

## Memorandum of Understanding

**This Memorandum of Understanding (which expression shall include the Appendix) is dated 19 June 2026**

### Between

- (1) **West Yorkshire Combined Authority**, of Wellington House, 40-50 Wellington St, Leeds LS1 2DE;
- (2) **Network Rail Infrastructure Limited**, of Waterloo General Office, London, SE1 8SW; and
- (3) **“The publicly owned train operating companies”**, being a collaboration of separate legal entities as set out in section 1 and represented by **Northern Trains Limited**, of George Stephenson House, Toft Green York, YO1 6JT

together referred to as **“we”** and/or the **“Parties”** and each a **“Party”**.

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### 1. Who we are

This Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is between:

- West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA);
- Network Rail Infrastructure Limited (NRIL) and
- “The publicly owned train operating companies” (the Operators), made up of:
  - Northern Trains Limited
  - TransPennine Trains Limited
  - London North Eastern Railway Limited

All Train Operating Companies that operate in West Yorkshire who transfer to DFT Operator will be invited to enter into this MoU as they transfer.

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### 2. Context

The Government is progressing a programme of national rail reform following the Passenger Railway Services (Public Ownership) Act 2024 and the Railways Bill introduced in November 2025, with Royal Assent expected by the end of 2026.

The Bill will establish Great British Railways (GBR), bringing together responsibility for infrastructure and train service delivery to create a more reliable, affordable, efficient, high quality, accessible and safe railway.

A key ambition is to improve integration between the rail network and local transport systems. The Bill is expected to introduce a statutory role for Mayoral Strategic Authorities (MSAs) and enable the creation of arrangements between MSAs and GBR for increased partnership in local areas.

While the legislation is still progressing through Parliament, there is a shared commitment between Government and the Mayor of West Yorkshire to begin realising the benefits of reform early, including aligning the Local Transport Plan with emerging GBR plans.

Producing this MoU has been a collaborative endeavour between WYCA and all partners representing the publicly owned rail industry in West Yorkshire. It has been guided throughout by the [GBR-MSA Practitioner's Guide](#), which was developed by AtkinsRéalis and Urban Transport Group (UTG) members with support from the Department for Transport.

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### **3. Purpose**

This MoU sets out how we intend to work together in partnership ahead of and in preparation for GBR. It demonstrates our joint commitment to collaboration and partnership.

This MoU is not legally binding and does not create, nor alter, existing, legal or financial obligations save in relation to the obligations of the Parties under section 10 which are agreed to be legally binding. With the exception of those obligations set out in section 10, no legal obligations or legal rights shall arise between the Parties from the provisions of the MoU. For the avoidance of doubt, this MoU does not override statutory duties or prejudice future policy or legislative decisions.

Through this MoU, we will:

- Work collaboratively ahead of the establishment of GBR to accelerate delivery of the objectives and benefits of rail reform.
- Support the transition to a more devolved, accountable and integrated railway.
- Deliver improved outcomes for passengers, freight, and communities by ensuring decisions are made closer to where they have an impact, aligned with local needs and priorities.

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### **4. Application**

This MoU comes into effect from the date of signing. This MoU may be terminated by any Party at any time by giving three months written notice to the other Parties. This

MoU may be varied by mutual agreement, and the Parties will confirm all agreed variations to this MoU in writing.

We see this as a transitional and evolving arrangement, to be replaced by a formal contractual arrangement once GBR is established, as per the currently proposed provision in section 5 of the Railways Bill. This MoU will be reviewed annually through Strategic Rail Partnership governance and updated as required to reflect legislative, organisational and strategic changes.

This MoU is between organisations and is intended to support effective and consistent collaboration across teams at all levels. Where relevant, each Party will continue to consult and liaise with other industry partners and stakeholders in compliance with applicable legislation/contractual obligations.

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## **5. Scope**

### **In scope**

This MoU will include, but is not exclusive to, collaboration on:

- Passenger rail services and the wider customer offer
- Infrastructure planning and delivery
- Integration with local transport networks
- Strategic planning for growth across West Yorkshire

This includes developing a West Yorkshire partnership model, exploring options for local commissioning, defining the network, and clarifying future roles and responsibilities in line with the GBR-MSA Practitioner's Guide and/or any relevant future guidance from Government.

### **Out of scope**

- Any NRIL decision making that is required, by virtue of NRIL's network licence and/or current railway regulation, to be undertaken by NRIL independently of train and freight operators.
- Any Publicly Owned Operating Companies' decision making that is required, by virtue of their operating licence and/or current railway regulation, will be undertaken independently.
- This MoU will not cover certain elements of national-level rail strategy outside of GBR's remit (e.g. statutory responsibility of the Secretary of State / Department for Transport).

- Although freight is not party to this MoU formally, we recognise the importance of rail freight and will support opportunities for freight growth in line with our wider strategic objectives. We will engage freight partners through a separate regional forum encompassing a wider geography.
- While CrossCountry is not currently in public ownership and therefore not party to this MoU, the Parties recognise the importance of ongoing collaboration and will continue to work with CrossCountry for the benefit of customers in West Yorkshire.
- Open Access Operators are not formal partners but will be engaged as appropriate.

Notwithstanding the above, the scope of this MoU may evolve as informed by the ongoing development of GBR organisational design.

For the avoidance of doubt, NRIL will ensure that all regulatory obligations and licence conditions continue to be carried out independently of operators where required and collaboration on the topics listed above does not extend to such activities over which NRIL must maintain independence and separation from operators.

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## 6. Our shared objectives

We have agreed a set of shared strategic objectives to guide how we work together to deliver for the region, embedding a customer mindset in everything we do. These will be developed further through a Weaver Network Vision for Rail (Deliverable 1).

We will:

- Deliver the objectives of the [Mayor's Local Transport Plan](#):
  - Enable inclusive growth
  - Boost productivity
  - Improve health and wellbeing
  - Tackle the climate emergency
- Support delivery of the [West Yorkshire Local Growth Plan](#)
- Take action to make journeys and places safer, with particular focus on women and girls
- Position rail at the heart of an integrated, accessible and inclusive Weaver Network

- Drive passenger growth through better performance and an enhanced customer experience
  - Drive rail freight growth in line with the Combined Authority's Rail Strategy and GBR's statutory long-term growth target
  - Enable easier joint working across our organisations and a shared approach to planning and delivering projects
  - Support the long-term financial sustainability of the railway, in the interest of the taxpayer
  - Build a skilled, diverse and future ready industry workforce
  - Maximise the benefits for West Yorkshire from major investment programmes, including the Transpennine Route Upgrade and Northern Powerhouse Rail.<sup>1</sup>
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## 7. How we will work together

We will be guided by the following shared principles for behaviour:

- One Team, Shared Outcomes
- Open, Honest and Transparent
- Trust, Respect and Accountability
- Pragmatic and Collaborative
- Delivery and Customer Focused

Further detail is set out in the accompanying Partnership Principles document (Appendix 1).

Senior leaders across all partner organisations are expected to model these principles and embed them within their teams and ways of working.

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## 8. Deliverables

By the end of October 2028, we commit to working together with the aim of delivering:

### Governance and vision

- **1) Weaver Network Vision for Rail** - A co-developed Weaver Network Vision for Rail document to be finalised and endorsed by WYCA and the publicly owned rail

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<sup>1</sup> We also recognise the [Secretary of State's Department Outcomes Framework](#) alongside our Shared Objectives.

industry organisations by December 2026, covering integration, investment and services

- **2) SRP Governance** - Updated governance for the Strategic Rail Partnership Board by September 2026

#### Investment and delivery

- **3) Joint Investment Plan** - A joint investment plan will be developed by December 2027, bringing together existing plans to a shared view, with the aim of optimising investment and maximising value across organisations.
- **4) West Yorkshire New Stations Programme** - Embedded new ways of working, including dedicated Sponsor resource, on the West Yorkshire New Stations Programme, by December 2026
- **5) Small-Scale Rail Accessibility Programme** - Delivery of the Small-Scale Rail Accessibility Station Improvement Programme by October 2028.
- **6) Rail Integration and Customer Experience Programme** - Development of the Rail Integration and Customer Experience programme, with the funding envelope agreed by September 2026 and scope and intervention locations confirmed by September 2027
- **7) Service Improvement Study** - Completion of a joint feasibility study with Northern by December 2026 to establish a shared view on service improvements

#### Preparing for long-term partnership

- **8) Data Sharing Agreement** - Develop a data sharing agreement to support improved data capability, by December 2026
- **9) Local Commissioning Roadmap** - A roadmap to a Local Commissioning Partnership model by December 2027
- **10) Baseline Services Position** - A shared proposal for what a baseline position of GBR services could look like by December 2027, recognising the development of the future legal and regulatory requirements and final design principles in this space are yet to be determined.
- **11) Rail Communications & Stakeholders Group** - We will establish a Rail Communications & Stakeholders Group for West Yorkshire to coordinate activity and maintain a joint communications plan by September 2026

A delivery plan, including milestones and resource requirements for each deliverable, is to be agreed between all Parties.

The progress of deliverables will be monitored through the Strategic Rail Partnership governance, as updated from time to time.

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## **9. Governance**

### **Decision-making**

While individual organisations have their own existing decision-making processes, we will ensure effective and transparent decision-making across the partnership by:

- Sharing early visibility of upcoming decisions, plans and key milestones
- Engaging one another at an early stage to shape proposals
- Work collaboratively to align positions and support informed decision making
- Regularly reviewing progress against shared objectives, plans and deliverables

### **Single points of accountability**

The Operators and NRIL will nominate a Local Railway Lead as a single point of accountability who will:

- Consult with Operators and NRIL to present a unified 'Rail Industry' approach
- Serve as the primary point of accountability for the Combined Authority and the Mayor of West Yorkshire for matters within the scope of this MoU
- Attend the Strategic Rail Partnership Board and lead delivery of a "Rail Industry Update" standing item
- Facilitate coordination across the Operators and NRIL and support timely issue resolution
- Champion partnership working and ensure a joined-up Rail Industry approach

West Yorkshire Combined Authority will nominate a single point of accountability who will:

- Act as the primary interface for engagement with the Local Railway Lead
- Coordinate activity and input across the Combined Authority, when required.
- Support the resolution of issues
- Champion partnership working and ensure alignment with regional priorities and strategic objectives

## **Resolving issues**

We will seek to resolve issues collaboratively and at the earliest opportunity, using agreed governance structures and in compliance with each Party's individual governance requirements. Where necessary, issues will be escalated in a timely and proportionate way to ensure they are addressed effectively.

## **Cross-boundary working**

We recognise that rail corridors extend beyond West Yorkshire. We will proactively engage with neighbouring authorities and partners, including through forums such as the White Rose Board, Transport for the North, and/or direct partnership working with other MSAs. This MoU has been shared with neighbouring authorities and partners for information purposes only.

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## **10. Information and data sharing**

Once a data sharing agreement has been agreed, we will share the necessary data to support effective planning, performance and decision-making, ensuring our approach is:

- Proportionate, relevant and focused
- Open, reciprocal, and based on mutual trust
- Secure and compliant with all relevant legislation, including data protection requirements and third-party confidentiality requirements
- Compliant with each Party's relevant regulatory requirements and licence conditions where applicable

We will:

- Handle and store information securely, with appropriate safeguards in place
- Clearly identify and appropriately manage confidential or commercially sensitive information
- Consult originating Parties before wider disclosure where appropriate
- Default to transparency wherever possible to support joint working

## **Intellectual Property Rights**

For the purpose of this section, "**Intellectual Property Rights**" means patents, utility models, inventions, trademarks, service marks, logos, design rights (whether registrable or otherwise), applications for any of the foregoing, copyright, database rights, domain names, plant variety rights, know-how, trade or business names, moral rights and other

similar rights or obligations whether registrable or not in any country (including but not limited to the United Kingdom) and the right to sue for passing off.

This MoU does not transfer any interest in Intellectual Property Rights and all pre-existing Intellectual Property Rights or Intellectual Property Rights developed independently of this MoU (“**Background IPR**”) remains the property of the owning Party (or, where applicable, the third party from whom the right to use the Background IPR has derived).

Any Intellectual Property Rights that arise or are developed in carrying out the requirements of this MoU (“**Foreground IPR**”) shall be vested in and owned by the Party creating or developing those rights. In the case of any Intellectual Property Rights created jointly by employees of two or more Parties, the Parties will agree in writing how those Intellectual Property Rights are to be managed and exploited by both Parties.

Each Party (insofar as it is able) grants to the other Parties a non-exclusive irrevocable and royalty-free, sub-licensable, worldwide licence to use Foreground IPR owned by it for the other Parties’ own use and exploitation.

### **Data Protection**

For the purpose of this section, “**Data Protection Legislation**” means (i) all applicable UK law relating to the processing of personal data and privacy, including but not limited to the UK GDPR, and the Data Protection Act 2018 to the extent that it relates to processing of personal data and privacy; and (ii) (to the extent that it may be applicable) the EU GDPR. The UK GDPR and EU GDPR are defined in section 3 of the Data Protection Act 2018. “**Personal Data**” has the meaning given in the UK GDPR.

It is not envisaged that we will share Personal Data under this MoU. If Personal Data sharing is required, then we will:

- Enter into a separate data sharing agreement;
- Comply with our responsibilities under the Data Protection Legislation and will not use any Personal Data exchanged under this MoU for any purposes which are incompatible with the Data Protection Legislation; and
- Ensure that Personal Data collated or exchanged under this MoU is not transferred outside the UK without the prior agreement of the other Parties.

### **Freedom of Information**

Each Party acknowledges that the other Parties may be subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and/or the Environmental Information Regulations 2004. Each Party acknowledges that any information obtained in respect of this MoU may need to be disclosed to third parties under the provisions of such legislation. Each Party shall assist any other in meeting any reasonable requests for information which are made to it in connection with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or any other similar

guidelines, codes of practice, or legislation which arise in connection with this MoU. Each Party will consult the other Parties before making to any third party any significant disclosures of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and/or the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 in relation to this MoU. However, the Party which receives the request for information shall, at its sole discretion, make the final decision as to what is disclosable and nothing in this MoU will prevent any Party from complying with any valid order, decision, enforcement or practice recommendation notice issued to it by the Information Commissioner under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and/or the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

### **Confidential Information**

For the purpose of this section, “**Confidential Information**” means any information which has been designated as confidential by any Party in writing or that ought to be considered as confidential (howsoever it is conveyed or on whatever media it is stored) including information the disclosure of which would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any person or trade secrets and all personal data and sensitive personal data within the meaning of applicable legislation. Confidential Information shall not include information which:

- was public knowledge at the time of disclosure (otherwise than by breach of a duty of confidence by any Party);
- was in the possession of the receiving Party, without restriction as to its disclosure, before receiving it from the disclosing Party;
- is received from a third party (who lawfully acquired it) without restriction as to its disclosure; or
- is independently developed without access to the Confidential Information.

Each Party understands and acknowledges that it may receive or become aware of Confidential Information of the other Parties (which may include information where the other Party owes a duty of confidence to a third party) in relation to this MoU.

Subject to the **Freedom of Information** section above, each Party shall treat all other Parties’ Confidential Information as confidential and safeguard it accordingly (which shall include complying with any protective markings on documents and instructions supplied by the disclosing Party). In particular, no Party will do anything that may place any other Party in breach of a duty of confidence owed to a third party. A Party receiving Confidential information shall not disclose Confidential Information without the prior written consent of the disclosing Party.

Where information we share comes from another organisation we will handle this information in line with relevant information governance, data protection requirements and contractual obligations. We will also check with the organisation that provided the

information before making any decisions about sharing it further, in line with statutory guidance and timescales.

The obligations of confidentiality in this paragraph section shall continue in force notwithstanding termination of this MoU.

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## **11. Communications and stakeholder engagement**

Wherever possible, we will coordinate our communications to present a clear, consistent and unified message aligned with our shared objectives.

Wherever appropriate we will work together to:

- Develop and issue joint announcements, press releases and public messaging
- Plan and deliver stakeholder engagement activity, including events and visits
- Produce shared research, insights and publications
- Coordinate responses to media enquiries and manage reactive communications

We will ensure that any joint communications are approved by each Party in accordance with their internal governance requirements.

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## **12. Culture, capability and resource**

We recognise that strong collaborative working is underpinned by the right cultures, skills and resourcing.

We will build a “one team” approach across all organisations by activities including, but not limited to:

- Expanding co-location opportunities and making effective use of collaborative digital tools
- Supporting joint team development at least twice a year, including partnership and volunteering activities
- Exploring flexible call-off arrangements between partners to enable efficient mobilisation across organisations
- Sharing skills and expertise through training, secondments and knowledge exchange

We will also:

- Support the development of both operational and back-office capabilities

- Enable staff exchanges, shadowing and mentoring opportunities, subject to relevant governance and entry into appropriate agreements
  - Encourage participation in sector-wide development programmes and leadership initiatives
  - Work collaboratively to plan, prioritise and optimise the use of resources across organisations to ensure we are GBR-ready
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### **13. Miscellaneous**

Except as otherwise provided in this MoU, each Party shall bear its own costs and expenses incurred in complying with its obligations under this MoU.

Each Party shall remain liable for any losses or liabilities incurred due to their own or their employees' actions and no Party intends that either of the other Parties shall be liable for any loss it suffers as a result of this MoU.

This MoU does not confer any rights on any third party. Nothing in this MoU shall be interpreted as limiting, superseding, or otherwise affecting any Party's normal operations in carrying out its statutory, regulatory or other duties.

The Parties warrant that neither they nor any representative working on their behalf shall engage in any personal, business or professional activity which conflicts or could conflict with any of the provisions in this MoU. The Parties agree to have in place, and will keep in place, adequate procedures to manage and monitor any actual or perceived bias or conflicts of interest.

Nothing in this MoU is intended to, or shall be deemed to, establish any partnership or joint venture between the Parties, constitute any party as the agent of the other Parties, nor authorise any of the Parties to make or enter into any commitments for or on behalf of either of the other Parties.


Whilst this MoU is not intended to be legally binding (other than section 10), for the avoidance of doubt, this MoU shall be governed by and construed in accordance with English law and, without affecting the resolution of issues procedure set out in section 9, each Party agrees to submit to the exclusive jurisdiction of the courts of England and Wales.

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**Signature Blocks**

The duly authorised representatives of the Parties affix their signatures below.


Signed for and on behalf of "publicly owned rail industry organisations" by its representative, Northern Trains Limited

Signature:   
 Name: PATRICIA WILLIAMS  
 Position: MANAGING DIRECTOR, NORTHERN TRAINS LTD  
 Date: 19.06.2026

Authorised for and on behalf of London North Eastern Railway Limited

Signature:   
 Name: STUART THOMAS  
 Position: COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR  
 Date: 19-6-26.

Authorised for and on behalf of TransPennine Trains Limited

Signature:   
 Name: CHRIS JACKSON  
 Position: MANAGING DIRECTOR  
 Date: 19/06/26

Signed for and on behalf of Network  
Rail Infrastructure Limited

Signature: *Jon Haulb*

Name: *Jon Haulb*

Position: *Route Director Network Rail North + East*

Date: *19/6/26*

Signed for and on behalf of West  
Yorkshire Combined Authority

Signature: *Tracy Brabin*

Name: *TRACY BRABIN*

Position: *MANAGER OF WEST YORKSHIRE*

Date: *19/6/2026*

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## Appendix 1

### Woven Together: Partnership Principles for the Railway in West Yorkshire

This Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) sets out shared principles of behaviour that will guide the Partnership between the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and the local rail industry:

- One Team, Shared Outcomes
- Open, Honest and Transparent
- Trust, Respect and Accountability
- Pragmatic and Collaborative
- Delivery and Customer Focused

The principles are designed to be practical, collaborative, and delivery focused. They guide how individuals interact across organisations; support decision making and embed a consistent culture for a devolved and integrated railway, while acknowledging and respecting that, at present, the Partnership is made up of a number of separate legal entities with different regulatory, licensing and governance requirements.

This document is intended as a tool to explain what each principle means and how this might work in practice for colleagues.

#### **1. One Team, Shared Outcomes**

We will work as one team across organisational boundaries, united by shared outcomes for passengers, communities and the wider region.

In practice this means:

- Working collaboratively across organisations and disciplines
- Actively avoiding siloed working and unnecessary duplication
- Supporting and championing each other to achieve our collective ambitions
- Recognising that successful outcomes depend on joint effort
- Respecting each other's own statutory responsibilities, interests and risk profiles

#### **2. Open, Honest and Transparent**

We will communicate openly, honestly and early, creating an environment with no surprises.

In practice this means:

- Communicating early about risks, challenges and opportunities
- Open information, data and insight sharing, as appropriate

- Explaining decisions, constraints and trade-offs clearly
- Simplifying and explain processes and roles to build a shared understanding
- Treating each other's information appropriately and carefully

### **3. Trust, Respect and Accountability**

We will act in good faith, treat each other with respect and take accountability for delivery.

In practice this means:

- Behaving professionally and respectfully at all times
- Assuming positive intent
- Following through on commitments and actions
- Viewing partners as colleagues

### **4. Pragmatic and Collaborative**

We will focus on progress, using pragmatic and proportionate approaches to problem solving and decision making.

In practice this means:

- Resolving issues collaboratively and at the lowest appropriate level
- Avoiding unnecessary process and bureaucracy
- Recognising operational, political and financial realities
- Balancing local priorities with wider network and system considerations

### **5. Delivery and Customer Focused**

We will act as delivery partners, aligned around achieving tangible outcomes and long-term value.

In practice this means:

- Centring the customer throughout our decision making
- Aligning our planning and funding to achieve efficiencies and value for money
- Ensuring the right capability and capacity are in place to deliver
- Getting the right people in the room to move things forward

The success of the partnership will depend not only on structures and governance, but on consistent behaviours, trusted relationships and shared accountability for outcomes.