

## **BRIEFING NOTE FOR COUNCIL 11 SEPTEMBER 2013**

### ***Motion proposed by Councillor Rollins and seconded by Councillors Dennison, Hamilton-Cox and Whitaker:***

*The Combined Local Authorities in the North of England with responsibility for transport have produced a Long – Term rail strategy for the North of England. This document is now open for consultation. The Council requests that the appropriate officer(s) to respond to this consultation and requests that the electrification of the Lancaster-Morecambe line be included in this strategy.*

The City Council is not the transport authority for the area. This responsibility lies with the County Council. It is because of this that the City Council's Regeneration and Planning service does not engage specialist expertise in transportation matters. Input into strategic planning documents such as the Local Plan is provided by the County Council, who also produce on a County wide basis the Local Transport Plan.

The electrification of the Lancaster-Morecambe line would require considerable capital investment and would have to be justified on the basis of a substantial economic need case. The recent Heysham/M6 link examination into that major infrastructure proposal heard from the County Council the reasons why improving rail linkage to the Port of Heysham is not practical primarily due to restraints over train lengths and historic loss of the bypass loop past Morecambe station.

It is understood that Councillor Rollins' case is not simply based on trying to promote that Morecambe should be a destination capable of being serviced by an electrified line but on the desirability of using the Lancaster-Morecambe line as a turn around spur for London bound trains terminating at Lancaster. If this case is to be put it will require a degree of technical transportation argument which City Council officers are neither qualified or experienced to present.

If Members wish to promote detailed representations based on a technical understanding of the issues which councillor Rollins wishes to promote they will need to seek the support of the County Council and its expertise in rail related matters to do this.

Alternatively Members can advise Officers of the reasons they want to promote the electrification of the Lancaster – Morecambe line without a detailed technical justification and these can be forwarded as a response to the consultation.

The Consultation period for the Long Term Rail Strategy ends on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2013.

#### Monitoring Officer Comments

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

#### Section 151 Officer Comments

The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

**Andrew Dobson**  
**Chief Officer (Regeneration and Planning)**