

Devon County Council meeting – item 12 – Thursday 17-02-2022

NOTICES OF MOTION

12. Restoring Railway Resilience (Minute 72 of 2 December 2021)

To receive and consider the recommendations of the Cabinet (Minute 103(a) as an amendment to the following Notice of Motion submitted previously to the Council by Councillor Hannaford and referred thereto in accordance with Standing Order 8(2), namely:

~ Council warmly welcomes and celebrates the restoration of the Okehampton to Exeter daily rail services after an absence of forty-nine years.

~ After many years of strong cross-party support at Devon County Council, we are especially pleased and proud that the first reopening under the governments “Restoring Your Railway Programme” has taken place at the heart of Devon.

~ Hopefully heralding a national railway service revival across the whole country, that will see a transformational change in commuter movements, and a substantial reduction in harmful emissions.

~ Council also welcomes the £50,000 to develop a business case to reinstate passenger rail links between Tavistock and Plymouth, and the new additional funding to reopen Cullompton Railway Station.

~ However, Council is greatly concerned, that there is still an estimated huge gap in regional railway service investment of 4.5 billion for the South West Region, based on its ONS projected population over the period to 2045.

~ Therefore, in order to continue to build upon the restoring your railway programme, increase the far South West’s general connectivity, secure our railway resilience, and crucially assist with the climate emergency, Council commits its active support, working with others to lobby, help facilitate, and advocate for the following projects;

The completion of the Great Western electrification programme.

The development of the North of Dartmoor line, connecting Plymouth, via Okehampton and Tavistock.

Additional passing loops, and an increase in line speeds, between Exeter and Salisbury to improve journey times between Exeter and Waterloo Station.

Encouraging and working with the logistics sector to commit to a serious switch to rail freight for the distribution of consumer goods, food, and industrial products.

Furthermore, Council resolves to make formal representations to the Government, national and regional transport bodies, the business sector, and our local Devon Members of Parliament, to secure the necessary funding and investment to progress these much needed and long-awaited improvements.

Having had regard to the aforementioned, any factual briefing/position statement on the matter set out in Report (CSO/22/01) and other suggestions or alternatives considered at that meeting the Cabinet subsequently **resolved**:

~ that Council be recommended to:

(a) continue to work collaboratively with the Peninsula Transport Sub National Transport Body authorities to develop a Peninsula Rail Strategy to inform future rail investment priorities; and

(b) through the Peninsula Transport Sub National Transport Body, work closely with rail partners and key stakeholders to make the case for future funding in line with the industry’s Delivery Plan process.