

**East West Rail Consortium**  
**14<sup>th</sup> June 2018**

## **Agenda Item 10.2: Oxfordshire Rail Connectivity Study – Proposed Funding Contribution**

**Recommendation: It is recommended that the meeting:**

- a) Approves a contribution of £25,000 from Consortium Funds as match funding towards the Study.**

### **1. Background and Context**

- 1.1 The previous paper set out the progress and latest position on this study. It included reference to £300,000 being made available by the Department for Transport towards this study, contingent upon the equivalent amount of match funding being secured, i.e. total study funding would be £600,000.
- 1.2 The report referred to a separate report going to the Oxfordshire Growth Board on 11<sup>th</sup> June, which includes a proposal for funding of up to £200,000 from the Growth Board towards this study. Subject to what is agreed at that meeting, this would leave a shortfall of at least £100,000 to be found from other partners.
- 1.3 The report and draft Study remit also referred to the concept of a funding Shareholder, i.e. that direct funding contributions from partners would secure a level of involvement in and influence over the study direction and management.

### **2. Proposal, including Funding and Financing**

- 2.1. The report and draft Study remit also refer to approaches being made to potential funding partners, including train operators, England's Economic Heartland and the East West Rail Consortium, hence this report.
- 2.2. It is important that the Consortium and the overall East West Project has a strong voice in this study. As previous agenda items illustrate, there are some significant issues over East West Rail phase 2 timetabling through Oxford to be resolved, alongside the timing of infrastructure provision essential for East West Rail, which is proposed as part of the Oxford station phase 2 works.
- 2.3. Beyond that, it is critical that aspirations for operating the central section from 2027 are aligned with the required infrastructure provision on the rail corridor through Oxford. Previous work undertaken by the Rail industry has indicated

further significant infrastructure upgrades on this corridor would not be required until 2033. It is therefore important that the opportunities and requirements for later phases of East West Rail are fully integrated into the study work, so that a clear view can be taken as to what investment is required to enable different East West Rail service patterns and operating scenarios.

- 2.4. Previous reports to this Board have also identified the opportunity the Consortium has to consider future service requirements, wider linkages and additional connectivity which could arise from infrastructure provision on the East West Rail corridor (for example, the potential in the future to extend services west to Swindon and Bristol). This can also be initially considered as part of the Rail Connectivity Study work.
- 2.5. The England's Economic Heartland Alliance Strategic Transport Forum (STF) has already identified East West Rail as one of its strategic priorities. A funding contribution is also proposed to be sought from STF, to be considered at its meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> June.
- 2.6. Bringing all this together, a funding contribution from the Consortium of £25,000 (to be matched by an equivalent one from the STF) would enable the work to be taken forward, and give the Consortium a share in the study, with a greater ability to ensure that East West Rail is at the heart of developing the study.

### **Next steps**

- 3.1 As per report to agenda item 10.1

**June 2018**



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