



Light Rail (UK)

All Party Parliamentary Light Rail Group

House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA
Ref: LR Applrg Parliamentary Tea v. 2012

"The past we inherit, the future we build"



That is why there is a process, if you are investing £200m into these schemes you have to make sure it is the right answer. I think measuring not just the costs and benefits but looking at the questions would more people live in different places, would more people set up more businesses, would we regenerate the area? Harrogate does not need regeneration but plenty of other places around Leeds do. You can argue this about the station coming with HS2 and what that is going to do to regenerate southeast Leeds which has been pretty derelict. So you might fancy a tram for people from Harrogate but that money might be better spent building a new garden city in southeast Leeds alongside the HS2 station. So I would suggest that people working in those communities need to have a more creative outlook. I am going to be looking at the cost benefit side and whether we are doing it properly but communities need to come up with their own funding for these projects, whether it is through a work place parking levy or a bond against future revenues, and I am keen that we change the law so that those local communities do have those powers. Whether they then choose to use them is a matter for local councils, council leaders and local newspapers.

John Leech then thanked the speakers and closed the meeting at 17:05.

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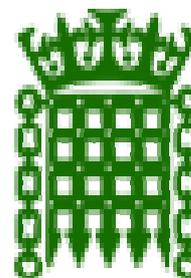
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Mary Creagh. I do not know. At the moment that line is in the pipeline for electrification. I do not have an opinion because first of all electrification will have to happen. Whether that happens in control period five that is by 2019 is a moot point and is down to Network Rail and their cost-benefit analysis. It is not for me to direct Network Rail how to spend that money on the railway and I am not clear whether having a TramTrain on Harrogate-Leeds would be an advantage. Would you have to have more intermediate stops, are there enough people coming in from Harrogate, is the traffic coming from Harrogate or suburban Leeds or other parts of the motorway network? I have not done the analysis.

Mel Reuben. It is coming from Harrogate, it is packed, and you can never get on a train. At all, the rolling stock is outdated the whole train system needs looking at.

Mary Creagh. Northern Rail? The most expensive railway franchise that we run. 8% to Abellio-Serco joint venture each year, nice work if you can get it.

John Leech. That franchise was let on a zero growth basis

Ian Souter. As in so many aspects of life, local transport has no one best solution. The car has been tried as the universal solution and it does not work. May I appeal for a greater depth of understanding on how to effectively transfer people between modes?

Allan Dare. My comment is about how long it takes us to do things. To give an example, in 1982 I was working for the Railways Board and proposals for converting the Rochdale railway line to tram passed over my desk. It opened last year. Thirty years to do a very simple job. So is there anything which can be done to get through the bureaucratic process? I am afraid the attitude in certain quarters at the moment is: the answer is no, what was the question?

Mary Creagh. You had privatisation in 1993; you have had twenty years of privatisation. I am certainly interested in what we can do to make the railways better but I do not want to do anything to upset the services. I think it is absurd that on the East Coast we have a directly operated railway, state railway that is unable to bid for its own franchise. A franchise that will have returned over £1bn to the taxpayer by the time it is put back out to the private sector, if indeed it is put back to the private sector, which is a different set of issues. It is no good coming in with a solution in isolation they all have to have a business case behind them. It might be that we need to look at how we measure the business case so there is a cost benefit thing which says let us have the Leeds-Harrogate train running as a tram. That might be what we want to do and we might save ourselves £175m on a trolleybus. But that is only useful if you live in Harrogate not if you live in Headingley unless there is a station to get on in Headingley. So a solution for one is not necessarily the solution for everybody.

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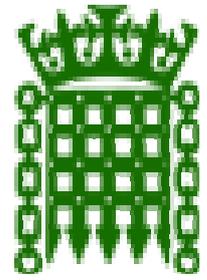
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development and civilised living is the way in which transport and development are combined, whereas in Britain they are seen as separate and funded separately. I wonder what thought you are giving to how one could get integration and that relates back to the garden city idea that you mentioned.

Mary Creagh Andrew Adonis, who was Secretary of State for Transport, is doing a growth review for us and we have had a JAR and infrastructure report as well. Any large infrastructure such as power stations which we are very poor at delivering as a nation is way down the track. I think that getting that modal shift is important and you only do that if you achieve what has been achieved in London. It is so reliable it is so frequent and it is so fast that why on earth wouldn't it? I have been to Nottingham and I spoke to a gentleman who lived in a village outside Nottingham and who was adamant that he would not leave his car because he would have to walk a mile to the tram stop. A mile is nothing, a twenty minute stroll. It is a very London centric point of view. In Wakefield I don't walk a mile, I get in my car. I am always going somewhere else or I have got the kids or I have got shopping. There is a suburban challenge and the best example is Croydon, that is a suburb, but people are out of their cars there because of the light rail. We do have to get people out of their cars but the public transport has got to be brilliant before people will make that change.

Elaine Greenwood. Given that we know that light rail brings a great deal of regeneration, why is it so difficult to get light rail developed in this country? Why is Leeds having a trolleybus system when it quite clearly a city that could so benefit from light rail? Look at the headaches we have gone through and all the money that has been wasted. If we just accept that yes it is going to be a lot of money up front but ultimately it is going to be absolutely fabulous, why can't we just get on and do it?

Mary Creagh. I think people are nervous of change. Outside London you do not have politicians who are in post for eight years at a stretch so you might have two years of Labour, two years of Tory, a Lib-Dem in for a year. I think the political inconsistency at local government level can be difficult. People might want the outcome but they don't want to lose their trees, they don't want to lose one or two traffic lanes, they are worried that congestion will get worse. At the end of the day I think it is about political leadership. Some of it is a problem with Whitehall and the fact that the process takes such a long time and it is all directed from the centre.

Mel Reuben (LRTA). Talking about New Generation Transport for Leeds, the Leeds-Harrogate railway line is used by thousands of people, would it be better if the money was spent on running that as a TramTrain? It would more or less parallel NGT.

What is the Labour Party's view?

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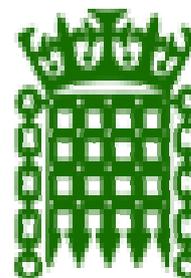


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I have talked about Salford Quays, three thousand new jobs, the benefit of the light rail system. It is not cheap; there have been criticisms of the expense of light rail networks. During the course of this parliament there are cuts of £9 billion to the overall transport budget, a not insignificant amount of money coming out of transport over these five years.

One of our big ideas in terms of reforming the economy is to have more devolution in transport. I talked about the ability of local authorities to potentially revenue-raise, but also to bring communities closer to the decision-making about their rail and tram systems. I do not think it will be my job, if I am Secretary of State for Transport, to be making those decisions, come 2015, and, if I am doing it, I want to be doing it in partnership with the communities that they serve. We want to make sure we have that devolution that we get bus regulation right, that is a key priority and will help the tram systems already in place to do better, and that we get smart ticketing. I want to create a less static and regulatory framework that will make it easier for communities to develop light rail services and I look forward to working with everybody in this room to make sure that happens.

Questions

Susan Evans (Alstom) One comment about Nottingham and funding, they are using a Work Place Parking Levy which charges employers for parking spaces. I am very much in agreement with the devolution of decision making, but do you think there is a role for government in giving ideas for guidance where an authority might think about a road or a bus but not about a light rail solution?

Mary Creagh. I think any rail or light rail system only works in areas of high concentrations of people. I do not think you can ask car drivers to make space on the roads in a small city like Wakefield with 70,000 people, where people are travelling in from across a 240 square mile area, it would completely disrupt patterns. We do have the East Coast Mainline to get people in and out of Leeds. So you need to be looking strategically at the eight to ten big cities. I am looking at areas of population growth as well, so where is it that these new garden cities are planned – could be Kent could be Essex no one is telling us. We have to have transport built in at an early time. I did know about the work Place Levy but I am not clear how much it is raising. The DfT grant will still probably be 90% of it, but it is good because we need lots of these types of creative solutions so communities have a menu that is going to work well for them in their local area.

Nicholas Falk. You mentioned shifting people out of their cars rather as an after thought; it was not one of your three objectives. I wondered what thought you were giving to getting changes in the suburban areas where most people in Britain tend to live where there is often a reluctance to using the bus but where trams would be seen as a superior alternative. It seems that one of the continental keys to growth and

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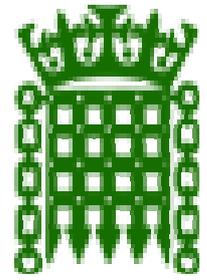


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That is a huge challenge. It comes down to how we regulate our buses but it also comes down to the fact that in Crossrail, which was planned and begun under a Labour government, we allowed London as a city to raise its own community infrastructure levy. We ended up with businesses campaigning to be allowed to pay more tax so that they could get the public transportation systems that would allow more people, in a heavily populated city that was growing by seventy to eighty thousand a year, to come into their city to spend money on their businesses, and the local authority saying we will give you the overage on any property excess business rates we create during that time, and you had Transport for London borrowing against its future income stream. So you had three ways that Transport for London had of putting together infrastructure. I think one of the issues around extension of light rail is always about who pays for it and that is particularly difficult at a time of austerity whichever government is in power post-2015. So I think that we need some of the creative thinking that has gone on in London and it will only happen if light rail is fed back into these regenerative, these home building, these business building arguments, it will not happen just because it is a good thing. That is a key message for you to take away. Of course, if you shift people on to trams and out of their cars, you are freeing up road space for other users.

I think we need to look at integration One of the issues I talked to people in Nottingham about is the difficulty they are having with through ticketing and I understand from Keolis that there is European legislation that says you cannot have through ticketing on trams and buses because it is anti-competitive, so they have seen their ridership go down. There has to be a way round it and I am going to find it. The way that we get more people using more transport is by having smart ticketing and that is how you drive down the costs to the operators and to the users. We have to use technology much more smartly. Technology helps us create capacity, not every capacity increase will come about from hard infrastructure some will come from use of smart technology.

I am pleased to see the TramTrain pilot in Sheffield will get the go-ahead from 2015; £58m there. There are many in this room who have been advocating the benefits of this technology and I look forward to seeing how that works.

A big day on HS2 tomorrow with the Supreme Court decision on the Environmental Impact Assessment due in the morning, but, as we look towards having a properly integrated transport system with HS2, we were very keen that HS2 was not just seen as a stand-alone system but was integrated with the full rail network but also that it was integrated into walking, cycling and other means of public transport to connect in and from those hubs. I think that is absolutely vital.

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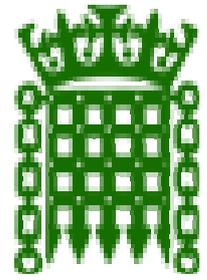
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is due in some part to improvements in transportation and public transportation in particular. So, if you build public transport, you are creating the spine that will be the skeleton of new cities. That is how we need to think about transport.

One of the problems with transport is that it tends to be captured by people who are very interested and very good at one particular type, cars; trams, trains, buses, and they are very interested in the thing itself rather than in the purpose of the thing. I am interested in the purpose of the thing as well as the thing itself that is my big picture.

I also wanted to talk about the environment. There has been a big issue around the government's plans for the second generation of managed motorways. This is something we started in government in 2006 to create extra capacity on congested motorways for a limited amount of time by allowing hard shoulder running. Son/daughter of managed motorways is to permanently increase the motorway by having permanent running on the hard shoulder. The government is now finding that this simplistic and very cheap solution is problematic from an air pollution point of view, so that are reducing the speed limit on a section of the M1 by Rotherham and Sheffield. Why is this important? Because air pollution really matters, it adds a huge health burden to the national economy and it shortens the life expectancy of the country by about six months, which, aggregated across sixty million people, means that an awful lot of people are dying in their fifties who should not be as a direct result of air pollution. They have asthma and lung disease that is exacerbated by air pollution. Obviously light rail offers a compelling opportunity to contribute towards reducing our carbon emissions and we are going to have to look very seriously at our transportation system to see how it meets our Climate Change Act obligations. I also understand that the steel wheels on trams offer one fifth of the rolling resistance of the pneumatic tyre, but you all knew that. So you need less power; plus braking systems which feed back the energy into the system. Manchester Metrolink, powered entirely by green energy, leads the way here.

There are issues around the cost, at £25m per mile it is an expensive solution. I think we should be looking at how, and Andrew Adonis is looking at this for us, we can get cities to grow more of their own infrastructure. One of the great successes of Labour's time in office is Transport for London. Think what the capital's transport system was fifteen years ago, bus ridership falling and PPP in its final throes. Ken Livingstone came in as mayor and did an enormous amount for the capital's infrastructure, bringing in one of the most politically difficult things, the congestion charge, and putting that money into buses. Bus ridership went up and we have a public transport system in London which is one of the most complex and highly functioning systems in the world. The question is: how can we get everybody outside London up to the level of the best?

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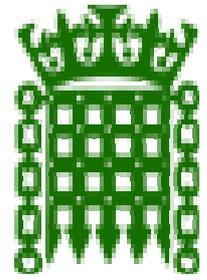
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3rd speaker

Mary Creagh MP (Shadow Secretary of State for Transport)

My experience of trams is limited to when I lived for four years in Brussels. The last tram left my constituency, Wakefield, in 1932. They are certainly something that is seen as from the past, but the question is: what role do they have to play in the future of transport? We see more people travelling on light rail and tram systems than ever before, 222m passenger journeys on our eight light rail systems. That is about 2.5% of all public transport journeys in Great Britain.

I have three priorities from a Labour perspective of what we want our transport system to do. The first thing is to make sure we keep a lid on the cost of transport. What we have seen, particularly in the last four years, is inflation busting fare rises, up to 9% in some years, and that is very difficult for people at a time when wages are frozen. The second thing is that we have to have an accessible transport system, and I do not just mean that from a disability point of view. It has got to be affordable in the sense that young people can get on it. It has got to be accessible in the sense that bus routes have to exist. It is no good giving pensioners bus passes if there is no bus to go on and we are seeing a reduction of buses taking place across the country, particularly in county authorities outside metropolitan areas where bus routes are heavily subsidised and that subsidy is being withdrawn by government and those services are being cut. The third thing and I think this is a key area, which we were not always brilliant at in government and certainly this government has failed in a fairly high order, is to make sure transport plays its part not just in and of itself. Transport is how we build the country, it is how we build places where people want to live, it is how we build connections between people, it is how we regenerate our towns and cities, and it is how we bring growth outside London and into the regions. So, for me, transport has a part to play in national economic life. We need to develop the skills we need for transportation systems, we need to look at the way we order things like rolling stock, trains and trams, so that we have the skills we need to make sure they are built in Britain rather than always going abroad to buy things, we need to make sure that we get the skill that we need and we plan properly for the infrastructure that we need.

I think there is a bigger story to tell about how we grow our communities and how we create places where people want to live or start a business. If we think about the successes in light rail and trams, we think about the Docklands Light Railway and the massive regeneration that that brought to the East End of London, and the East side of London is one of the places that is growing incredibly fast compared to the rest of the country, and I pay tribute to Michael Heseltine and his vision for what transportation and regeneration can do for a community. In Manchester, with the whole regeneration of Salford Quays, all of that transformation

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Jim Harkins (Light Rail (UK)). This group took a number of MPs to Kassel to look at it and they were very impressed and this is what has led to the so-called TramTrain trial. We were able to bring a bit of pressure.

Ian Ambrose. A lot of people aspire to a TramTrain system but they do not come and talk to the right people in Network Rail. Unless you engage with us it is not going to happen.

Jim Harkins. On TramTrain and TrainTram there is a wide spectrum and there is a danger that we think just of the Sheffield style but there are variants all the way through. The biggest example of TrainTram is Manchester Metrolink and that is a good method of introducing trams into cities. The Abbey line would have been an ideal one to bring the TrainTram into the city itself and this is hopefully what the Sintropher conference will bring out.

Dave Halliday (STRAIL (UK)). Comparing continental practice with regard to track maintenance for light rather than heavy rail, do we need for instance ballast tamping on light rail track?

Paul Griffiths. Evaluating continental practice would be exactly what we are looking for.

David Walmsley (UKTram, LRTA). Jim mentioned the other possibilities for TramTrain and there is a perception that we should always be looking at running together with heavy rail but there are alternatives: you could run trams on parallel lines, or at a different time of day. There is a whole range of different things right up to the case where you convert the railway line into a tram line.

Dave Halliday. One thing that struck me about Kassel was that the TramTrains are entering the main station intermixed with trains rather than being outside on the street as they will be in Sheffield.

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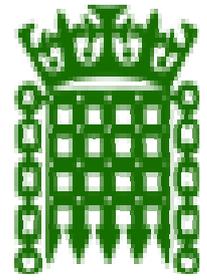
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Ian Ambrose (Network Rail). It occurs to me, hearing the debate about the availability of vehicles to test ideas on, there is currently something like thirty spare trams in Manchester and there will be sixteen spare ones in Birmingham very shortly. There is fleet replacement going on and we are considering in Network Rail extending the IPMU (i.e. sticking a battery on an EMU) to sticking a battery on a tram. So why not have a think about whether there are other things you would like to stick on an old tram that we can play with on one of our test tracks.

Paul Griffiths. Yes we are looking at the possibility that we can make these vehicles available to do such tests

Jim Harkins (Light Rail (UK)). It strikes me that it would be relatively inexpensive to put some form of diesel motor in a Manchester T68 so that it would be able to run from, say, Altrincham out to Chester. If we can get to Chester, the TrainTram, as opposed to TramTrain, will open up the whole network there. Is this the sort of thing you would consider?

Paul Griffiths. It is exactly the sort of idea we are looking for.

Peter Stonham (New Transit/LTT). There are a lot of interesting things happening in the UK but there are a lot of parallel interesting things happening in Europe where things were done twenty or thirty years ago that we are now trying to catch up on. We have been working with the European Sintropher project, which is an international comparative investigation of improving rail services by new technology. We have an event at the end of February in Brussels with a European exchange of thinking on these issues, which might bring people up to speed on things they are doing overseas. Two days: one day is about the overall thinking on urban transport provision and the role of rail and the other is about the technologies that you can harness to make systems more effective.

Jim Harkins (Light Rail (UK)). With regard to TramTrain a lot of things are happening with Centro. Can you talk to us about that?

Paul Griffiths. I think TramTrain is of interest to all the PTEs and they all have their aspirations. At GMPTF fifteen years ago we had TramTrain projects ready to go, so it has been around a long time and we just need something to unlock the blockage and hopefully the trial does that

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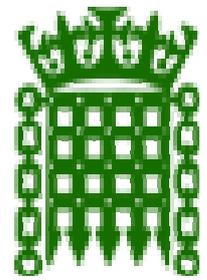


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"The past we inherit, the future we build"



Elaine Greenwood (Bombardier). We have a massive test track at Derby, so I think we could organise that quite easily.

Jim Harkins (Light Rail (UK)). Would it be eligible for funding?

Paul Griffiths. Yes. It is not just about small businesses; it is open to anyone, businesses, universities or individuals.

Nicholas Falk (URBED - Urbanism, Environment and Design). Given the amount of tram lines in Britain, such a small proportion of what is available in Europe, should people be going to look at what is happening in other countries and learn from that? Are not the obstacles more organisational than technical? In other words, I wonder whether technology is just seen in terms of hardware or whether it can also be about software and the way things are done. I am thinking for example of the replacement of utilities which seems to be a large part of the cost of installing a tram system

Paul Griffiths. The DfT are of course reviewing the question of utilities piecemeal so we need to see what will come of that. It does not need to be physical it could be about software systems or systems more generally. There is always a case about transferring things from the continent and if we can help in making that transfer easier then that is something we can think about. A lot of the problems of bringing in innovation are about the procurement process. We stick so religiously in this country to the legislation. Therefore, if as a promoter I am looking to buy a large package costing many tens of millions then I cannot specify down to the level of this particular budget over here. So to get that budget through I have to try and convince Balfour Beatty or Carillion or somebody that that is the thing to do but they are not going to do it because they are warranting it. This is a way round that procurement process so we can get some of those ideas and get them tried and tested.

Nicholas Falk. Other countries do not seem to be so constrained by EU regulations as we are.

Mary Bonar (LRTF). I wonder if just advertising on UKTram website is going to open the competition up sufficiently and where else it could be promulgated.

Paul Griffiths. That was an omission on my part it is also going on various other websites and the TSB will be putting it out to a range of industries.

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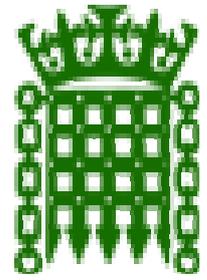
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Sam Hargreaves. Is this the first time a project such as this has been done by anyone in the industry or was it inspired by a project in a different sector?

Paul Griffiths. It is certainly something that has worked in other sectors. The Technology Strategy Board has been driving through various things like this, in the automobile industry, in battery technology. All sorts of schemes like this have been done previously. As far as I am aware it the first time in light rail.

Sam Hargreaves. Is this going to be a one-off or something that might be done every say five years?

Paul Griffiths. Hopefully we can get more money to extend this project further. It will depend on the success of this one. The more entries we get, the more good ideas we get, the more we can drive innovation, get new projects to market, make light rail more affordable in the future. Then it is a virtuous circle.

Jim Harkins (Light Rail (UK)). I have spoken about the smaller schemes but I would like to ask a question of the bigger manufacturers. Is this the sort of thing that would encourage you to bring over one of your catenary-free vehicles to try it somewhere?

Elaine Greenwood (Bombardier). It is assumed that we have these vehicles just knocking around but we tend not to. We own the vehicles during manufacture but as soon as they are sold and gone it is down to the operator. I am not saying no but it would be up to the operator whether they had a vehicle available and that is not always an easy thing.

Jim Harkins (Light Rail (UK)). This happens in the bus world where they have demonstrators.

Elaine Greenwood (Bombardier). Yes but these are buses costing a few hundred thousand not trams costing a million. Then there is the question of insurance, liability if it goes wrong, it is more complicated.

Susan Evans (Alstom). Looking at this from another angle, maybe it would be possible to take the device whatever it is to one of our test tracks, not necessarily in the UK. It would need some working through. I can see a number of problems but I think we could make something happen and I hope UK operators would be keen to help

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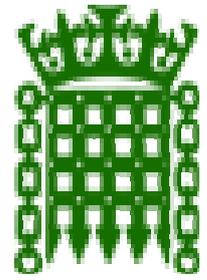
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Susan Evans (Alstom) A lot of the Technology Strategy Board programmes have to be match-funded, is this fully funded?

Paul Griffiths. I am pleased to say that it is fully funded. We are also working to try and improve on the £3m that we have got.

Jim Harkins (Light Rail (UK)). We have a whole range of folk here from consultants through operators to manufacturers. How do the smaller folk take part? Say I had an idea on track formation and wanted to demonstrate for instance the Portland method. What are the mechanisms for that because I have not got the track; I have not got a tram?

Paul Griffiths. That is exactly what we are trying to overcome. You could come forward, go and talk to your friendly local consultant to be your third party partner, put in an application and we will, through the scheme, provide somewhere to run a tram, get it tested and get it to market. It is as simple as that.

Jim Harkins (Light Rail (UK)). That sounds one good breakthrough. What is driving it from UKTram - is this one of Norman's initiatives?

Paul Griffiths. I suppose it is to some extent, it certainly has its gestation in Green light for light rail. But UKTram is keen to see light rail extensions and to take forward this scheme to try to proceed more cost effectively because that's the way we shall get more funding.

Jim Harkins (Light Rail (UK)). Some of you may be aware that we have been trying to promote a low cost circulator in Dundee and making heavy weather with it because the powers-that-be prefer buses. We wanted the Aruba method of construction which has brought it in below £20m for about 2.5 miles. How would we get some dosh on that?

Paul Griffiths. Clearly we cannot fund the whole project. But if here are methods you want try, Aruba or anywhere else, to demonstrate that it does work in a UK setting, then we could help to fund that and we could help with the transfer of the technology to the UK market - getting it trialled here, getting the safety sign-off and all that kind of activity that often stops schemes going ahead.

Jim Harkins (Light Rail (UK)). We have come up with this low-cost hydrogen-type vehicle. Are there operators prepared to put this beast on the rails?

Paul Griffiths. It needs to be done in a staged approach but for the hydrogen vehicle we could find a location and pay for it to be tested in a location where it was deemed safe until it could be proved so.

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Through UKTram over the last twelve to eighteen months we have been talking to the Technology Strategy Board and they put forward funding to help drive innovation and they, through the SBRI (Small Business Research Institute), have provided £3 million to take forward a demonstrator competition.

We want to focus on two challenges in the industry. Logically we are trying to focus on areas of high cost as things stand. That is about track form and about energy, how you get it to the tram how the tram uses it. By focusing on those two areas we can bring forward a whole lot of ideas not just in the light rail industry but more widely and there will be a lot that can be transferred across to heavy rail. You can read the detail of this on the UKTram website.

If you have an innovation, or you know somebody who has, you can apply through the UKTram website. There will then be a selection process and we shall select a number of schemes which will go forward to a feasibility study stage. Those ideas that successfully complete that stage will then move on to the demonstration stage. We will find a location on a UK light rail system where we can actually trial the idea and prove that it works and gives value, then, hopefully, move it towards the market if it is successful. That is the plan of what we are doing.

In terms of the key dates: the competition was launched last week; there is a deadline on 21 February to register and 7 March to submit ideas. We then have a pretty tight period to get some assessment done and then on to the feasibility stage. The way to apply is on the UKTram website where you can register your details and complete your application

So please pass the message on to whoever has got good ideas out there whether they are in the rail industry or not.

Questions

G. Brough (Centre for Economics and Business Research). What is the function of the TSB [Technology Strategy Board] in the project?

Paul Griffiths. They are the source of our funding and they will also be working with UKTram in terms of the process of the competition, particularly the administration.

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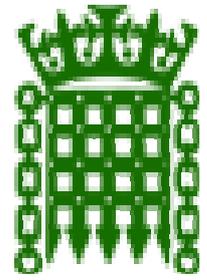


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"The past we inherit, the future we build"



2nd speaker

Paul Griffiths (Director for Midland Metro, Centro).

This was accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation which can be found on the APPLRG website at???

<http://www.applrguk.co.uk/presentations>

I want to talk today with my UKTram hat on about innovation in light rail. We have just launched a scheme last week called Low impact light rail. To put this in context, going back two years now the report Green light for light rail came out from DfT and one of Norman Baker's drivers from that was affordability: If you want light rail, make it cheaper and more cost effective. In order to do that we need to be sure we are bringing forward new technology and innovation. We do not spend the amount on innovation that some other industries do. By way of comparison in the aerospace industry, a big industry in the UK with a turnover of £53 billion, 7.8% of their spend is on research and development. In the rail industry, worth about £7 billion in the UK, the research spend is one tenth of that of aerospace. As a result all the innovation that we would like to see does not come forward. The Rail Industry Association has been working hard on a scheme for the last couple of years on innovation which has done a fantastic amount. It is a really good scheme, bringing together all sorts of companies, not just from the rail industry but from other places, which helps to cross-fertilise. This has helped to kick off various other things, one of which is, through Future Railway, the Enabling Innovation Team. They are very much focussed on the heavy rail side of the industry but they have tens of millions to spend. They have a number of competitions ongoing, one for example on improving the aesthetics of overhead line, and there is money to help develop these things and help businesses take them forward.

But that is all heavy rail biased. In the light rail sector we are a lot smaller and we have not seen anything specific but that is what we are now changing. I think that part of the reason why people have struggled to develop innovation in light rail has been lack of consistency of workload. In the recognised innovation development model, the TRL model, there is a thing called the valley of death where people have good ideas and start to take them forward but then cannot quite find the funding to take them to the point where they can get to market. I think that is probably where a lot of good ideas in light rail end up. We do not want to let that innovation die and go to waste and therefore we are trying to push things forward.

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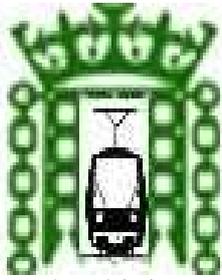
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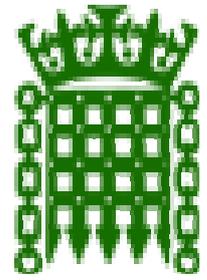
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Tim Bilby. In Sheffield we have put on feeder services and we have a multimodal ticket under the Travel Master brand, the tram, train and bus operators are participating in that. There has been a growth in bus partnerships in Sheffield that you may be aware of. The Citywide ticket that is available on bus and tram has taken a real amount of growth over the e last year. There was always an equivalent ticket available but there has been a lot of promotion of it over the last twelve to fifteen months and the volume of people buying the ticket to allow them to change between bus and tram has really grown. It is the flexibility of not worrying about which bus, which number or which operator, they can just jump on any tram or bus that has been a key part of passenger growth.

Ian Souter. That is good news

Colin Robey (UKTram). It is good to hear somebody make the comment that the real benefits of TramTrain are in urbanisation, because at UKTram we have been sitting in meetings for the last twelve months listening to how people would like TramTrain to replace the Kyle of Lochalsh and every other social railway. The real benefits come from freeing up access to city centres like Birmingham New Street. The key is how you develop the technology to run trams on lightly used rail routes rather than TramTrains, because we know that TramTrains have not proved to be quite as cheap an option as we thought they might be but if we had a system where we utilised trams for access to heavy rail than that is a winner and that is when we get development

Rachid Meftah (Vossloh Rail Vehicles). TramTrains are more expensive in Sheffield, the first such project in the UK. If we take other projects like Karlsruhe or Alicante, we can see that the TramTrains are not so expensive - the same order of price as trams.

Jim Harkins Light Rail (UK) The DfT last year issued figures for the number of tram passengers carried and it was 244m. That is an awful lot of folk for very few vehicles. As far as TramTrain is concerned there are variations: TramTrain and TrainTram. At the last count we have estimated some 60 to 80 possibilities for TramTrain and TrainTram which would give somewhere in the region of another 50-60m passengers per year once it developed. The project is rather an ancient experiment as TramTrain is tried and tested. We continually get this from government: it is not invented here. It is no longer an experiment.

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Tim Bilby. There are four constituent parts to the PTE, Doncaster, Barnsley, Rotherham and Sheffield, and Sheffield is seen traditionally as the only beneficiary of the tram system, whereas all four areas effectively subsidised the original installation. So the TramTrain is seen as the first opportunity to extend the system directly to another member of that group.

John Leech. Hopefully that will have a knock on impact of gaining more support across the whole PTE area.

[Unknown questioner]. What is the target date for opening the TramTrain?

Tim Bilby. Late 2015 or early 2016.

Elaine Greenwood (Bombardier). One of the reasons extensions might be difficult is because your trams are among the best in the world but they are unbelievably bespoke and expensive. So if you do any more extensions, unless they are significant extensions, you are looking at a significant amount of money for a small amount of vehicles.

Tim Bilby. You are quite right, the vehicles are very complex

Susan Evans (Alstom). What is the plan for communicating progress of the TramTrain project as it goes on?

Tim Bilby. Yes, there is a TramTrain project board which will be putting out information as soon as it becomes available.

Ian Souter (Independent consultant). The difficulties we have had in Sheffield and elsewhere are the migration of population. A tram is justified by being able to carry people in bulk and you can get back a bit of bulk by transferring passengers. You alluded to that in your opening remarks. Can you say anything more on the level to which the public are prepared to transfer between modes for the one journey?

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Sam Hargreaves (Office of Rob Ffello MP). How do you feel the TramTrain project is going to affect urban transport development in the next twenty years?

Tim Bilby. I think the TramTrain project is very important for the cities in the UK which have a tram system. If it shows that TramTrain can operate in the UK as it does on the continent then it will allow greater integration of traditional heavy rail point to point services with the more local aspects for tram systems drawing people into the network. I think TramTrain will be shown to work in the UK and can then be developed on a city by city basis.

John Leech. I was interested to hear that your concession is 27 years, quite a long concession. What impact does that have on Stagecoach's role in development of future lines and expansion of the network?

Tim Bilby. I think the key here is our working partnership with South Yorkshire PTE. We have a keen interest in developing the network a take part in discussions on long term strategy

Clive Betts MP (Labour, Sheffield South East)

The TramTrain project is a national pilot. My concern is how long it is taking. It was ten years ago that the idea was first mooted, another three years to have the pilot and assess it, then maybe we will start doing what other countries have been doing for thirty or forty years. It is an awful long time. There are a lot of underused heavy rail lines up and down the country and the advantage is you can get services off there and into the city centre and connect with people. We have heard all the good things about Sheffield Supertram and people will get out of their cars and on to a tram who would not get on to a bus. But the actual route is the same as it was twenty years ago when the tram was first built; we have not moved on, whereas the Manchester system has been expanded. There does not seem to be quite the same pressure in Sheffield from the politicians, the PTE or the tram operator to make that happen.

John Leech. I do not know how it is in South Yorkshire, but certainly in Greater Manchester there has been absolute political buy-in by all the parties and all local authorities. For example, Stockport has not so far directly benefited from the tram yet all political parties on Stockport Council were fully behind the network being expanded. That is one of the most positive things to come out of Greater Manchester that it has been fully supported by all local authorities and by all political parties. I do not know whether that is the case in South Yorkshire or not.

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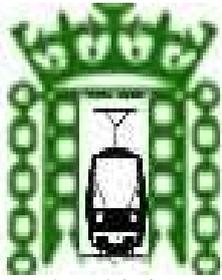
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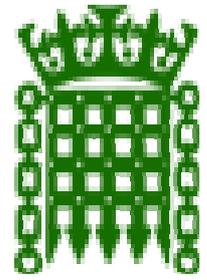


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Questions

John Leech. You mentioned a number of major destinations such as Meadowhall and Sheffield Arena. Which of those were there before the tram and which came after as a direct result of the tram?

Tim Bilby. The ones I mentioned are on the Meadowhall line and came after the tram system was there. It is difficult to say whether they were a specific result of the tram system but it must have played a part in the decision of where they were to be. The route along Attercliffe Road was very industrial and as that industrialisation moved away there was the opportunity for organisations to install there. Obviously the tram system, the ease of transport in and out and the avoidance of traffic congestion was a key part of organisations' decisions on location.

Reg Harman (Interfaces Consultancy). When we put a tram proposal forward in 1974, it was going through dense areas of existing and future development. On all three of the arms of the tramway as it was built there were areas actually flattened as the tram was being built so there was a huge loss of the tram being part of an inner residential area of opportunities. On the Halfway line the development appeared only in little bits on top of the hill with the tram below it, not easily accessible. The extent to which this has lost out, I suspect, is absolutely huge and it is a great pity nobody has really tried to assess this, unless the speaker wants to tell me otherwise. Tramways are a tool of development and I think we are still at the moment failing to take this thoroughly into account. We need to learn from other countries, particularly the French, why they have such integrated planning, why they produce the results they do when the operators are not necessarily any better. My own thoughts on this appeared in last November's Tramways and Urban Transit.

Tim Bilby. It is quite true and particularly on the Herdings Park branch where flats were demolished weeks or months before the tram opened. This was an unfortunate result of the timescale and the time between planning and opening. We cannot change what is there but we have managed to increase the number of people using the trams.

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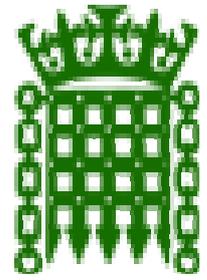
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environmental benefits of the tram system and Sheffield benefits from those. Sheffield is traditionally a dirty place with the industrialisation of the area, although now reducing, the major motorway artery close to it, the airport that is quite near, so the tram system has no doubt helped in terms of reducing emissions.

In terms of future developments of the tram, we have three additional vehicles committed from Vossloh, along with the TramTrain project's four vehicles, which will start coming through at the end of 2015. The additional vehicles are to reduce congestion and keep the capacity of the systems at the required level. Passenger Information Displays is a key thing that people in customer surveys have talked about because they see them at bus stops but not the tram stops. We are working with the PTE to bring in Passenger Information Displays to give people live information about tram times and when the next one is coming along. The TramTrain is the first heavy rail use by a tram system which will operate between Sheffield and Rotherham every twenty minutes. In the longer term, Sheffield City obviously plans for transport developments and transport links and tramway extensions form a key part of that, including looking at TramTrain and how it can utilise existing rail infrastructure. We are looking further ahead to HS2 at Sheffield, currently planned with a hub at Meadowhall. Whichever way this goes the tram system will form part of moving people to and from the train.

Could it be better? The obvious problem with the tram system is that it is primarily fixed. So the tram system was originally thought about in the 1970s to 1980s and the city has continued to evolve and develop and the tram is not necessarily as you would plan it now. However, the link services have enabled the system to expand into other areas to widen the benefit of the tram system

The mixture of segregated and non-segregated track is a key problem with time-keeping. Ideally we would have more non-street running but there is a trade-off with practicality and convenience of passengers. There are a number of park and ride sites but the big failing is that they are not ideally situated for motorway access. There is a huge volume of traffic comes off the Parkway from Junction 33 of the M1 straight into Sheffield. Some park and ride towards the motorway end rather than the city centre end is what is needed.

In summary: the Supertram system is a valued service to the people of Sheffield; the transport capacity offered by a tram system is a key tool to avoid city development choking itself; and Tram train is a real opportunity to demonstrate a low-cost extension opportunity for tram systems.

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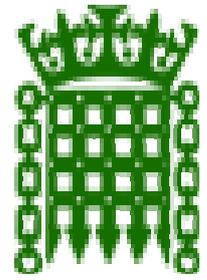


Light Rail (UK)

All Party Parliamentary Light Rail Group

House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA
Ref: LR Applrg Parliamentary Tea v. 2012

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The main reasons people give for using the tram are punctuality, reliability, reduced journey times, convenience, and ease of access and friendliness of staff. The SYPTE do a survey every couple of years and in the most recent one they recorded a 91.1% satisfaction rate amongst tram users. We have staff who take pride in their tram system which they associate with something that is part of Sheffield. The trams are seen as benefiting Sheffield - house sales descriptions and job notices always mention proximity to the tram.

Punctuality has steadily improved since 2007 and the trams have consistently been the most punctual mode of public transport, outperforming trains and buses. Our main problem with punctuality is caused by other traffic on the street-running sections.

In terms of improving the customer experience there are a number of things we are looking to do. One of the constraints of a tram system is that it cannot easily be extended, so we are looking to increase link bus services, we already have three, to feed outlying areas into the extremities of the tram system. These are timed to integrate with the tram services. We introduced smart ticketing towards the middle of last year. We underwent a tram refresh a number of years ago, effectively a mid-life refresh, and we are currently coming to the end of an underfloor project, renewing the running gear. We have a number of partnership workings with PTE bodies, including the rail replacement project.

To touch on the environment, obviously the tram network is very environmentally friendly towards a congested city such as Sheffield but there are various improvements we can make. This year we have installed LED lighting on the trams to reduce power consumption and we have cut tram stop lighting outside operating hours

In terms of the impact of the tramway on Sheffield, I think the key thing has been the speed of access to the Meadowhall retail complex. Meadowhall had the potential to split the city in two by pulling people away from the city centre but the tram system as well as other modes of public transport, but particularly the tram system, has been very important in terms of keeping Sheffield connected to Meadowhall. There have been other developments along the Meadowhall line, such as the Valley Entertainments complex and the English Institute of Sport and there is talk of an IKEA. The Don Valley Stadium is in course of being demolished but there is talk of replacing it. In terms of job creation, there were a number of jobs created during construction and there are 306 people currently employed by the tramway. We also try and use local suppliers where possible, so there is direct and indirect employment generated by the tram system. The capacity to support major events as a major city: the Tour de France is coming to Sheffield on July 6th, the second stage of the Tour of Yorkshire. I am sure the tram system was not the only consideration but I am sure it was part of it, providing the infrastructure to get a quarter of a million people in and out when there are a lot of road closures to facilitate the race. Sheffield is congested and continues to be congested but it would be very much worse if the tram system were not in place. I am sure you are all aware of the

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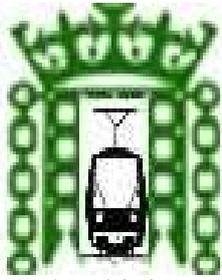
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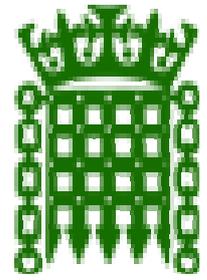


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Tram system statistics: 25 trams, of a unique Sheffield design to cope with the gradients; 18 miles of track, 54% of which is embedded for street running; 48 tram stops; 15m passenger journeys per year; vehicles travelling 1.5m miles per year; and a staff of 306. That gives the context of the size of our tram system compared with others in the UK.

The tram system is essentially a three route arterial system so all the routes come out of the city centre. There is a branch which goes off to Meadowhall, one to Middlewood, which is where Hillsborough football ground is, and one to Halfway, which is halfway between Sheffield and Chesterfield. So some journeys require a change in the city centre to get from one extreme to another.

We have a 24/7 365 day control room. The only day when we do not operate trams is Christmas Day but the control room never closes and is there for emergency possession and emergency isolation. We have conductors on the trams, a decision that was taken fairly soon after Stagecoach took over the operation. Previously there were ticket machines on tram stops but, for reasons of customer service and revenue protection, conductors on trams was the best way to go. The service is run from approximately 6 a.m. to midnight, an eighteen hour a day operation with a ten minute frequency, reducing to a twenty minute off-peak frequency. We accept national concession passes and we take part in the multimodal ticket under the Travelmaster brand which incorporates the bus and train operations within Sheffield and South Yorkshire.

Some figures taken from the PTE's passenger surveys, comparing the market segments for bus, rail and tram, show that the largest section for the tram, 41.4%, are people carrying pre-paid operator tickets, daily, weekly or longer term, which they can buy on the tram or online. This is a larger proportion than for the other modes. We have a reasonable number of seniors using passes at 21.48% compared to bus who carry 31%. This is largely due to geographical factors and we know from passenger surveys that seniors do enjoy travelling on the trams with their accessibility, speed and reliability and also interaction with the conductor forms a key part of that.

For people's reasons for travel, we have about a third travelling for commuting purposes, a third for shopping and a third for leisure, which incorporates any other reason for travelling including education.

Volumes of passenger on the system showed growth from around 11m in March 2000 to a peak of 15m. The recession caused a reduction in numbers which then picked up again but there was a sharp drop towards the end of 2013 as a result of the rail replacement programme. We are arranging bus replacement but the passengers on those buses are not included in the figures.

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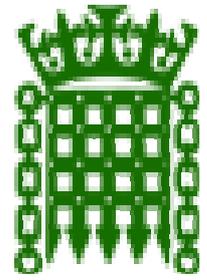
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All Party Parliamentary Light Rail Group (APPLRG)

Report of a meeting held at the House of Commons on Tuesday 21st January
2014

Chairman: John Leech MP (Chairman APPLRG)

John Leech was absent for a vote in the House between 15:55 and 16:20, when Jim Harkins deputised as Chairman.

The Chairman opened the meeting and introduced the first speaker.

Tim Bilby (Head of Finance and Commercial, Stagecoach Supertram, Sheffield)

This was accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation which can be found on the APPLRG website at <http://www.applrguk.co.uk/files/lr%20applrg%20super%20tram%20presentation%201012014.pdf>

We start with a brief timeline of the tram systems in Sheffield. It was in 1960m when the last traditional tram ran in Sheffield but as soon as the 1970s there was talk of a light rail system forming part of a transport solution in Sheffield. That continued into the 1980s when various acts of Parliament were passed work actually began on the new light rail system in 1991. There was a lot of disruption during construction particularly with concrete slab laying on the on-street sections but by 1994 the first line opened from the City to the Meadowhall shopping centre and in 1995 the system was fully completed and fully operational. In 1997 Stagecoach took over the operation of the tram system until 2024.

One of the notable landmarks of the pre-Supertram Sheffield was the "hole-in-the-road" roundabout which is now replace by the Castle Square tram stop, which forms part of the redevelopment of that part of Sheffield.

The tram system was designed to still allow traffic to flow around the city centre, traffic has increased since the trams were installed, and to be pedestrian friendly. It connects a number of key locations in Sheffield: Meadowhall; Sheffield station; Sheffield University; Sheffield Arena; Hillsborough football ground (Sheffield Wednesday) and not too far from Bramhall Lane (Sheffield United); also the Crystal Peaks shopping centre, smaller than Meadowhall but which attracts a substantial number of passengers.

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