

## **East West Rail Consortium Strategic Board 12<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

### **Agenda Item 5: Eastern Section: Interim SOBC**

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

- a) Notes the report**
- b) Supports the direction of the work**

#### **1. Background**

- 1.1. The January meeting of the East West Rail Consortium agreed to fund the development of an Interim Strategic Outline Business Case (Interim-SOBC) for enhancing the Eastern Section of the East West Rail Main Line. The Interim-SOBC will explore the strategic, economic and financial cases for investing in the existing railway lines between Ipswich/Norwich and Cambridge (the Eastern Section).
- 1.2. The Interim-SOBC is being led by the Eastern Section Executive Board (a sub-group established by the Consortium and consisting of Councillors and officers representing the Eastern Section). Under the Executive Board's guidance, which is supported by an officer Steering Group, the Interim-SOBC will set out the business case for:
  - Improving the frequency of passenger rail services between Ipswich/Norwich to Cambridge;
  - Reducing journey times to Cambridge and to Oxford; and
  - Providing rail connectivity for passenger and freight trains with the East West Rail Main Line.
- 1.3. The Interim-SOBC is being developed in close collaboration with the East West Rail Company, Network Rail, DfT and Greater Anglia Trains Company.
- 1.4. It was agreed by the Consortium that members would receive a copy of the draft business cases (Strategic, Economic and Financial) for comment before they are combined to form the Interim-SOBC and submitted to the Department for Transport (DfT).
- 1.5. The submission of the Interim-SOBC will enable the Consortium to open discussions with the DfT about securing funding for the development of a full Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) and Outline Business Case (OBC) for enhancing the Eastern Section.
- 1.6. The submission of the Interim-SOBC is the first stage in the DfT's funding process, known as the Rail Network Enhancement Pipeline (RNEP).

#### **2. Progress Report**

- 2.1. In July, Steer Consultants were awarded the contract to undertake the Interim-SOBC work. An inception meeting was held in early August between Steer and the Eastern Section Steering Group. Since that inception meeting, Steer has commenced work on developing the Strategic

Case for the Interim-SOBC and has started work on modelling passenger demand for a half-hourly rail service between Ipswich/Norwich and Cambridge and onwards to Oxford. Work to model freight demand is also being undertaken.

- 2.2. An initial working draft of the Strategic Case was available at the end of September. The officer Steering Group is working with the consultants to develop the working draft in order that it can be considered by the Consortium at the December meeting. The same meeting will consider the draft Economic Case and Financial Case. A timeline for the development of the Interim-SOBC is set out below:

<b>Area of Work</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Consideration by EWR Consortium</b>
Draft Strategic Case	2 <sup>nd</sup> October	December, 2020
Draft Economic Case	23 <sup>rd</sup> November	December, 2020
Draft Financial Case	23 <sup>rd</sup> November	December, 2020
Modelling outputs	11 <sup>th</sup> October	December, 2020
Economic outputs	12 <sup>th</sup> October	December, 2020
Technical outputs	12 <sup>th</sup> October	December, 2020
Draft Interim-SOBC	28 <sup>th</sup> December	January 2021

### **3. Business Case Sign-off**

- 3.1. Appendix 1 (attached) shows the decision-making process for approving the three draft cases and the draft Interim-SOBC.
- 3.2. The development of the three cases will be managed by the Eastern Section Steering Group before they are approved by the Eastern Section Executive Board and agreed for final sign off by the East West Rail Consortium. The Steering Group will act as the supporting link between the Executive Board and the Consortium and will also be responsible for consulting with the East West Rail Company, Network Rail, the Department for Transport and other key stakeholders.

**Kerry Allen**  
**October 2020**

Decision-making process

