



CLLR DAVID HODGE  
LEADER

Richard Berry,  
London Assembly,  
City Hall,  
The Queen's Walk,  
London SE1 2AA

26 June 2015

Dear Mr Berry

**Re: the devolution of national rail services in London**

We welcome the opportunity to comment on the London Assembly Transport Committee's investigation into the devolution of rail services in London.

What is of most importance to Surrey County Council is that residents and businesses using inner suburban rail lines receive a good quality, improving rail service. The exact way in which these services are delivered is important but of less significance.

There is potentially merit in Transport for London (TfL) taking control of some inner suburban rail services that include stops in Surrey. We recognise that better integration with the London rail network could bring benefits to Surrey residents and businesses in terms of more frequent services and better connectivity.

In considering the devolution of rail services in London, we would be keen to ensure that service frequencies are protected in Surrey, fares are kept low and the capacity of services is increased.

Should services be devolved we would expect a formal role in overseeing those lines which service the county. Clear and transparent governance is crucial. This will help to ensure that the voice of passengers outside the capital is more clearly heard. It is important that timetables and stopping patterns reflect the needs of all the communities along the line, balancing the needs of communities in Surrey and in London.

**The Surrey rail network**

Like the London Assembly, the county council has identified several problems with Surrey's rail network. Many services in Surrey are at capacity and suffer from peak time overcrowding. The county has some of the most overcrowded train journeys in England and Wales and some parts of Surrey are poorly served by rail, with poor connections to the capital.

To ensure that the county has the rail infrastructure needed for sustainable economic growth and to identify proposals for improvements that partners in Surrey can plan and deliver, the county has developed a rail strategy.

The Surrey Rail Strategy was published in September 2013 following an extensive consultation process. It sets out the county's rail priorities:

- **Capacity on the South West Main Line**, including the Crossrail 2 scheme;
- **Local orbital rail services** (the North Downs Line);
- **Access to airports** – examined in the Surrey Rail Strategy: Surface Access to Airports study (October 2013).

Crossrail 2 is an example of a scheme where close working with TfL will help to secure an optimal solution for Surrey, with the potential for direct services into the county from London and vice versa.

The Surrey Rail Strategy, and the detailed analysis that underpins it, can be found at [www.surreycc.gov.uk/surreyrailstrategy](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/surreyrailstrategy).

Since the publication of the rail strategy, Surrey County Council has been working with the rail industry to implement it and deliver an improved rail service for Surrey residents.

We hope that working with TfL as it seeks to ensure a better service for those that live and work in the capital will also help us to deliver our rail priorities and ultimately deliver a better service for Surrey residents.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Hodge', enclosed within a large, loopy circular flourish.

David Hodge  
Leader of Council