnership - to extend the tram in south London. As part of that, there is a thing that I would like to draw to your attention. We have looked at how small and medium-sized cities, in France, for example, are able to build that infrastructure relatively quickly and do that autonomously with the support of government to be able to finance it differently. We have looked at, for example,

Strasbourg and Besançon. Those are similar sizes to Sutton and Merton in terms of population and they are able to finance and fund that infrastructure by issuing bonds independently, and are given a very wide beam in relation to their autonomy and authority to raise money within the markets, which does not exist for us easily. Some of the German examples are really important as well. Some of the stuff that may be underpinning that more reliability, more accountability and much more democratic transparency is the ability to finance it and a real, genuine connection with the costs of the infrastructure by the citizens who are responsible or are using it.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): We will look at finance later. That sounds very interesting. All right. Let us look at how we plan demand for rail services.

Steve O'Connell AM: Thank you, Chair. Thank you very much and good morning to all of you. A couple of comments, Niall. Thank you for your championing of outer London. It is very true about this resentment in outer London that has been felt over many years about the imbalance of investment. It is good to hear from you around that.

Just a last comment before I pursue that is the one in five journeys by public transport in the southwest sector. That is shocking. Until we get that infrastructure investment, it would be rather fanciful that people get out of their cars until we get that.

Anyway, on forecasting demand, we have heard already talk about congestion and about increase in ridership and capacity as a major challenge. That was your evidence that you gave earlier. We know and we understand that London's population will grow, potentially, to 10.8 million by 2041 and so there are some issues there. However, there is an imbalance and I want your comments really about how you judge this imbalance about the way that people's work practices are changing, which they are, and the way that people, for example, shop differently. Shops are coming to people from elsewhere.

My first question to all of you really is: how is your perception about how the demand forecasts are being made? Your comments around that, Niall?

Niall Bolger (Chief Executive, London Borough of Sutton, and Chief Executive Lead for Transport in the South London Partnership): We principally look at the evidence base for this, which is included in the mayoral supporting documentation for the draft London Plan at the moment, particularly in terms of the Strategic Housing Land [Availability] Assessment and how that is completely and utterly dependent, for example, on Crossrail being implemented. We know, for example, in our sub-region that the high level of housing growth that is expected to meet the London Plan objectives and that increasing population by 2041 is completely dependent on infrastructure improvement, including Crossrail 2. However, we also have the remedial problem and we have a remedial issue in terms of the infrastructure not being able to cope, as we have already outlined, with the existing population growth and the existing increase in ridership. That 60% increase is part of the reason why, I would argue, the reliability of the infrastructure is so poor. It is incapable of accommodating the demands being put on it at the moment.

Steve O'Connell AM: What we want to understand, Niall, is also - and others will continue - the robustness of this. We can say that it will go up 60% and I have seen the morning peak up by 50% by 2041. What I would also like to explore is how dependable those figures are and the basis around them. Sorry to interrupt you.

Niall Bolger (Chief Executive, London Borough of Sutton, and Chief Executive Lead for Transport in the South London Partnership): That is fine. We are dependent, obviously, on the best knowledge we

have available. On the basis of the projections in terms of population that we have, which are relatively reasonable and have been tested through the mayoral strategies, then we need to think about what we do in terms of the prediction in terms of the infrastructure requirements and the location of that growth, which is also related to the London Plan objectives.

My contestation is the fact that those areas where growth is expected in outer London are already underserved by infrastructure. It is not only the new infrastructure that is required; the existing infrastructure is completely inadequate. Some of the areas where greatest growth is expected under the Mayor's new London Plan are areas at Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) 1 and 2. We already have a problem in terms of the access to infrastructure for those communities that exist at the moment, let alone additional growth.

The solutions to that are not only going to be about heavy infrastructure. We have to shift and change our policies, for example, around digital infrastructure, the nature of work and employment, having a look at how we get cheaper, easier, implementable solutions to enable greater mobility. Also, our policies need to be about encouraging town centre development and concentrating economic activity in the town centres in outer London. We cannot rely on that massive heavy infrastructure to support it.

That is a challenge then for our overall infrastructure pattern. The geometry of infrastructure in London is very much about pointing into the middle of the city. We need to think about what that looks like in terms of what that means around the edge. That is something which we need to use all of the tools that are at our disposal, including the other transport measures, including improvements in bus accessibility. The tram, for example, is key for south London in the medium term, as well as encouraging other forms of transport access.

Steve O'Connell AM: Thank you. The point is well made because there are two issues. There is the issue of areas where there is not the infrastructure. Sutton, as you have just said, is the worst served borough, I believe, in London. TfL is not present other than buses, of course, and so there is a need there already but there is also the growth need. What I will be interested in exploring is you referred to - and the Mayor always refers to - the link between housing and demand and infrastructure. Croydon as a borough gets that but has a potential around that. Stephen, your thoughts around that from where you come from?

Stephen Joseph (Chief Executive Officer, Campaign for Better Transport): One of the problems here is that the traditional tools used by transport planners are not very good at this and they are not good in two main ways.

Firstly, that link between transport and development is not well organised and is not well represented in the way in which transport demand is talked about. What it does not take account of is the difference in travel demand about where you place development. Traditional transport planning tools do not tend to take account of how there will be a lot less car use if you place new development near railway stations and you provide a decent railway service or, indeed, a fast bus service, actually.

Secondly, there is the way in which you design the developments. Sutton's Beddington Zero Energy Development (BedZED), which has much less carparking, generates much less travel, provided we put in things like car clubs and so on, than a very low-density development. Particularly some of the commercial developments on, say, the Lee Valley or out in west London have generated a lot of car travel. Therefore, transport planning tools are not very good at that level.

They are also not very good at spotting the changes in trends. There was a recent report, which the Committee might want to take a look at, done by an independent Commission on Travel Demand, which

pointed out exactly as you have said: there are huge changes in work and shopping patterns, such that there are reducing numbers of trips happening particularly in cities. The report highlights that current transport policy trends do not take account of that. Particularly just outside the Greater London borders, the way in which roads are being planned assumes huge future growth in traffic that simply may not be there. The Passenger Demand Forecasting Handbook, which is how national rail is planned, does not take account of any of this. In fact, one of the reasons why the Department for Transport (DfT) has been so resistant to fares reform, we think, is because they think it is going to lose them lots of money because they have not taken account of the changes in working patterns and where people live.

Steve O'Connell AM: They are not taking account of this at all?

Stephen Joseph (Chief Executive Officer, Campaign for Better Transport): No, they are not taking account of this at all.

Steve O'Connell AM: That is rather odd.

Stephen Joseph (Chief Executive Officer, Campaign for Better Transport): There is a very interesting graph in that Commission's report which talks about leads in future demand in its development plan based on the way in which transport plans are delivered, which shows that even the lowest growth forecast implies much greater growth in traffic and trips than has happened in Leeds for 30 years. I have mentioned Leeds, but the point is made generally. I know that there are intense debates between TfL and the DfT over travel demand and over who is right about this kind of stuff. By the way, it underlies some of the arguments between TfL and the Government over future service access demand for the Heathrow third runway. They are technical arguments about what kinds of forecasts you use and whether you predict past trends continuing and so on versus taking account of the changes. They are a really important issue and, as I say, also links to the join-up between transport and planning, which the Government has been traditionally terrible at on a national level.

Steve O'Connell AM: Of course, as we said earlier, there is the issue about the demand issue and people coming into the centre, but there is of course the orbital demand and where that is. Helena, would you like to comment?

Dr Helena Titheridge (Senior Lecturer, Department of Civil, Environmental and Geomatic Engineering, University College London): On Stephen's point about the models not taking the new developments into account properly and the links between transport facilities at those developments, I would just highlight a case. We did some work quite a few years ago now looking at the New Delhi metro. A couple of the stations along there when it first opened were performing very poorly, much below expected from the models. What we think was happening was that because of the way in which they designed the metro station with a huge carpark in front of it, buses on the wrong side of the carpark and very few connecting shops and things, it was not creating a pleasant place for people to travel to and easy journeys and so people were not using it. That level of nuance is not in the typical transport planning tools that we use.

There is a question, as you say, about the orbital versus central trips. We tend to look at the past demand to predict future demand, which is not sensible, whether it is talking about changing work practices or just even changing preferences around our transport system.

There is a focus on peak hour. With changing work practices, focusing on what happens in the morning peak is not going to lead us to sensible solutions.

Another limitation of many traditional transport planning models is really that they are not very sensitive to all of the variety of choices that people can make in response to a change in the system, whether that is to not do the trip at all, to start doing their shopping online, changing routes, changing destinations. It tends to look at changing routes but none of the others. There are a lot of questions around the figures that we are using.

Steve O'Connell AM: There is also the issue about the relocation of businesses and work itself because some large-scale employers are moving out. I can think of the Home Office with 4,000 jobs in Croydon. I am sure Kingston and Sutton will be wanting big companies to move out. There is that, possibly, to think about.

Dr Helena Titheridge (Senior Lecturer, Department of Civil, Environmental and Geomatic Engineering, University College London): Then there is the work in practice. Many when they are moving out are going to hotdesking and encouraging employees to work at home several days a week.

Steve O'Connell AM: David, what is the business take on that?

David Leam (Infrastructure Director, London First): On the transport demand, we are facing much more uncertainty than we have done in recent years and that is a fact we are grappling with. I have not seen any comprehensive or clear evidence or analysis. People are still trying to get their heads around this.

However, there is no doubt that both TfL on its network and the commuter rail services coming into London have both reported some dips in demand for a mix of reasons. Partly it is some changes in work patterns, maybe. It could be a bit of a dip in economic activity. It could be tourists and visitors outside of London being a bit more nervous about coming into London in response to some of the challenges that we have seen over the past year or two. There is internet shopping, as you say. There are a number of factors at play here and we do need to get to the bottom of them more.

They seem to be experienced more on the commuter rail network than on the TfL network, as far as I can tell, particularly the TfL peaks. It is not obvious to me that we have seen some radical changes in peak travel activity on the core TfL network. It is clearly still the case that in that morning peak, which can be for quite a period in London - try getting off a train at one of the big London terminuses and getting onto the Tube network - there is very real congestion there now, let alone in five years or ten years. There are bits of the Tube network. Try getting on a train south of Stockwell in the morning peak on the Northern line. You will not. Those trains are full. Similarly, in outer London, the patchiness of some of the services means that some of those are very full.

There is an asymmetry here. It is the case that there is more uncertainty there. My fear is how we react to that uncertainty. We will have siren voices upstream from our friends in the Treasury and the DfT saying, "Let us just sit tight and see what pans out. Let us not make big plans. It might be that demand does not go up. We should just sit tight and see what pans out", whereas the fact of London at the moment is that we are experiencing some real capacity and crowding problems now. The signs are that they are likely to get worse and I am much more worried about an absence of capacity in the future than I am about building some infrastructure that will be underutilised. We do not really have much experience of that in the past 50 years. It is not a fear that is high on my list.

Steve O'Connell AM: Lastly, the point is a good one about the capacity issues. Those people who are trying to get on the Tube or on the train at the moment, if they heard that there may be a rise of 50% over 20 years, would be horrified because they cannot get on it at the moment. What we have heard here is that the modelling and the forecasting is, at best, a bit foggy and it needs to get better.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Lovely. Thank you very much indeed for that. We are going to move on to planning for London's future rail needs.

Florence Eshalomi AM (Deputy Chair): You have all touched on it, essentially, in terms of the infrastructure and how we look at dealing with the capacity and population rise in London. Also, you touched on some of the improvements that we need at certain stations. I have lived in Brixton all my life and the only place I do not feel safe is Brixton Railway Station. I would not encourage anyone to use that station at night because it is just so dark and dingy and it needs such a major uplift.

I think about my journeys on the railways and the Tube prior to having children, whereas now I have children and I have to meticulously plan out my route in terms of looking at stations that are accessible. My whole day could change if I turn up at a station and - guess what - the lifts are out of order. It makes a big difference. Then we talk about residents in London with disabilities. In terms of that infrastructure and the challenges, what key things do you feel that we need that would benefit Londoners the most? I will start with you, David.

David Leam (Infrastructure Director, London First): There are two things. There is absolutely the infrastructure, but actually, following on from the previous point and it came up a bit in the discussion earlier, there is also the fares and ticketing side of things. There clearly are some changes in the structure of demand. More people are working part-time. More people are working flexibly from home at least one day a week, typically a Friday, and so it is quite lumpy. TfL has been world leaders in terms of things like contactless. We have not seen that same spirit of innovation and creativity about the sorts of tickets that we sell to people or the sorts of fare structure. That is one area over next 10 years or so where there is scope for more innovation and a bit of creativity to think about how the products that TfL is offering can match better the reality of Londoners' day-to-day lives.

On the infrastructure side, we clearly are going to need some more of it. The Mayor's Transport Strategy is a good strategy. It is a good long-term vision. It has identified all of the things that I would hope to see in it and the various upgrades. There is no shortage of good plans. There are some absolutely critical improvements to existing infrastructure. I would put the Tube modernisation programme very high up the list. That continuing it is absolutely critical. If there were any signs that things like the Piccadilly line were being delayed or put back further, it would be a very real cause for alarm for us. That would be a red flashing light.

Beyond that, we clearly do need to keep planning for some new bits of infrastructure. We have been very vigorous in making the case for Crossrail 2. That does stand out to us as the major new priority infrastructure requirement for London and the southeast in the 2020s. That to us stands out head and shoulders above it as a very good project that would add significant capacity. The big challenge is one of paying for it and affordability. That is something that we are all grappling with.

Part of the fact that we are going to have to confront that is that, if in London and the south east we want to keep investing in our network and we accept the needs for investment across the wider UK as well, which we have to - there is a very real need out there to invest in things like the Northern Powerhouse Rail - then we are going to have to contribute ourselves. That is the message coming back from the Treasury and the DfT. It is not a wholly welcome one. My members in the business community would rather not pay additionally for better infrastructure. However, if that is part of the deal, we have shown with the Crossrail funding package, business rates, developer contributions and the mayoral Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) that that will be part of the deal. Looking forward, that will have to continue to be part of the deal in future, both for the members I represent and also, I suspect, for some of the people you represent, whether through the fares they

pay or through things like council tax. This is going to be difficult, but we have to accept that if we want continued investment, Londoners and London businesses are going to have to help to do their bit.

Florence Eshalomi AM (Deputy Chair): That is great. Is there anything you wanted to add on to that statement?

Stephen Joseph (Chief Executive Officer, Campaign for Better Transport): It would be easy to answer this question by talking about more infrastructure and David [Leam] is right that we need more infrastructure, but the points you made about the quality of service equally deserve planning for the reasons that Helena said about the changing nature of London's population and aging population.

I would suggest to two things, really. Firstly, metroisation, which we have talked about before, means that you are investing in interchanges. If TfL had the south London rail network, one of the things it wanted to do was to put an interchange at Streatham so that you would be able to run frequent trains into the main line stations rather than four trains an hour or something, compared with 36 on the Victoria line. It is all very well Network Rail talking about digital railways and the technology that goes with that, but metroisation is the only way we are really going to take advantage of that technology coming forward. It is about interchanges and joining up the system.

Then it is about investment in accessibility and staffing and support so that you have visible staffing at Brixton and other main line stations and accessibility. The Access for All Fund, which TfL has managed to get bits of from the national Government, feels a bit like grabbing bits of money as it passes rather than looking at the London rail network and working out the places that really need accessibility improvements that can be done. Denmark Hill, which is next to King's College Hospital, has shown that you can take an old Victorian standard suburban railway station and make it accessible and some of the London Overground stations like West Hampstead are starting to do that, too.

It is easy to think about the big-ticket Crossrail 2. I am not criticising David [Leam]. I am just saying that alongside that we need to think about the other things that are about planning for the future.

Niall Bolger (Chief Executive, London Borough of Sutton, and Chief Executive Lead for Transport in the South London Partnership): I would agree entirely with that proposition. The need for the heavy infrastructure is absolutely there. The fact is that there is a substantial number of stations in our sub-region across London which are completely inaccessible for significant proportions of the population, whether they be elderly or whether they have a disability or whether they are afraid of going there. That cannot be something that we can ignore. That does not need complicated financing mechanisms and mayoral CILs. It needs attention to the basics.

That is absolutely the case, for example, in the Thameslink loop that goes through Merton and Sutton, all of the stations on that loop are completely inaccessible to people with disabilities. They are all dependent on stairs. That is absolutely a more than necessary requirement for us to think about investing in that. That is unacceptable and we need to make sure that we are putting in place the infrastructure to allow everyone to use the transport network.

Another issue also from the Assembly Members' position in terms of the safety issue is in Sutton at the moment we are undertaking as part of our Digital Strategy a programme called Smart Place, which is looking at ways in which we can solve knotty problems about managing urban spaces. One of those is about access and accessibility for people with profound learning disabilities who require independent travel. Thinking about how

we can apply digital mechanisms to enable accessibility to the transport network and ensure those are safe is part of our challenge. Think not only about the heavy infrastructure, but also the supporting mechanisms about information, safety and supervision which we can think about using alternative digital strategies to achieve.

We have huge opportunities in London with the 5G network and the national non-domestic rates (NNDR) devolution arrangements we have. The sub-region has submitted, for example, for our bid to that fund the establishment of the local area network which is 5G-enabled to enable that real-time information which enables you and others to make those choices about where to go, how to use that infrastructure, how to use what we have at the moment more smartly and make the smart choices. That does not require huge amounts of capital investment; it requires lateral thinking about what the problem looks like.

Florence Eshalomi AM (Deputy Chair): I appreciate that you may not have studied it inside out, Network Rail runs its cycles in five years with the control period plans. The current one, Control Period 6, runs from 2019 to 2024, whereas if you look at the Mayor's Transport Strategy, it covers a much longer timespan of up to 2041. To what extent do you feel that some of the things you have just touched on are captured in the current network rail cycle control plan?

Stephen Joseph (Chief Executive Officer, Campaign for Better Transport): Not at all. That is the short answer. This is a general problem; it is not just London that faces that because all the city regions have or are developing those kinds of long-term plans. If you went to talk to the Mayor of the Cambridge and Peterborough Combined Authority, he would talk about the challenge of growth and development looking a long way out and trying to get a view about rail development. The Lee Valley line issues and the Stansted corridor very strongly relates to that.

There is a very strong case but for much longer-term planning in these areas, but, if anything, the problem we have is that the current control period seems to be shortening rather than lengthening with some of the problems that the national rail is facing and subject to ever more intense short-term political interference, particularly on enhancements. The enhancement funding is now directly under the control of the DfT for the next control period. It is unclear how that is going to be spent. There is not clarity on that at the moment and what, if anything, London gets out of that. That is a real concern.

Florence Eshalomi AM (Deputy Chair): Helena, is there anything you wanted to add, specifically in terms of Network Rail's plans and maybe looking at the range of policies and ideas outlined in the Mayor's Transport Strategy?

Dr Helena Titheridge (Senior Lecturer, Department of Civil, Environmental and Geomatic Engineering, University College London): Nothing particularly on the national rail plans. In terms of the Mayor's Transport Strategy, I want to reiterate what my colleagues have said around looking at the smaller stations and the quality of those smaller stations, ensuring that service quality and staffing at stations is part of that consideration. Then, finally, thinking more about information provision to passengers and how that is done and what sort of information through what mechanisms suits them best, thinking of the whole variety of passengers from the regular commuters to the more occasional users of the rail system who are perhaps less confident travellers. Using your own example there, if you had known in advance to check that morning to see if the lifts were out, it might have saved you a lot of trouble.

Florence Eshalomi AM (Deputy Chair): If you have time to check, but when you turn up it is a totally different story.

Dr Helena Titheridge (Senior Lecturer, Department of Civil, Environmental and Geomatic Engineering, University College London): Absolutely. Information is not valuable if it is not accurate.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Could I just pick up? In the Mayor's final Transport Strategy, he really had beefed up the section on things like the West London Orbital line. David, is that a reality? Is it deliverable? We have other really exciting projects, Crossrail 2, the Bakerloo line extension, things that we all have looked at and generally support, but is it realistic? Is it going to be delivered?

David Leam (Infrastructure Director, London First): No. There was a great range of projects and a great list of projects, all of which, I am sure, have positive business cases and would make a significant positive difference. The reality we face is that, in the very near term at least, they are not going to be affordable and deliverable. The Mayor's Transport Strategy has, of course, quite a long look over a long horizon. Over a 20-year period maybe it is more plausible, but I am afraid we are simply not going to be able to advance on all fronts in the next two years or the next five years. We are going to have to make some slightly uncomfortable choices about prioritisation.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): What are you hopeful we might make progress on, having looked at the whole Strategy and with your expertise in this area?

David Leam (Infrastructure Director, London First): There is the critical progress on some of the ... I hesitate to call it "business as usual" because it is more than that. I guess "elevated business-as-usual" such as the Tube modernisation programme I am confident will continue.

Beyond that, I guess, on the big enhancements, we have a range of options which are being developed further, which is the right thing to do. There are good options around the Bakerloo line extension, extending the Docklands Light Railway (DLR) to Thamesmead, say, extending Crossrail east. The west London one I know less well, to be perfectly honest, but partly that will depend on the interrelationship with housing. Where there is a boost to housing, these things will be more attractive. It is a bit of a challenge because, inevitably, it takes time for that housing to come through. There is a great desire to see more housing now, next year, the year after. These big transport schemes will have an impact that is further out than that. I continue to be a very strong champion for Crossrail 2, not because it is the only thing that matters. I certainly do not think that, but we have seen before that they are a big ask, these projects, but they are also a big prize. We did see that with Crossrail 1, we had a long discussion in London. Did trying to push for a big prize like that risk compromising the Tube modernisation programme and some other things? Actually, we managed to make progress on both.

There is a premium on ambition. We should not stop being ambitious and being demanding and pushing the boundaries of what is possible, but over the next year or two let us see what commitments and promises we can extract from the Government, particularly around the budget this year, and then we are looking at entering into a spending review territory next year at which some of these debates are going to have to be had. As a city, we are going to have to think about our asks and choosing them. If we are asking for 20 things, we might be heard slightly less favourably than if we have three priorities, say.

Keith Prince AM: David - and others might wish to comment - just on High Speed 2 (HS2), if it happens, do we think that will have an impact on London's rail service?

David Leam (Infrastructure Director, London First): HS2, as we stand at the moment, seems to be one of those things that is absolutely baked into the Government's plans for the next couple of decades, and so that

seems to be one of the firm constants out there. It clearly will have an impact in particular places. It will have a very real impact at Euston Station and at Old Oak where it interfaces with the London network. At Euston, the impact it will have is to bring more people into Euston Station, a station that is already struggling to cope with the volumes of people it has. What we will see at Euston Station, unless we do something different, is that in the peak hours it will close. You will be standing on the concourse waiting to get entrance into the Tube station unless we do something radical. That is part of the justification for the interchange with Crossrail 2 there.

However, HS2 is happening. 2026, I think it is, the first stage to Birmingham. That will mean additional people coming into what is already a congested station. 2033, the full Y, we are going to see some very real problems at Euston by then unless we have some plans to alleviate those.

Tom Copley AM: Let us say we get Crossrail 2 funded. Fantastic. What is next? Do we need Crossrail 3? Do we need to be thinking about where that goes? Do we need to be prioritising investment in other infrastructure? Does anyone have any thoughts on that?

Stephen Joseph (Chief Executive Officer, Campaign for Better Transport): I would just reiterate the point that it is less glamorous but metroising the south London rail network would be the thing.

Tom Copley AM: That would be the priority?

Stephen Joseph (Chief Executive Officer, Campaign for Better Transport): It does involve some investment. For things like the Streatham interchange, we could look for funding from developers. You could see that happening. Making much better use of what is quite an intensive rail network in London feels like the big priority. It is less glamorous than Crossrail 3 would be, but it is the thing that is most important. Then the things we have talked about around accessibility and so on in terms of making the system more usable are collectively big-ticket items but they do make a big difference. Orbital bus links across outer London linking into the rail network are things that would make a big difference. It is easy to just focus on the big projects without looking at those things.

Niall Bolger (Chief Executive, London Borough of Sutton, and Chief Executive Lead for Transport in the South London Partnership): I could not agree more. We have to think about Crossrail 2's development horizon. It is not going to be in the next decades. It would not even be built. In the meantime, we have the projections coming from the Mayor in terms of the population growth which we have already identified and a remedial requirement for infrastructure improvement.

The original agreement which was signed by [The Rt. Hon] Patrick McLoughlin [MP, former Secretary of State for Transport] and the previous Mayor envisaged that south London metroisation would be broadly cost-neutral in the context of being able to achieve the investment requirement. That could be done now, and the opportunity exists in terms of the refranchising arrangements that are coming forward quite quickly. We have lost it for South West Trains, but ultimately for the south London franchises it could be done now. In addition to that, I would argue or contend that the current performance of that franchise would merit some intervention from the Secretary of State to bring that date earlier. That could then, as a consequence, be quite easily - says he - allocated to the Mayor for responsibility for implementing it now. That would make a considerable improvement in the quality of life of residents in south London. It would enable confidence from the development industry to invest. It would allow us then to make progress in relation to our economic ambitions

and probably half of the quantum of development expected for Crossrail 2 in south London would be developed as a consequence of more reliability in the existing infrastructure.

Tom Copley AM: It is frustrating to all of us here that [The Rt. Hon] Chris Grayling [MP, Secretary of State for Transport] reneged on that agreement. Probably, the next suburban rail line to be devolved will not be in south London at all, it will be another line in north London, not that we are opposed to that at all.

Niall Bolger (Chief Executive, London Borough of Sutton, and Chief Executive Lead for Transport in the South London Partnership): Exactly. If I may make one slightly ... I am thinking about how to put this. It is even more egregious given the fact that Chris Grayling's constituency is Sutton and Kingston and the transport infrastructure of his own residents is being impacted because the terminus for a lot of these routes that come through south London are in Epsom, Newham and those areas, and so the residents in those parts of the close neighbours in Surrey are desperate for this change to happen equally. We know that from our own analysis in relation to their input and I work with our neighbouring authorities in Surrey, East Sussex and West Sussex.

Stephen Joseph (Chief Executive Officer, Campaign for Better Transport): There is an opportunity for TfL and the Mayor to work with the other mayors, the combined authorities and the subnational transport bodies to make this argument. Andy Street, Mayor of the West Midlands, is at the centre of something called West Midlands Railway, which would be like TfL and the surrounding counties getting together. West Midlands Railway runs from Hereford to Crewe but with the Birmingham network at the centre of it. Andy Street has made no secret of the fact that he wants much more control over that network than he currently has under the new franchise. Therefore, there are opportunities for networking with Wales, Scotland, the North of England and others to talk about and to put pressure on central Government to hand over control over a lot of the local rail network to local bodies.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): That might be the way to secure it, being not just about London, which is always --

Tom Copley AM: Absolutely.

Caroline Russell AM: Just picking up on something that Stephen said earlier about the importance of thinking about healthy streets and tackling problems like air pollution in relation to rail, and also thinking about how a lot of what has been discussed so far has been about getting people from outer London into the centre. On the Economy Committee here on the Assembly we have been looking at how the Mayor's Culture Strategy has been helping to develop local economies in outer London. We are talking also about getting people to outer London.

I just wondered whether any one, particularly possibly Helena, with the ideas of aging populations and people living their lives differently in terms of their working practices, could expand a bit more on the importance of rail stations being properly connected into the local areas to help reduce the car dependence. If when you get to the place you are going the only way you can get anywhere is by car or you feel like that because the roads are so hostile and unpleasant, that slightly undermines the networking that the rails can provide.

Dr Helena Titheridge (Senior Lecturer, Department of Civil, Environmental and Geomatic Engineering, University College London): You are quite right. It does make a big difference. Coming to mind in terms of things like local economies are things like the culture area that is being developed at Wealdstone, which is meant to be attracting people outwards to that area as a new employment area. There

are all sorts of local facilities, not forgetting where our hospitals are, where the crown courts are, that attract people from across London in terms of lawyers, friends and family, as well as patients, for longer journeys. They will be looking to use the rail system to get there. It is incredibly important that we think about this complexity of flows. We do not understand enough about them yet and how they are going to change because we do not quite know enough about how working practices will truly grow and what will not, but we certainly need to do more to think about how we integrate those into the rail system, whether that is better bus interchanges around railway stations, thinking about changing how we balance the rail system so that it is as attractive to travel outwards as it is to travel inwards.

Caroline Russell AM: Certainly the experience of turning up to outer London rail stations, unless you have Citymapper and your phone is charged up, there may be no staff at the station and there is no sense of how you connect then into the area that you are going to.

Dr Helena Titheridge (Senior Lecturer, Department of Civil, Environmental and Geomatic Engineering, University College London): Yes, often to multiple exits with no indication even of which one is the right one for you.

Caroline Russell AM: Indeed.

Stephen Joseph (Chief Executive Officer, Campaign for Better Transport): I mentioned earlier the idea of fixing the link and seeing stations as transport hubs or gateways to surrounding communities. A practical suggestion that the Committee might make would be for TfL to take one of the Overground stations that it now controls and possibly some of the Crossrail stations in outer London, one or two of them, and do a practical investment in those just to see how Healthy Streets as a philosophy could be applied to those outer London stations and just show what can be done, much in the way the Mini-Hollands did on cycling and walking in outer London, to do something practical. I suspect there would be a queue of boroughs wanting to work with TfL on that.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Yes. Niall is already sitting in the queue.

Stephen Joseph (Chief Executive Officer, Campaign for Better Transport): That feels like something that would practically take that forward.

If I can just come back to the West London Orbital, there are opportunities there because some of that is about using freight and other underused lines. I mentioned when I last came to the Committee about the concept of a workplace parking levy. Hounslow has raised that as one option for paying for the reintroduction of passenger services on the freight line from Southall to Brentford. There is some willingness among the business community around the Golden Mile at Brentford or to consider something like that because, as David [Leam] said, no businesses like paying more for things, but if they can see tangible benefits from something like that, it feels like a solution for that area, which is very car-dependent and the public transport there is not brilliant. Providing a link into Crossrail in fact at Southall feels like something that could happen. A workplace parking levy, as piloted in Nottingham, could be something that would make a difference. It would be useful for TfL to work with Hounslow and the other boroughs, talking about the west London metro, to see whether something like that levy might work.

Caroline Russell AM: Presumably, also, I do not know whether Oxford Street buses are still going to be heading towards outer London, but thinking about if there is extra bus capacity to make sure that it connects with these stations so that they become more usable.

Joanne McCartney AM: Of course, I accept the case for south London, but also, as Niall particularly will know, there are parts of north London that are barren as far as Tube networks are concerned. The Great Northern line franchise is up in 2021. We had the Gibb Report [Chris Gibb, *Changes to Improve the Performance of the Southern Network and Train Services and Restore Passenger Confidence*, 2017] last year that recommended devolution to TfL. I was just going to ask Stephen, really. You have talked about how, if the services are devolved, they are more accountable, more locally focused and have a better quality of service. We talked about planning that as well. Have you seen benefits of that happening, particularly with outer London boroughs?

Stephen Joseph (Chief Executive Officer, Campaign for Better Transport): It is five years old now, the report, but we did do a report that looked at London Overground and Merseyrail and compared and contrasted what happened before those services were devolved - in terms of the quality of the service, the frequency, investment and stations - with what has happened since. There is a myth about London Overground that that was great because they had lots of investment. Actually, for the first few years they did not get lots of investment and their performance and punctuality went up because the contract incentivised the operator to control things the operator can do, which is to get the trains out and to manage the stations properly, and it took away some of the issues around revenue and so on that bedevilled some of the other wider arguments.

This has shown to work. It has worked elsewhere. There is a very strong case for developing the Great Northern services, as the Gibb Report recognised. Then there is a discussion to be had about, within what is now the GTR franchise, what happens to south London. We are strong supporters of this. There is an evidence base that actually, on the whole, devolved rail works. As I said, Merseyrail has had no investment and has some of the oldest trains in the entire country. It still does well and is now looking at ordering a new fleet of trains which will maintain staffing of trains and stations. They will be genuinely accessible on what is partly as old a network as some of the London rail network is.

My point is that devolution works and there are opportunities for TfL and other authorities to learn from each other.

Joanne McCartney AM: Wonderful. Chair, just so you are aware, the Mayor is on his way to Liverpool today to meet the other regional mayors. I like the idea that that should be on their future agenda.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): We might want to suggest that. Lovely. Thank you.

David Kurten AM: If I could ask Stephen about the digital railway, which we have all talked a bit about so far, you mentioned the Jubilee line, which is fantastic now because there are 36 trains an hour in the peak. This digital railway programme idea of upgrading the signalling and so on which has happened in some of those lines and the Underground, do you think it is possible that that can happen all over the whole rail network? Can it be implemented and what would its effects be, ultimately?

Stephen Joseph (Chief Executive Officer, Campaign for Better Transport): I am not a technology specialist, but hidden by the mess that has been the Thameslink timetable, has been in fact that they have made a digital railway or automatic train operation work on that central core for the first time on any main line railway anywhere in Europe. All credit to Network Rail for that. They have shown that they can make it work on a mainline railway.

The key to digital railway - and if you are going to see Network Rail in a few weeks, then you can ask them - is to work out the benefits and to turn this into a programme that brings real benefits for users and operators and communities around the rail network in terms of more frequency, more reliability and something that is genuinely more usable. That is what the technology promises because it removes a lot of the signalling, as has happened on the Underground lines. It is worth mentioning that the person in charge now at Network Rail of the digital railway was responsible for the digital railway for the Jubilee, Victoria and Northern line changes. He does know what he is talking about.

The person responsible now, David Waboso [CBE] of Network Rail, for the digital railway was the person at London Underground responsible for that, and so he does know what he is talking about. The question is whether he has the team around him to make this work and whether Network Rail can turn this from a slogan into something that has meaningful benefits across the network in terms of frequency, reliability and speed.

David Leam (Infrastructure Director, London First): The line to ask Network Rail about very explicitly would be the Brighton Main Line. That seems to be the one that is in the frame and at the top of the list for potential upgrades to the digital railway approach. As Stephen says, the critical thing is to put some flesh on the bones of this, really. There is no doubt that that is a section of the commuter rail network into London that is going to need some significant enhancements over the next decade or so. There is a considerable amount of uncertainty about where Network Rail will be investing in upgrades and enhancements over the 2020s and this strikes me as one of those that it would be good to get some clarity and commitment to.

David Kurten AM: Just one other thing, slightly different. We have mentioned infrastructure, signalling and metroisation, but are there any other things that we may have missed that you think would be good improvements to the rail network that we have not mentioned yet? If not, do not worry.

Niall Bolger (Chief Executive, London Borough of Sutton, and Chief Executive Lead for Transport in the South London Partnership): I would suggest that the Committee might want to think about the shape of the ask, if you will, or the recommendations in the short, medium and longer terms because the infrastructure interventions that are required are not always the heavy lifting gear. Some of them are quite simple. Some of them are about attitudes and prioritisation within existing resources, rather than new resources. Asking Network Rail about that would be very helpful.

This is also a toast to Joanne McCartney's [AM] point about policy integration. We should be aiming to get the economic benefits and the access benefits and the cultural benefits and implementing safe streets and good growth. That should be a part of this single package of intervention.

One of the things which happens with transport infrastructure is that it is seen as transport infrastructure and the capital is deployed for that purpose. It has to have other broader impacts across multiple policy objectives for it to be really successful. That is entirely achievable. Network Rail, in my experience, tends to see it as simply as a package of interventions within their estate, rather than the broader impacts across the communities they serve.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Fantastic. Could I just ask David? In terms of digital railway, is there anywhere else in the world where they are doing this that we should be looking to as good practice? Who would write to us afterwards if you want to have a think about it?

David Leam (Infrastructure Director, London First): We will have a think, yes.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): There are other places that have great railway systems where it is really tried and tested. Maybe you could put your thinking hat on and --

David Leam (Infrastructure Director, London First): Interestingly, this was one of the ones. New York is looking to London to copy the experience of the modernisation programme. We forget that we have done it.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): On the Tube, yes, but on the rail networks, is there anywhere else leading the way on this?

David Leam (Infrastructure Director, London First): I will reflect on that.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Brilliant. Thank you. Let us look at a rail strategy for London.

Joanne McCartney AM: The question is: will there ever be a common one that everyone agrees on? What is clear is that it is so complex and there are so many players involved in delivering rail services in London. I was very struck by what Stephen said earlier and I wrote it down. He said that the join-up between transport and planning in government has been traditionally bad.

I am just wondering. What do we need to do make sure that the Government, Network Rail, operators, TfL and everyone really works together to develop that strategic rail infrastructure for London?

Stephen Joseph (Chief Executive Officer, Campaign for Better Transport): You could look to what Scotland has. They have an alliance in which the person running the ScotRail trains is also running the Network Rail zone up there. What the Scottish Government has done with that within the ScotRail franchise has been to look at major development around the Scottish railway stations so that there is a commitment. For example, at Dundee there is a big station development which is turning the station around, looking outwards and so on. They have used the alliance between the train operator and Network Rail to move towards the wider benefits that Niall was talking about earlier. That would be a practical way forward.

Again, it is looking for practicalities as opposed to big statements that people sign up to and doing some experimental partnerships around some stations. Network Rail keeps saying that they want lots of third-party funding. Maybe TfL and the Mayor can say to Network Rail - and after all, as Chair he has had some association with London in the past - "Let us try something in London. Let us do some experiments around some stations to show how a partnership can work". Again, West Midlands is doing that. They have a station partnership. Greater Manchester talked about a station partnership but [the Rt. Hon] Chris Grayling [MP, Secretary of State for Transport] told them they could not have one and so they are going back and looking at it again. There are things you can learn that TfL - and I know it does talk to these other authorities - can do to make something happen. This is about having a shared aim at a big pan-London level for what should happen to rail across the piece. It is about making that work on the ground in the way that Niall has been talking about to make joint development happen.

Elsewhere, there have been initiatives. Homes England is doing work with Network Rail on some stations at places like York and Taunton to use land around the stations and bring it back into use. Maybe, given that there has been that join-up there, there is an opportunity to bring in Homes England as an enabler of some of those wider developments that people want to see happen.

Joanne McCartney AM: Do we need a London rail board?

Stephen Joseph (Chief Executive Officer, Campaign for Better Transport): The Centre for London talked about creating Rail South, which was, as Niall has said, the south London boroughs with Kent, Surrey, West and East Sussex and so on. There is an opportunity to think about that. As I have said, West Midlands Railway exists. Transport for the North exists. There are joint groupings of local authorities with some control over their local rail network, not as much as they want. There are bodies in place that look like that. As I said, Hertfordshire proposed such a board at one point. There would be an opportunity for talking to the surrounding authorities - it sounds like Niall's grouping already is doing that - to see what the opportunities are for making something practical happen.

Joanne McCartney AM: What I have gathered today is that nobody thinks that at the moment we plan our rail services to tie up appropriately with where we need employment, where we need housing and those other strategy imperatives. If we had this board or grouping or partnership, what other powers or what ability would they need? We have heard about the data they collect and how they plan. It was Stephen [Joseph] or David [Leam] who talked about how you plan trains, but it seems to be irrespective of what is happening with regards to those other priorities. What else would need to happen?

Niall Bolger (Chief Executive, London Borough of Sutton, and Chief Executive Lead for Transport in the South London Partnership): I am really pleased we are referring to the Centre for London report, which looked at that, and that is becoming a reality now with a draft national transport strategy which was just published by the Transport for the South East Board, in terms of looking at the integration of all transport mechanism. The rail board would also have to be thinking about other means of accessibility and mobility. It would be about integrated seamless services.

Part of the concern, for example, in south London is having the complex network that we have. The interchange issues can be as much of a frustration as the trains themselves because you are dependent on the reliability of unreliable networks. As a consequence of that, a transport board, for example, a rail board for south London and the greater south east, could look at that integration and look at planning more effectively which prioritises the needs of the urban requirements for transport as well as the interurban requirements. That does not happen at the moment.

A lot of capacity in there in south London is occupied by people commuting from outside London and, therefore, occupying the space that is available at the moment. The board is able and could look at far more integrated transport planning but also integrated ticketing to enable that to happen.

The other thing which would also be incredibly important to do is identify the prioritisation for infrastructure because there is a clamour for a lot of infrastructure investment where there needs to be some prioritisation. My colleague has said that going to the Government and saying you have 20 priorities, you are not going to get any of them. Basically, we need to have a mature debate in a properly democratically accountable body which enables the trade-offs to be heard and decisions to be made about what comes first. That board will be absolutely essential.

Our own conversations with our colleagues in the subnational Transport Board for the South East is beginning to talk about that and beginning to think about what the functions of economic areas we share are in order that we can make those priority investments. For example, the Brighton Main Line is absolutely pivotal to the functioning of the Gatwick Diamond and absolutely pivotal to the infrastructure requirement for south London and to optimise localisation. That is absolutely necessary in order that we can get better accessibility. That transport board could lobby and seek the investment requirement to make that happen.

Joanne McCartney AM: Obviously, this is a more formal structure than exists at the moment. Is there any indication from the DfT that it would welcome such an organisation?

Niall Bolger (Chief Executive, London Borough of Sutton and Chief Executive Lead for Transport in the South London Partnership): My view is the structure does exist and that we should not be asking for permission. We should be working collaboratively to do it.

Joanne McCartney AM: That was my next question.

Niall Bolger (Chief Executive, London Borough of Sutton and Chief Executive Lead for Transport in the South London Partnership): We should just get on with it and getting the coalition which is already prime because if you do read the draft strategy for the south east for transport, it really does echo and chime with the Mayor's own Transport Strategy. The synergies are already there; it needs politically joining up.

Shaun Bailey AM: May I address this to Niall and Stephen [Joseph] and David [Leam] to some extent? I just want to investigate the theme that my colleague Joanne [McCartney AM] brought here about the sub-regional transport board or rail board. What are the bars to making it happen? If you are saying that the mechanisms are there, why does it not exist, at least informally? What are the bars?

Niall Bolger (Chief Executive, London Borough of Sutton and Chief Executive Lead for Transport in the South London Partnership): The mechanism is only recently there with the establishment of the sub-national transport boards. That is important and working with our colleagues in the greater south east to enable that to be its function. In effect, it is a prototype moving towards a TfL-like structure, but it is not there at the moment. They have strategic responsibilities rather than delivery responsibilities at the moment.

As I said, rather than asking for permission, we need to use what we have got to come forward with a plan of action to get the coalition of the political interest - because the political interests are really diverse, they represent all the political interests - and a need is identified and clear to absolutely ask and demand for devolution and require it to happen to make sure the economic powerhouse, which is our region and that wider region around us, can absolutely drive the economy of the UK. That is essentially what this is all about. Getting that optimised transport infrastructure is critical to the future of the UK, particularly in the context of post-Brexit world because we cannot have sub-optimised infrastructure which is not enabling people to realise their ambitions and the economic potential of our regions.

Stephen Joseph (Chief Executive Officer, Campaign for Better Transport): I just make one comment about this. Transport for the North is already a subnational transport body which has statutory status. In a way, what Transport for the South East wants to do is to move in that direction towards a statutory status.

I just make one comment or a note of caution, really. It is important that in creating these big subnational bodies that accountability and transparency is not left behind. There is a bit of a tendency for a group thing to appear and for people just to roll to each other. We have done some work for Transport for the North in terms of engaging the wider community, wider stakeholders, which I think they found very valuable because they have got insights over what people thought was important that they would not otherwise have. It is very important that in the context of what we are talking about here that rail users of all sorts and people who might be rail users but are not at the moment because they find it very difficult to use the system, feel that their voice is being heard on the London Regional Rail Board or some such party, therefore, it does not feel out of touch. We have enough of that with the DfT managing rail franchises. We need to make sure that anything that replaces it talks to the wider world.

Shaun Bailey AM: If you would just indulge me a while longer, is it obvious then which bodies should be on this body and who should overlook that body? To a certain extent, the big players are obvious, but your comment leads me to believe that there may be other bodies who it is not obvious straightaway should be involved for transparency reasons, just for reach, therefore, all the decisions, planning, etc, are in that room.

Niall Bolger (Chief Executive, London Borough of Sutton and Chief Executive Lead for Transport in the South London Partnership): My view there is that it has to be democratically accountable. It would be because of what I do and it has to be representative of the communities it serves. Therefore, whether it be representatives from the Mayor and TfL and the Assembly, it also has to engage the boroughs, the counties and the districts.

I also echo the point about the interest groups in terms of the users. There must be a mechanism for engaging across the piece, that collaboration, so there is accountability in real time as well as in periodic time. When people go to the ballot box, there has to be a continuous process of being completely transparent. That is really important because of the previous point I made about 'we cannot do everything'. Someone is going to have to wait and when people have to wait for stuff, they need to know why they are waiting and what the priority is. We have a transparency obligation and a duty to explain it.

At the moment, half the problem is nobody understands why Network Rail makes any of the decision they do unless they are really technically enabled. That is really important in terms of enabling communities to understand the dilemmas and the trade-offs in terms of investment within the limited resources we have.

Shaun Bailey AM: Has anybody done the work at looking at the membership of our equivalent body or is it just a case of copying what is happening in the West Midlands and in the North?

Niall Bolger (Chief Executive, London Borough of Sutton and Chief Executive Lead for Transport in the South London Partnership): It is early. It is just starting. The discussions are starting now. That is a good idea and it needs airing and debating.

Stephen Joseph (Chief Executive Officer, Campaign for Better Transport): The Centre for London work, turning south London orange, was a good start in this direction.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): It did build on some work we had done on the Assembly, I should add.

Tom Copley AM: For everything that has been said, it sounds like one of the major problems over the years has been the fragmentation of the railways and, for many years, the prevailing wisdom, not just in this country but also something that the European Union has been pushing, has been the separation of operation from infrastructure. Are you saying that we need to be going the other way now and looking much more at how we can integrate people who operate the trains with the people who are running the track?

Stephen Joseph (Chief Executive Officer, Campaign for Better Transport): I am saying that there does need to be better integration. There was a South West Trains alliance which did not work well. As I say, Scotland does seem to have made it work and I am suggesting that there might be some learning from that, not least because of what the Scottish Government seems to have done in terms of joining up the railways to the wider objectives the Scottish Government have. Indeed, in their case of reopening the rail line to the borders which missed every cost benefit analysis going but has still been enormously successful.

Tom Copley AM: There is a bit of an accountability issue. Whenever something goes wrong, like the Thameslink or something like that, the train operators blame Network Rail and Network Rail blames the train operators. At least on London Underground, they come in here and one person sits there, and they cannot really blame anybody else because they run the trains and they maintain the track.

Stephen Joseph (Chief Executive Officer, Campaign for Better Transport): All I am saying is it is possible to create a more accountable and better joined up railway without going for complete and full integration. It is possible to do that. There are plenty of models around.

David Leam (Infrastructure Director, London First): You are thinking about it in exactly the right sort of way. Interestingly, in terms of the strategy, we have a pretty good strategy in London. It is clear who is accountable for what. The biggest challenges and weaknesses and failings are as we get further away; over the past year, where we have seen the biggest of them have been at the Centre, to be perfectly honest. The lack of clarity about precisely who is coordinating and planning and leading, the problems on Thameslink and Northern Rail have been failures of accountability, failures in planning, failures of coordination and a lot of those go right back to the Centre, to be perfectly honest.

I endorse what others have said about part of the answer being a bit of localisation. From a business perspective, we have also supported that. The Mayor's Transport Strategy identifies specific services and that is the right way of thinking of it, not in the big, broad-brush ideological terms but identifying those suburban services; it would make a real difference and would be possible. We are on to it now and it is reassuring that that is more what the Mayor and TfL are talking about now, specific things. I do not hear the Mayor talking about taking over Thameslink as much now which must be a tremendous relief to Mike Brown [MVO, Commissioner of TfL]; be careful what you wish for on those things. That is where the biggest challenges are.

Tom Copley AM: They would need to break up the service, would they not?

David Leam (Infrastructure Director, London First): They would.

Tom Copley AM: Even the Mayor would take part of it, but yes.

David Leam (Infrastructure Director, London First): It is that accountability and that is the right way of thinking of it rather than necessarily the ownership which is where a lot of the public debate goes to. The idea that what we need right now is more central and DfT control over everything is the wrong way of thinking about it. It is the accountability that is the critical thing.

Tom Copley AM: Interestingly, someone has dug up a transcript from three years ago when Peter Hendy was the TfL Commissioner and sat here in front of us saying that he never thought Thameslink was going to work because it was too complicated. You cannot put that many trains to that many destinations through central London.

David Leam (Infrastructure Director, London First): Over-optimism and group thinking, the fear of reporting the truth onwards and centrally. That is what seems to have happened.

Tom Copley AM: Yes.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): We have seen that with Network Rail and other projects like the Barking to Gospel Oak electrification. They are just not admitting that they were behind, and things have not

happened even though you could see it. There is obviously a culture there. Let us move on to look at funding now which has come up.

Tom Copley AM: David, you are London First. You will have some views on this one in particular. Something I am very interested in is the funding infrastructure out of land value capture generally and land value tax specifically. How do you think that London rail improvement should be paid for, particularly now that London is going to be asked for big infrastructure projects, to find more of the money ourselves rather than central Government?

David Leam (Infrastructure Director, London First): The future is a mixed funding package, a bit like Crossrail. There will need to be a continued role for some central Government grant, whether that comes through DfT or Network Rail, and it is important that we continue to make and champion the case for that. We do have to be realistic. That is not going to do all the job. Partly, some additional localisation again might help. The Treasury will always be suspicious of localising further taxational revenue streams but where we can make a convincing case that by doing that we are also strengthening the incentives to go for growth, that there can be benefits around that. Where you are giving London government and London boroughs, if they are directly benefiting from some of these revenue streams, then they have a much stronger incentive to make some of the local choices and trade-offs that would allow that.

Beyond that, as I said, Londoners in different forms are going to have to contribute in some way whether that is through the fares they pay, some of the local taxes or through business taxes. I am not delighted about that but realistically, we have to think of that as part of the package. If we look at cities around the world, that is also what is happening there, whether it is in France or in North America, people are coming to the conclusion that if you want better infrastructure, you have to make a contribution towards it. We should continue to be a bit ambitious and creative about thinking about things that we have not yet solved.

Value capture, in principal, there are good reasons for seeing it as being the right thing to do. Around transport schemes, for example, there are clearly very significant value uplifts that accrue to particular residents, to be perfectly honest, who get windfall uplifts. The challenge we have already had is finding ways of capturing that because, of course, as soon as we start to do that, it becomes very visible to people and they do not feel it to be just. We tend to get political backlashes against that. They just see it suddenly being an additional tax bill for them. There is a gap at the practical level.

Tom Copley AM: As well, we have had the reports in the media saying TfL are going to bring a transport property charge. Presumably that will be something like that which is collected out of an additional band on council tax or something like that or part of the Mayor's precept or something.

David Leam (Infrastructure Director, London First): Typically, you can do these things as annual charges or when transactions take place.

Tom Copley AM: Do you think it is right, as well, because this did not happen on Crossrail, but the authorities outside of London that benefit themselves should also be asked to contribute towards this given that London boroughs will probably be asked to contribute towards this or people living in London?

David Leam (Infrastructure Director, London First): That is exactly right and if you look at Crossrail 2, between a third and 40% of the benefits were accruing to people outside London. The idea that it is only London that should be contributing to this, and when we talk about the London contribution, we should think a bit more as a sort of contribution from the direct beneficiaries there. Certainly, outside London, you run into

some governance challenges inevitably. It is slightly easier to do things on a Greater London Authority (GLA) level as soon as you are looking at adding lots of additional districts. Absolutely, those people who are benefiting outside London should also contribute towards it.

Tom Copley AM: Helena, do you have any thoughts on how we should fund transport infrastructure in the future?

Dr Helena Titheridge (Senior Lecturer, Department of Civil, Environmental and Geomatic Engineering, University College London): I am not a huge expert in this. Just a cautionary note: value capture and passing that on to residents is an obvious way of doing it. It is making sure that given all the pressures of the London housing market, we are not pricing people out of the market and that is not just homeowners. We have to remember that a large proportion of people also rent and anything that is passed on to landlords will be passed down to tenants. It needs to be a carefully thought through structured approach if there is any taxation passed on to residents. I agree; residents should be contributing as part of the opportunity that accessibility affords them of a better transport system, even if they are not direct users.

Tom Copley AM: Thank you.

Stephen Joseph (Chief Executive Officer, Campaign for Better Transport): A starting point for this is to make the point, which has not been where central Government has been, but for rail, there are wider benefits from having a good rail network. For David's [Leam] members, having an opportunity of getting people to work and so on. I say that because the policies of successive governments have been to move the burden, the funding of the railways from taxpayers to fare payers. They have been very successful in that. Fare payers would probably say that they do not feel they can see the benefits from this, particularly at the moment, but there are limits to that. We have gone further than most other countries have done because we have not, I would argue, quantified and reckoned to pay for those wider benefits in terms of reduced congestion and pollution and so on from having a good rail network.

A starting point, which is a good way to approach the spending review next year that David [Leam] referred to, is to make the case that there are wider benefits from having a good rail network. Having said that, in terms of how you pay for that, the Mayor has talked about road user charging. That would be a way, if some of that money went into a better rail network, before a hastily said better orbital bus link into that rail network to recognise the places that do not have railways, like my colleague over there. That does look like a sensible proposition. At the moment, we are faced with a situation where the Government is creating a road fund, Vehicle Excise Duty, none of which will come here, even though £500 million will be raised from London vehicle holders. There is an inherent unfairness. By the way, that is not just a London story; that is reflected elsewhere.

There is road user charging but, as I have said already, there are more localised options. For example, development funding around the interchanges to enable the localisation that we talked about, the workplace parking levy in Hounslow and so on. There are a range of options and TfL are very across this in relation to looking at how other countries, other cities fund their public transport. It is just a matter of seeing what will work.

Tom Copley AM: With road user charging, TfL would potentially be able to borrow against the future revenues in order to fund upfront improvements to services. Just on the international front, do you have any examples you could give us from around the world of where other cities are doing this?

Stephen Joseph (Chief Executive Officer, Campaign for Better Transport): Niall [Bolger] might refer to this, but the French experience has been the best in transport which is employers' payroll taxes that pay for the trams and other things in Strasbourg and the other cities that you mentioned. There are sales taxes, property levies. The San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) system was financed by a property tax within a quarter mile radius of every station. There is plenty of this around in place. Of course, we have it here, the Nine Elms Northern Line extension that is being funded through business rate uplifts and the Crossrail experience as well.

Tom Copley AM: I do not know if you have anything you can send us, if there is a form you could send us of international examples. It might be quite interesting.

Stephen Joseph (Chief Executive Officer, Campaign for Better Transport): We had a survey done a few years ago. I could send you that.

Tom Copley AM: Brilliant; that will be very useful. Thank you.

Niall Bolger (Chief Executive, London Borough of Sutton and Chief Executive Lead for Transport in the South London Partnership): This is a real live issue for us. I will talk about the tram extension and what we are doing about that in a moment, but the issue relating to taxation in terms of relying on the council tax system to enable that to happen is, what my colleagues are saying, a blunt instrument and is very regressive and it will adversely impact on those who are least able to pay. That is specifically a problem in relation to the coincidence between lack of accessibility to transport and poorer communities. The expectation that poorer communities should pay for the regional infrastructure or national infrastructure and through the council tax is problematic.

If you take that forward then, what are the solutions? It has to be some of the examples that Stephen [Joseph] has just mentioned in relation to the land value capture, individual financing mechanisms such as road pricing but also in the context of this. The example from Nottingham, which we have studied quite extensively, for the tram. There was enormous community opposition to it and business opposition to it but the tangible benefits of the tram itself means that that is now going to continue. They are using that mechanism for further infrastructure improvement beyond the tram.

As a consequence of that, it seems a viable mechanism to pay for the city and the wider regions infrastructure requirements as being fairer because part of it is workplace parking, it has a positive impact in terms of the externalities, in terms of discouraging unnecessary car journeys. It controls the use of land for car parking purposes and then becomes virtuous in relation to releasing more land for economic development purposes. Those are the sorts of arguments we need to learn from in terms of making this more acceptable.

In the context of the tram, we have been in discussion with TfL. We very much welcome the commitment of the Mayor's Transport Strategy to investing a third of the cost. A question for us is where the other two-thirds is going to come from. The two boroughs who, to put it bluntly, are a bit skint at the moment, are having to prioritise some of the investment themselves from their own resources but that is not going to make it all. We need to plug the gap in the context of what we need to do in terms of active conversation with the business community residents about how we fund it; importantly, about the trade-offs in relation to development.

The expectation of the development is already imbedded in the tram extension. As I mentioned earlier on, this is about remedial infrastructure. This is not about enhancing an already well-served part of London. This is also going to plug the gap for places that do not have access and really will have public transport accessibility

levels. We will be expecting that discussion, that conversation to be about accepting more growth to enable that remedial infrastructure to be implemented in order that we can also improve it and future proof it for that growth in the communities. It is a really tough discussion. The financing mechanisms that will flow through that need to be dealt with as a public debate with all levels of government within London. It cannot just be the boroughs doing that. It has to be the Mayor, TfL and this Committee having those debates about how we finance it, whatever those mechanisms are.

There is room also for designated areas and so opportunity areas. A growth service example in Croydon, for example, which is using even more resources in relation to infrastructure improvement and we are also examining that for the support from Government in terms of a potential designated area for the London council hub to enable us to pay for some of the infrastructure requirements which is basically the land value capture in terms of bringing forward that investment and allowing us to recycle some of the business rates, expected revenue in order to pre-finance the infrastructure requirements. There are active examples in London at the moment as well as the international ones.

Tom Copley AM: I am glad you mentioned Nottingham. I am a former Nottingham resident and the tram system is brilliant and they have a fantastic bus service. They are one of the only cities that never privatised their buses. They only take public ownership and it shows. They are a really good example of an integrated transport system.

I just wanted to ask finally, before I finish, if any of you have any thoughts on the opportunities and challenges of the new rail networks enhancement pipeline which sounds like a way the Government is trying to get financing for infrastructure without paying for it itself.

Stephen Joseph (Chief Executive Officer, Campaign for Better Transport): There are some opportunities; really the things we have just talked about of looking at the developer and other finance packages to look through that pipeline. We know there have been various proposals made. Of course, there is a Heathrow southern access proposition which fits within that pipeline potentially.

Tom Copley AM: Yes, it is quite interesting.

Stephen Joseph (Chief Executive Officer, Campaign for Better Transport): We will have to see whether any of that can pass Treasury rules about additionality and pay off the public set borrowing because that has always been somebody you rock up to now for a lot of that kind of thing. If they do and find a way around that, then it might be an opportunity for some of the schemes we have talked about to move in that direction.

David Leam (Infrastructure Director, London First): I have a clear view on this, and that is whatever the game is, London should be playing it. If there is a fund, let us find a way, let us make sure we find a couple of things that we can be putting forward to it. The scheme that stands out for me at the moment as most likely to gain some success on that is the Heathrow Southern Rail; we are definitely proponents there. That does look like a scheme that would strengthen public transport access to the railway from the south and would also provide some extra capacity and resilience for commuter rail as well. That would be reliant on the Government agreeing to pay for that track and that track being available over time. It does require some commitment, but it should generate additional traffic that will essentially pay for it. That does look like a good proposition. Beyond that, it looks a bit thin, to be perfectly honest. It would be nice to see some additional proposals beyond that.

Florence Eshalomi AM (Deputy Chair): I am not sure if Tom touched on it, apologies, but just looking at the fact that my family are originally from Nigeria and you cannot get about in Nigeria and Lagos unless you have a car. Sometimes when friends and family come and visit, from America as well or Africa, they comment on how great our transport system is in the UK, not just London, and the fact that you can move about. I know this may be a little bit contentious and divides opinion, but something around a tourism tax would help fund some of that transport infrastructure. Has anyone done any work or research in terms of London First or anyone else?

David Leam (Infrastructure Director, London First): I cannot remember who has done it, but it has been looked at periodically. You are absolutely right. Some other cities do these things. On all these new taxes, the key thing is to look at city competitiveness in the round. On the point of Stephen [Joseph], absolutely. There are places that have payroll taxes and sales taxes. I know various members of ours would be quite nervous about some of those because we probably have relatively higher employment and sales taxes relative to those jurisdictions. It is important to look at it in the round. The general principle of giving city leaders and boroughs more powers and more options; if the Mayor of London had a dozen potential levers to pull in terms of raising additional revenues, then they can think about what is most appropriate in their jurisdiction at any given time, given the economic conditions, given the sorts of schemes you are talking about.

We had previously looked at a hotel tax in the context of Crossrail 2. We felt it did not really fit with that because if you are raising money from that, it has to be going to something that is seen as directly relevant to it. Crossrail 2, hotel tax, they were a bit abstract. The general principle of finding additional powers for city leaders to be able to utilise is a sound one.

Niall Bolger (Chief Executive, London Borough of Sutton and Chief Executive Lead for Transport in the South London Partnership): I believe that was a part of the debate in one of the devolution discussions which was previously held in relation to the example of tourist tax or hotel taxes and visitor taxation which was rejected by the Government. It seems to me as if that is an obvious source of revenue which is marginal in terms of the total cost for a hotel room in London. £1 a night when you are paying £250 is not going to be something which is going to break the bank.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Exactly, quite right. Lovely. That is a great place. Thank you all so much for your contributions this morning. It has been really appreciated.

I know we have asked a couple of you for some further information but, Helena [Titheridge] particularly, we have not touched in as much detail on some of the work you have done around teleworking and teleconferencing and the impact on travel from your research. If there is extra stuff you would like to send us, to feed in, we would be very grateful.

Thank you, Niall [Bolger], Stephen [Joseph], Helena [Titheridge] and David [Leam]. Thank you very much.