Transport for the North Board Minutes

26 June 2026
Greater Manchester Combined Authority

Present:
Co Chairs
Mayor David Skaith (York & North Yorkshire Combined Authority)
Cllr Louise Gittins (Co-opted)

Attendee	Local Authority
Cllr Hans Mundry	Cheshire and Warrington Combined Authority;
Cllr Mark Fryer	Cumbria Combined Authority
Cllr Eammon O'Brien	Greater Manchester Combined Authority;
Cllr Phil Riley	Lancashire Combined County Authority;
Mayor Steve Rotheram	Liverpool City Region;
Mayor Kim McGuinness	North East Combined Authority;
Mayor Oliver Coppard	South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority;
Cllr Stephen Harker	Tees Valley Combined Authority;
Cllr Carl Quartermain (Observer)	Tees Valley Combined Authority
Mayor Tracy Brabin	West Yorkshire Combined Authority;

Rail North Authorities Attendees

Cllr Anthony McKeown	East Midlands Combined County Authority

Business Attendees

Isobel Brown	Cumbria
Mark Rawstron	Lancashire
Natalie Sykes	West Yorkshire

Partners in Attendance:

Ellie Burrows	Network Rail
Rob McIntosh	Network Rail

Officers in Attendance:

Name	Job Title
Katie Day	Chief Executive (interim)
Gary Rich	Democratic Services Officer
Lisa Pitt	Interim Financial Controller and Deputy Section 151 Officer
Joanne Barclay	Monitoring officer
Rachel Ford	Strategy and Corporate Services Director (interim)

Item No: **Item**

1. Appointment of Co-Chairs

1.1 The Monitoring Officer opened the meeting and welcomed Members to the Transport for the North Board meeting and advised that, as the meeting was the Annual Meeting for the 2026/27 municipal year, the first item of business was the appointment of the Chair.

1.2 She reported that, at the previous meeting in March, Board had approved the appointment of Mayor Skaith and Councillor Gittins as Co-Chairs until the Annual General Meeting. It was proposed that the co-chairing arrangements continue for the 2026/27 municipal year.

1.3 Following a show of hands, the Board approved the appointment of Mayor Skaith and Councillor Gittins as Co-Chairs for the 2026/27 municipal year.

Resolved:

That Mayor Skaith and Cllr Gittins be appointed as Co-Chairs for the 2026-27 Municipal Year.

2. Welcome & Apologies

2.1 The Chair (Mayor Skaith) welcomed the Board and advised that, as Greater Manchester Combined Authority is in a pre-election period, Members should be mindful of the associated sensitivities. Members were reminded that they remained entitled to participate fully, but that contributions should remain factual, non-partisan and focused on the business before the Board, avoiding comments that could be interpreted as political messaging or election-related campaigning.

2.2 The Democratic Services Officer informed the Board that apologies had been received from Cllr Tucker, John Hall and Mandy Ridyard, who was being represented by Natalie Sykes.

2.3 Members were informed that a number of individuals were no longer serving on the Board following the previous meeting. Thanks were placed on record to Mayor Burnham and Cllrs Rollo, Gannon, Hunt, Hinchcliffe, Murray and Kilbane for their contributions.

3. Declarations of Interest

3.1 There were no Declarations of Interest.

4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

4.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Transport for the North Board held on 16 March 2026 were considered.

4.2 The Chief Executive (interim) updated Members on three matters. She advised that future Board meetings would receive a report on progress against the business plan and that a new Member engagement programme would be introduced, with dates to be arranged. She also reported that, while Transport for the North was not required to publish a gender pay report, its latest analysis showed that the organisation was below the national average and had made significant progress. Further details would be shared with Members separately if required.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the Transport for the North Board held on 16 March 2026 be approved as a correct record.

5. Governance and Constitutional Matters

5.1 Members received the report from the Monitoring Officer, who highlighted the key points. The Board was asked to approve the Board and committee appointments for 2026/27, with delegation to the Co-Chairs to approve any outstanding appointments once confirmed. Members were also asked to approve the 2026/27 calendar of meetings, noting that Partnership Board meetings would be arranged only if required as part of the Transport for the North reset and that no Independent Chair would be appointed.

5.2 The report also sought approval for a constitutional amendment to provide a clear process for cancelling meetings where there was good reason to do so, following consultation with the relevant Chair and the Monitoring Officer. Members were asked to note minor constitutional amendments made by the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chief Executive, to reflect the Transport for the North reset; Councillor Louise Gittins' permanent appointment as a co-opted member of the Board for this Municipal year; the Audit and Governance Committee's endorsement of the draft statutory accounts for 2025/26, which would be published on 30 June; and the internal audit on IT security controls, which had provided substantial assurance and identified no improvement actions.

5.3 The Board endorsed the report and its recommendations.

Resolved:

That the Board:

1) Approved the membership of the TfN Board and committees for the 2026/27 Municipal Year, with authority delegated to the Co-Chairs to approve any outstanding appointments;

2) Approved the 2026/27 calendar of meetings, noting that Partnership Board meetings would be scheduled only if required and with the agreement of the Co-Chairs;
3) Noted that an Independent Chair of the Partnership Board would not be appointed at this time;
4) Approved the proposed constitutional amendment relating to the cancellation of meetings;
5) Noted the constitutional amendments made by the Monitoring Officer, under delegated authority and in consultation with the Chief Executive, to reflect changes to group titles and improve operational processes;
6) Noted Councillor Gittins' permanent appointment as a co-opted member of the TfN Board;
7) Noted the Audit and Governance Committee's feedback on the draft Annual Accounts for 2025/26;
8) Noted the outcome of the internal audit on IT Security Controls at TfN.

6. Northern Powerhouse Rail Co-Sponsorship: Update

6.1 Members received the report from the Chief Executive (interim), who highlighted the key points. The report provided an update on the evolving governance arrangements for Northern Powerhouse Rail following the Government's announcement of funding for the programme.

6.2 Members were advised that new arrangements had been established to coordinate activity through transport directors, the White Rose Rail Board and the Liverpool-Manchester Rail Board. As a result, the existing co-sponsor agreement would be retired and replaced by those arrangements.

6.3 In response to a question from Mayor Rotheram, the Chief Executive (interim) clarified that Transport for the North would be represented on both the White Rose and the Liverpool Manchester Boards.

6.4 Mayor Brabin welcomed the work undertaken by the TfN TAME team in relation to Bradford Southern Gateway. She highlighted the strategic importance of the investment and the transport opportunities it supported, including improved connections between Bradford, Huddersfield, Manchester and Leeds, and thanked officers and partners for their work.

Resolved:

That the revised governance arrangements for NPR, and the implications for the co-sponsor arrangements be noted.

7. Transport for the North Reset Next Steps

7.1 Members received the report from the Chief Executive (interim), who provided an update on the Transport for the North reset. The Board was advised that the reset responded to changes in the operating environment, including full combined authority coverage across the North, rail reform and changes to core funding for 2026/27.

7.2 Members noted that discussions with Board Members had been constructive and had focused on Transport for the North's future functions, governance, funding and transition arrangements. Members had been broadly supportive of two core functions: multi-boundary transport governance and analytical services to support delivery.

7.3 The Board was advised that further work would be undertaken on the organisation's future operating model, including governance, efficiency, funding and legal, financial and risk matters, before formal proposals were brought back for consideration.

7.4 The Chief Executive (interim) advised that the Co-Chairs intended to write to the Secretary of State and the Chancellor of the Exchequer to set out the emerging recommendations and begin discussions with the Department for Transport.

7.5 The Board endorsed the report and its recommendations

Resolved:

That the Board:

1) Noted the report and the verbal update from the Chief Executive (interim) on the TfN reset, including potential future operating and funding models.
2) Noted the verbal update from the Chief Executive (interim) on proposed next steps and timeline for decisions to be presented to the TfN Board at future meetings.
3) Approved that the Co-Chairs and/or Chief Executive write to the Secretary of State and Chancellor of the Exchequer on future arrangements for TfN.

8. Corporate Risk Register Update

8.1 Members received the report from the Strategy and Corporate Services Director (interim), who outlined the key points and provided feedback from the Audit and Governance Committee. The Board was advised that the Corporate Risk Register had been reviewed to ensure it reflected discussions taking place as part of the Transport for the North reset.

8.2 Members noted that two new risks had been drafted in relation to the proposed operating and funding models. The Audit and Governance Committee suggested that these be merged. Further risks would be developed as the models progressed, alongside a separate risk appetite statement, and brought back to a future meeting.

8.3 The Board endorsed the report and its recommendations.

Resolved:

That the corporate risk register be noted.

9. Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on 21 September at 1pm ion Microsoft Teams.

In view of the conversations of the Board Mayor McGuinness suggested it be necessary to reconvene earlier should it be required.

10. Exclusion of Press and Public

It was resolved that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items pursuant to Section 100(A)4 of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 2 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and public interest would not be served in publishing the information.

11. Part 2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

11.1 The private minutes of the meeting of the Transport for the North Board held on 16 March 2026 were considered.

Resolved:

That the private minutes of the Transport for the North Board held on 16 March 2026 be approved as a correct record.