

**GREATER MANCHESTER TRANSPORT COMMITTEE
METROLINK AND RAIL NETWORKS SUB-COMMITTEE**

Date: 22 January 2021

Subject: Local Rail Service Performance

Report of: Caroline Whittam, Head of Rail Franchising, TfGM

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report provides an update on local rail service operation and performance across Greater Manchester over Rail Periods 08 and 09, 2020/21 (18 October – 12 December 2020).

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Members are asked to note the contents of this report.

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Equalities Implications: n/a

Climate Change Impact Assessment and Mitigation Measures: n/a

Risk Management: n/a

Legal Considerations: n/a

Financial Consequences – Revenue: n/a

Financial Consequences – Capital: n/a

Number of attachments to the report: 0

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

MRN report of 20 November 2020

TRACKING/PROCESS		
Does this report relate to a major strategic decision, as set out in the GMCA Constitution		No
EXEMPTION FROM CALL IN		
Are there any aspects in this report which means it should be considered to be exempt from call in by the relevant Scrutiny Committee on the grounds of urgency?		n/a
GM Transport Committee	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	
n/a	n/a	

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report provides an update on local rail service operations and performance covering rail periods 08 and 09, 18 October – 12 December 2020.
- 1.2 The report is structured under subject headings aligned with the following key areas of focus for TfGM in relation to rail service delivery.
- Periods 08 and 09 overview, including:
 - Network Rail performance and updates
 - Route crime, trespass and fatality
 - Train operator performance and updates
 - Details of December 2020 timetable
 - Patronage and footfall updates
 - Monitoring of face covering compliance
- 1.3 A list of rail period dates for 2020/21 can be found in Appendix A.
- 1.4 A geographic map showing all Greater Manchester rail lines and stations can be found in Appendix B.
- 1.5 Individual TOC PPM vs Target and Moving Annual Average graphs and Northern and TPE cancellations and short forming graphs can be found in Appendix C.
- 1.6 Individual Line of Route performance for Northern and Service Group performance for TPE can be found in Appendix D.
- 1.7 Appendix E details Northern's Greater Manchester routes which have seen uplifts in December 2020 timetable change (shown in yellow).

2. OVERVIEW

- 2.1 The two periods covered by this report have seen continued robust operational performance by train operators, with high PPM and Right Time figures and low numbers of cancellations. Network Rail delay minutes continue to perform well and remain favourable to targets.
- 2.2 Train services experienced a further incremental uplift in timetable changes brought in on 13 December and are now at around 88% of pre-Covid levels. Avanti West Coast reduced services between Manchester – London to two trains per hour (tph) from 14 November 2020.
- 2.3 A full list of enhanced services can be found in this report and include Liverpool – Manchester Airport via Warrington, Wigan – Blackburn, Barrow/Windermere - Manchester

Airport services and the return of hourly trains between Leeds – Chester, Piccadilly – Chester via Altrincham, as well as the restoration of an hourly service for Rose Hill.

- 2.4 Christmas rail services followed a similar pattern to previous years, with early wind-downs on 24 and 31 December and no services on 25 and 26 December. Planned engineering works took place successfully, with no possession over-runs affecting local services over the Christmas period.
- 2.5 As part of its previous franchise commitments, Northern took delivery of its final new train in the autumn, with 101 brand new vehicles now in its fleet. The last Pacer train journey took place on 27 November and these have now finally been retired, after extensions to their use to help ensure social distancing on services.
- 2.6 Patronage has fluctuated, declining after increased leisure usage in summer and aligning with changes to Covid restrictions. Latest intelligence suggests that patronage is at around 15 – 20% of pre-Covid levels.
- 2.7 Face covering compliance has varied between operators and journey type/time, with average reports of between 80 – 85%. This remains higher for longer distance operators, at city centre and staffed or gated stations and in the morning peak period.
- 2.8 Emergency Recovery Measures Agreements (ERMAs) remain in place for TOCs which were brought in on 20 September, continuing the arrangement in which the government assumes liability for the costs of operating railways until March 2021. These agreements feature additional payments to operators for good performance.
- 2.9 Collaborative working across the industry and with input from TfGM, ensured that plans were in place for students to travel home for Christmas over their ‘travel window’. Furthermore, plans were put into place for passengers taking advantage of relaxed Covid restrictions over Christmas, which were subsequently revoked by government. Additional strengthening of some services, stand-by buses, easement of peak ticketing restrictions and messaging around the necessity of seat reservations had been put into place, although were not required.
- 2.10 Notable dates around Covid restrictions included the second national lockdown from 05 November until 02 December, the student travel window from 03 – 09 December, the Christmas relaxation period (later withdrawn) from 23 – 27 December and the imposition of tougher tiers for large parts of the country from 31 December, which saw Manchester enter Tier 4. As from 05 January, a third national lockdown has been imposed.

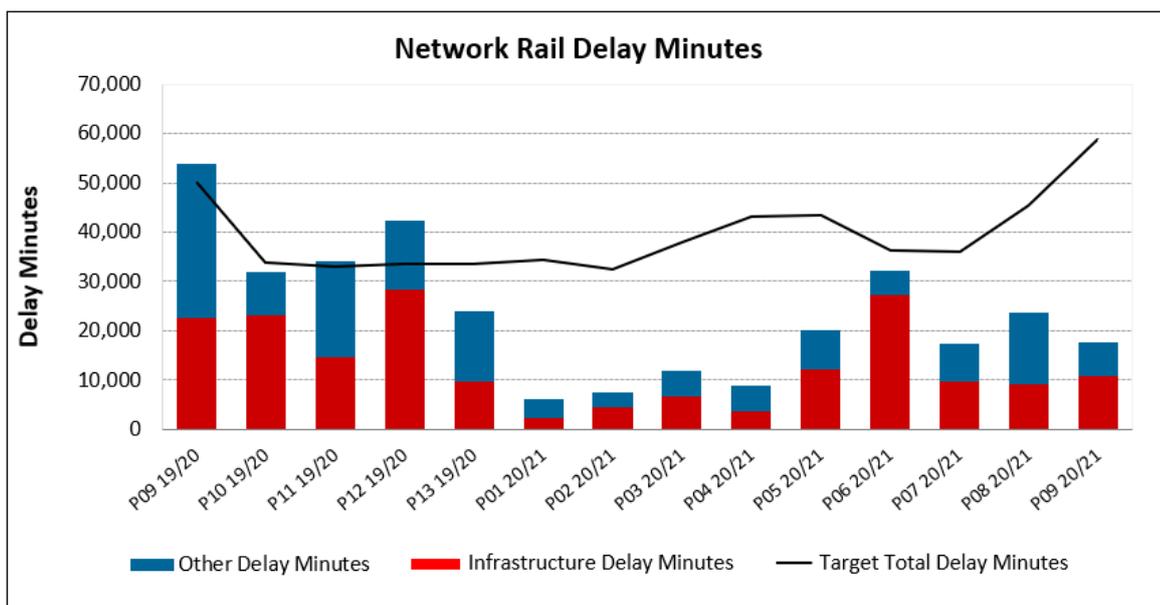
3. OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Network Rail

- 3.1 Network Rail performance is measured against overall delay minutes across its network. These include track and non-track infrastructure failures and external (or ‘Other’) delays, which are attributed to it, such as trespass and weather-related events.

- 3.2 Delays have reduced significantly and performance improved due to the rail network being considerably less congested since emergency train plans were introduced on 23 March 2020. Performance gains have been maintained as services have been added incrementally in July, September and again in December. Both primary and reactionary delay to incidents have fallen considerably, dwell times at stations have improved as a result of fewer passengers and infrastructure continues to perform well.
- 3.3 Total Network Rail delay increased in Period 08, largely due to increases in Other delay as a result of flooding across various parts of the network. This has halved in Period 09 bringing total delay down to 17,717 minutes in its Manchester area. Infrastructure caused delay has remained consistent over the past quarter at around 10,000 minutes.
- 3.4 The most significant infrastructure incidents over the periods included track circuit failures at Eccles (20/11) and Atherton (11/11), accounting for almost 2,000 minutes delay. An object on the OHLE at Trafford Park on 04 November caused 1,410 minutes delay and 7 cancellations. An engineering over-run on 09 November caused cancellations to Buxton services, with morning trains starting/terminating at Hazel Grove and replacement bus in operation.
- 3.5 Other delay included a combination of weather-related disruption, with widespread flooding on 26 October along parts of the WCML, Hope and Calder Valleys. Further flooding at Chinley on 23 November caused over 900 minutes delay. The most significant event of the periods was a lineside fire at Bradford on 16 November, which impacted both Northern and TPE services, causing disruption to Calder Valley services and considerable reactionary delay and congestion at Leeds station.
- 3.6 There were seven fatalities in the periods affecting local services; these included Trafford Park and Ince on 09 November, Slaithwaite on 26 October, Euxton on 28 November and Adlington on 30 November. Whilst the 09 November incidents had little direct impact on performance, the Euxton fatality caused almost 1,000 minutes delay to services and four cancellations.

Network Rail Delay Minutes (Manchester DU)



Route Crime, Manchester DU

- 3.7 Criminal activity on the railway causes significant delay and cancellations for passengers. Network Rail is attributable for this delay and it can be broken down into trespass, which can be accidental or intentional (and also includes threatened suicide), vandalism and fatality.

Category	Incidents P08	Delay Minutes P08	Incidents P09	Delay Minutes P09
Trespass	27	940	42	1160
Vandalism	8	215	6	64
Fatality	5	1277	2	235
Grand Total	40	2432	50	1459

- 3.8 The periods saw fatalities within Greater Manchester, including those detailed above. Further threatened suicides were reported at Chorley and Leyland stations, impacting Preston and Anglo-Scottish services.

- 3.9 Network Rail continues to work with British Transport Police and local mental health agencies, along with groups such as the Samaritans, in a bid to identify and deter potential suicidal behaviour. Physical mitigation at stations includes enhanced platform-end fencing and platform surface deterrents, spiking on bridges, signage and CCTV.

Operator Performance

- 3.10 Operator performance across the six TOCs who operate in Greater Manchester has remained consistent throughout the two periods covered by this report. TOCs have recorded PPM scores in the low to mid-nineties and right time performance averaging over 64% for the six in Period 08 and 68% in Period 09. Cancellation figures have remained low and CaSL figures stand at around 2-3%.
- 3.11 In addition to Network Rail delay, TOCs cause delay to themselves and to other TOCs (and freight companies). This can be due to crew issues, rolling stock failures, station or other operational issues, usually accounting for a third to a half of total delay. The tables below detail the largest delay-causing incidents across Periods 08 and 09. These included a derailed freight train at Sheffield, impacting longer distance services over three days from 11 November, a failed locomotive over Hope Valley on 04 November and a unit with pantograph issues on 07 November.
- 3.12 Autumnal period declines covered by this report have not impacted as significantly as in previous years. Reactionary delay to delayed trains has decreased due to a less congested network. Trains which were more susceptible to braking issues and wheel-flats, notably Pacer units, have been gradually withdrawn from service, with newer fleet fitted with more advanced braking systems and wheel-slip protection.

- 3.13 Covid train plans have been devised to be resilient and have contingency for unavailable crew. Largely, crew availability has not impacted service delivery, although the roll out of mass testing in Liverpool resulted in significant numbers of crew being diagnosed or having to self-isolate due to Covid. Rather than cancel services at short notice, Northern pre-planned the cancellation of some of its half-hourly stopping services between Liverpool – Manchester Oxford Rd on five days over the periods on 25, 28, 30 October and 05, 07 November. An hourly stopping service was maintained on the route, along with additional (mostly) hourly EMR express services. A limited number of these EMR services are currently withdrawn or only operating between Liverpool – Manchester – Nottingham, again due to issues with crew availability.
- 3.14 New trains for both Northern and TPE are now performing well after some initial teething problems. Northern took delivery of its final new train in the autumn to complete its brand-new fleet of 101 vehicles. Although they have technically performed well and far outlasted their planned service, Pacer trains were still required until 27 December as the last journey was made by one to Kirkby.
- 3.15 Station and operational delay caused by extended platform dwell times continues to be significantly reduced as a result of the fall in rail demand.

Most Significant Incidents – GM Travel to Work Area, all causes:

Date and Period	Location	Incident	Delay minutes and cancellations
16 November (P09)	Bradford	Lineside Fire	2,000+ mins tbc; 50 full/70 part cancellations for Northern alone
11 November (P08)	Sheffield	Freight Train De-railment	2,019 mins; 274 full and part cancellations
26 October (P08)	Hattersley, Woodley, Rose Hill and WCML	Flooding	Excess 1,000 mins; various full/part cancellations
04 November	Trafford Park	Object on OHLE	1,410 mins; 4 full/3 part cancellations
04 November	Hope Valley	Loco Failure	1,038 mins; 2 full/5 part cancellations

- 3.16 The table below illustrates the six individual Greater Manchester TOCs PPM and Right Time performance over the previous two periods. PPM fell for Northern in Period 08 to below 90% for the first time since emergency timetables were introduced in March but recovered in Period 09. The average of the six TOCs Right Time scores in Period 09 reached 68%.

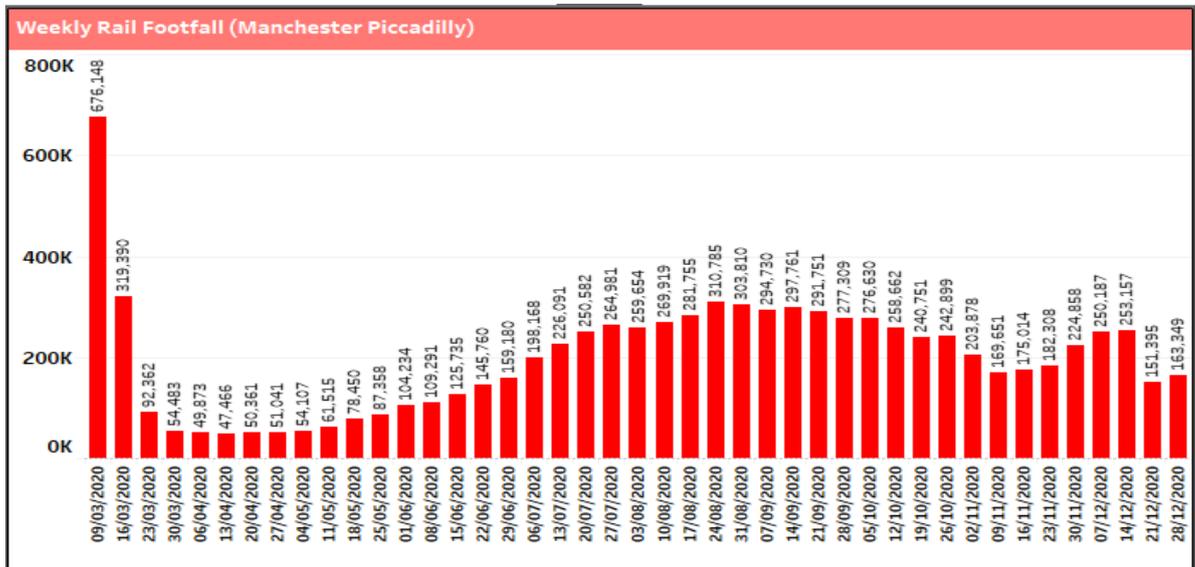
TOC		P08	P09
Northern*	- Right Time%	76.1	70.4
	- PPM%	87.1	91.5
TPE	- Right Time%	79.7	73.7
	- PPM%	93.8	93.8
Avanti	- Right Time%	45.3	53.6
	- PPM%	90.5	89.8
TfW	- Right Time%	80.0	77.3
	- PPM%	93.9	94.5
Cross Country	- Right Time%	51.3	62.3
	- PPM%	91.9	93.8
EMR	- Right Time%	51.3	71.4
	- PPM%	83.1	89.3

**Right Time for Central/West regions; PPM company-wide*

- 3.17 Graphs detailing the six GM TOC PPM set against target and including a rolling Moving Annual Average (MAA) figure can be found in Appendix C.
- 3.18 Graphs detailing Northern and TPE cancellations and short forming can also be found in Appendix C. For both of these metrics, the revised train plans have seen excellent performance since the start of Period 01, 2020/21. Train services have operated reliably, with very few cancellations and full strengthening. The measures used to monitor Northern's short forming have been suspended.

4. PATRONAGE

- 4.1 Passenger demand across the rail network declined over the periods, reflective of more stringent Covid tier restrictions across the region. This culminated in the second national lockdown on 05 November, with patronage dropping to around 15% of pre-Covid levels. Operators have maintained service levels and plans to introduce additional trains in December, other than Avanti who has reduced its Manchester – London service from 3 to 2 tph.
- 4.2 Footfall at Piccadilly station declined to less than 25,000 per day throughout the second lockdown (including significant staff movements), rising to around 30,000 following relaxation. Figures have declined further over Christmas and remain approximately 75% lower than in the same period last year.



5. FACE COVERING COMPLIANCE

5.1 TfGM continues to work with TOCs, British Transport Police (BTP) and Travel Safe Officers (TSOs) to raise awareness of the mandatory requirement to wear face coverings whilst at stations and on-board public transport. The policy has been one of education, engagement and, if necessary, enforcement. For rail, face covering compliance remains at around 80% – 85%, with slightly higher compliance on longer distance operators. Morning peak and city centre journeys also attract higher levels of compliance.

5.2 Cumulative figures from BTP since the requirement began in July, report that, up until 21 December, 71,800 interventions were made, with 4,667 persons directed to leave the train and 162 fixed penalty notices issued across the whole of the national heavy rail network.

6. DECEMBER 2020 TIMETABLE

6.1 Enhanced train services began operating on the 13 December, as part of the December timetable change, on the following Northern services, as previously detailed;

- Liverpool – Warrington Central – Manchester Airport
- Barrow/Windermere - Wigan North Western – Manchester Airport
- Wigan Wallgate – Blackburn
- Manchester Piccadilly - Stoke
- Leeds – Manchester Victoria – Chester
- Manchester Piccadilly – Altrincham – Chester
- Manchester Piccadilly – Rose Hill

- 6.2 TPE saw its Cleethorpes – Sheffield – Manchester Airport service re-instated to hourly, although only operating to Manchester Piccadilly.
- 6.3 Whilst services will be enhanced by the December timetable, a small number of Northern trains due for implementation in December, will now not be introduced until 25 January. These include two trains in each direction on Manchester – Altrincham route and two additional peak trains in each direction between Manchester – Hadfield. Additionally, one existing train in each direction between Manchester – Sheffield will not now operate until 25 January. This is due to on-going crew availability as a direct result of Covid.

7. CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR SERVICES

- 7.1 As reported in the previous MRN report, Christmas and New Year rail services operated to a similar pattern of previous years. Services finished early on Christmas and New Year's Eves, with no train services in place on 25 and 26 December. New Year's Day saw a normal weekday service operate, with the exclusion of some early morning services.
- 7.2 Due to a combination of crew unavailability as a result of Covid and a reluctance to work the rest day Sunday between Christmas and New Year, there were one hundred Northern service cancellations on Sunday 27 December impacting Greater Manchester, although passenger demand was extremely low.

8. NETWORK UPDATES

- 8.1 Northern has announced an additional eleven Travel Safe Officers to join its team in Manchester. These will be working alongside British Transport Police and based on stations and trains out of Manchester Victoria and Manchester Oxford Rd stations.
- 8.2 Following on from a successful trial, Northern is now able to offer its customers who use mobility scooters access to its services at more than 100 accessible stations across its network. More information, including details of the permit scheme, maps of the stations which are covered, the types of scooters which are accepted under the scheme form to apply for a Scooter 'Rail Ready' permit can be found here:

<https://www.northernrailway.co.uk/mobilityscooter>

- 8.3 As part of a review of performance following the 2018 timetable, the Manchester Recovery Task Force is looking at services using Manchester and the Castlefield corridor in a bid to evaluate how performance and reliability can be improved. Stakeholder consultation will begin on plans for May 2022 timetable changes in early January.

9. EMERGENCY RECOVERY MEASURES AGREEMENTS

- 9.1 The Emergency Recovery Measures Agreements introduced in September continue to give the rail industry the financial support and clear directives it needs to continue operating.

- 9.2 The DfT continues to waive TOCs revenue, cost and contingent capital risk and is paying a fixed management fee (max 1.5%) with the potential for an additional performance-based fee, based on measures including punctuality, passenger satisfaction and financial performance.
- 9.3 Currently, Northern Trains Limited continue to operate under an Operator of Last Resort (OLR) arrangement; Cross Country are operating under a Direct Award until October 2023 and TfW are now operating under a Welsh government OLR. TPE, Avanti and EMR are all covered by ERMAAs.
- 9.4 The government has announced that rail fares will rise in January based on the RPI+1% formula. Over recent years, the additional +1% has been dropped and fares have risen with inflation. The government cites unprecedented funding for the rail industry over the past year as the basis for restoring this. This will mean that regulated fares will face a rise of 2.6%.

10. COMMUNITY RAIL

- 10.1 Station Friends groups and adopters have returned to their stations and continue to help put them at the centre of their local communities. Outstanding work by groups at Heaton Chapel, Rose Hill, Reddish South, Romiley, Marple and Altrincham was recognised with awards at Cheshire's Best Kept Station event in November (the awards feature stations previously classed as Cheshire pre-local authority boundary changes). Further honours were bestowed to Hindley, Heaton Chapel and Rose Hill stations at the national Community Rail Network awards in December.
- 10.2 TfGM continues to help set up new Friends groups and, in addition to the newly formed group at Pemberton, have new members at Hindley and a local school interested in adopting Ince. TfGM will be working with Northern and Ince primary school, in conjunction with the Samaritans, to brighten the area up and deter people from thoughts of suicide or self-harm.

11. FORWARD LOOK

- 11.1 December 2020 saw new timetables featuring more services. Service levels will once again need review following national lockdown. The latest estimates on when passenger demand will return to pre-Covid levels for rail travel vary (ranging from 2024 – 2029).
- 11.2 TfGM has learnt that, as a result of the government's intentions not to award rail workers a pay rise in 2021/22, RMT guards at TPE shall be undertaking a 'work to rule' from 06 January 2021. This will see guards refusing to work overtime or rest days. TPE believes that contingency in its train planning will enable services to still be delivered.
- 11.3 The industry continues to await publication of the further-delayed Williams Review into Rail, which will now include a response to the post-Covid environment and challenges faced.

- 11.4 As a result of DfT instruction to enable reliable service delivery amidst increasing crew unavailability due to Covid and a further fall in passenger demand, train plans will change from 18 January 2021. Northern changes are listed in a revised Appendix E. TPE and EMR services will change from 25 January and Members will be verbally updated at Committee.

Caroline Whittam
Head of Rail Franchising, TfGM

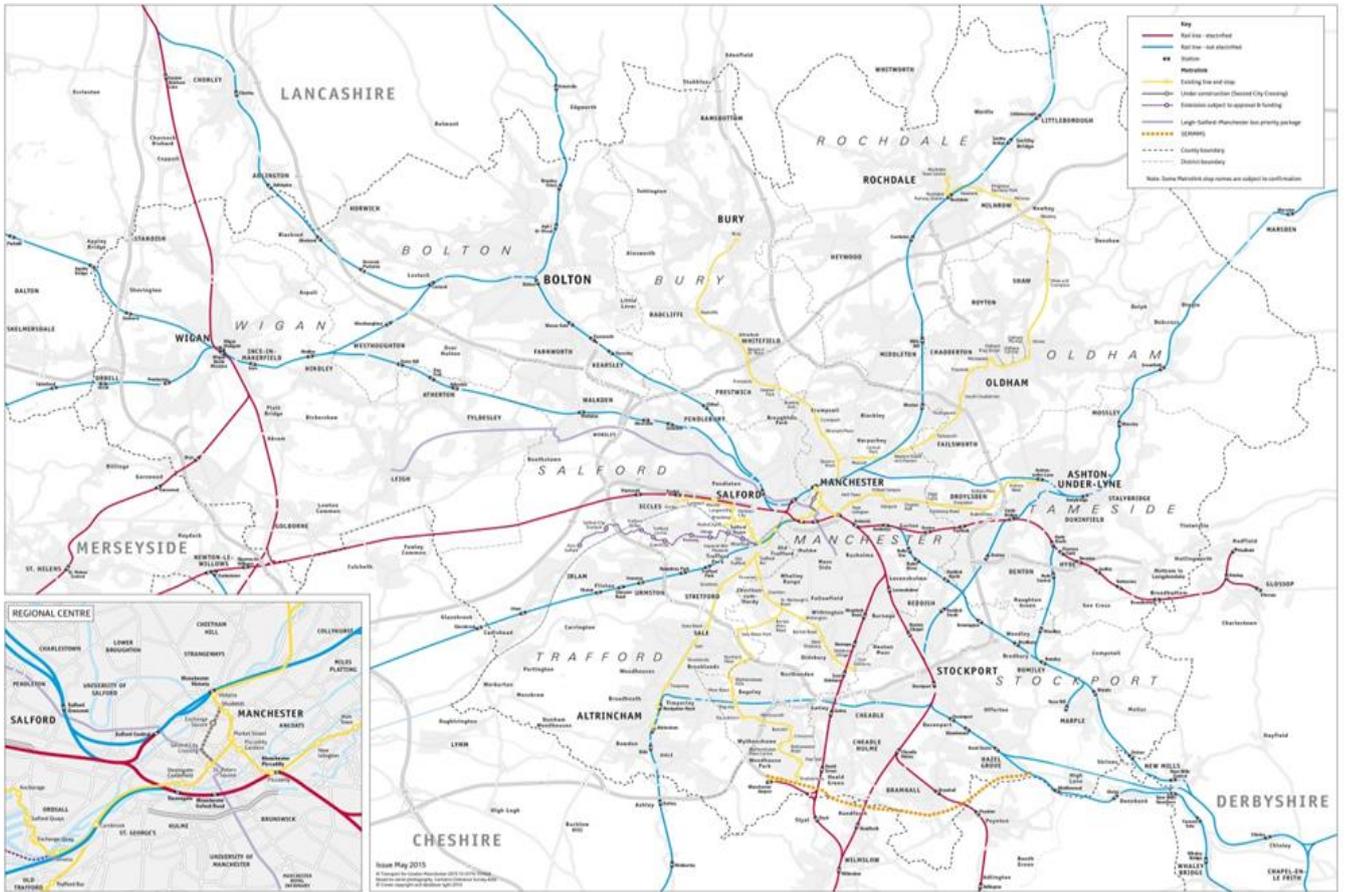
Appendix A – Period Dates

P01 – 20	P02 – 20	P03 – 20	P04 – 20	P05 – 20
01 April – 02 May 20	03 May – 30 May 20	31 May – 27 June 20	28 June – 25 July 20	26 July – 22 August 20

P06 – 20	P07 – 20	P08 – 20	P09 – 20	P10 – 20/21
23 August – 19 September	20 September – 17 October	18 October – 14 November	15 November – 12 December	13 December – 09 January

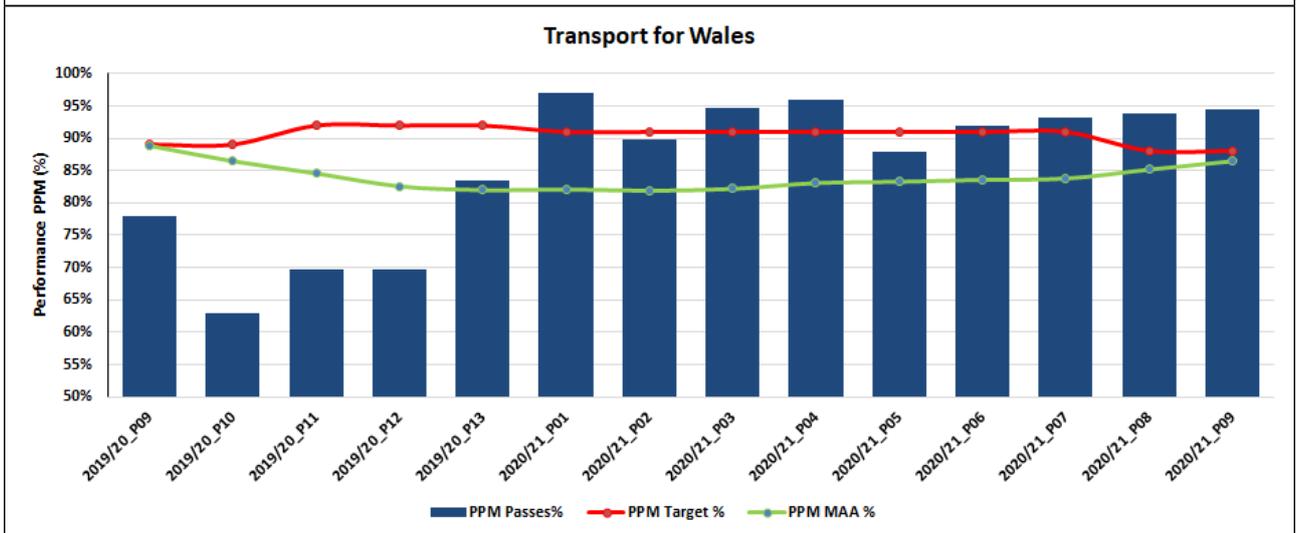
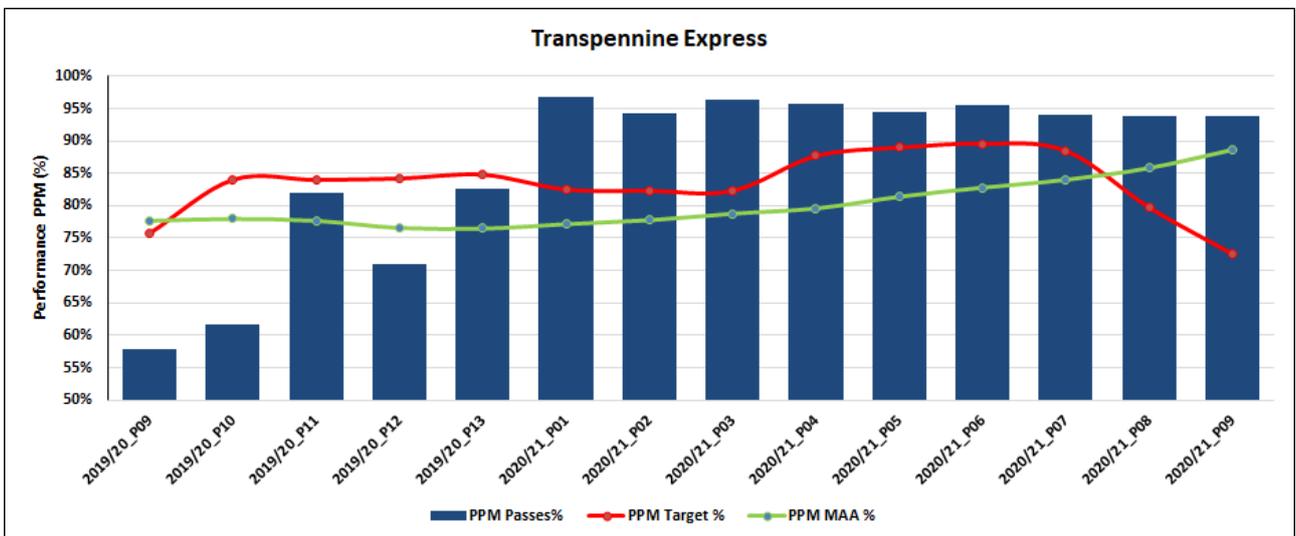
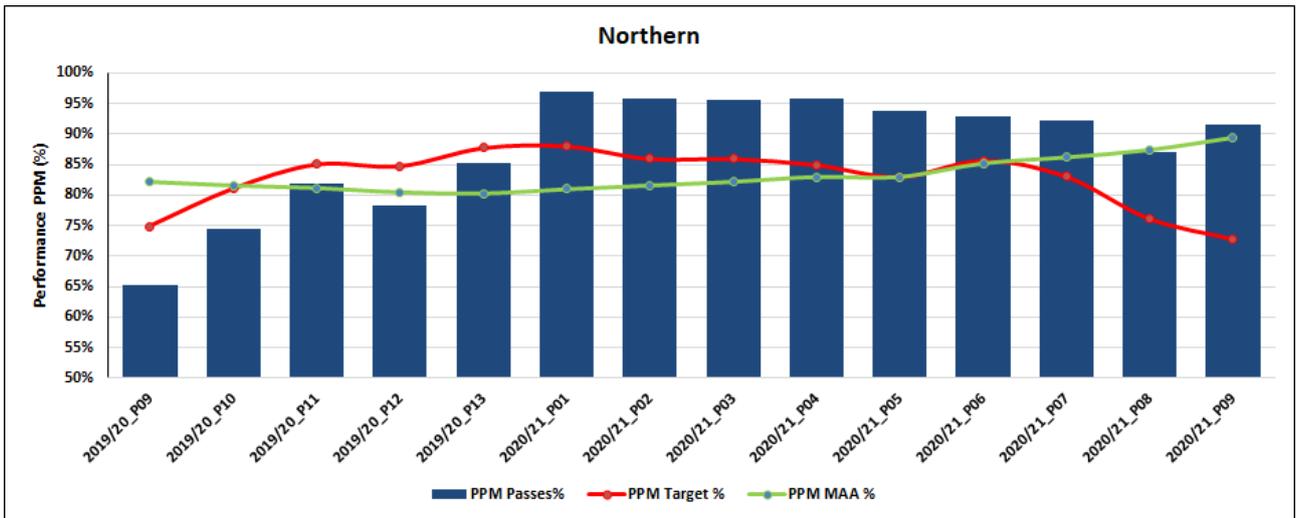
P11 – 21	P12 – 21	P13 – 21
10 January – 06 February	07 February – 06 March	07 March – 31 March

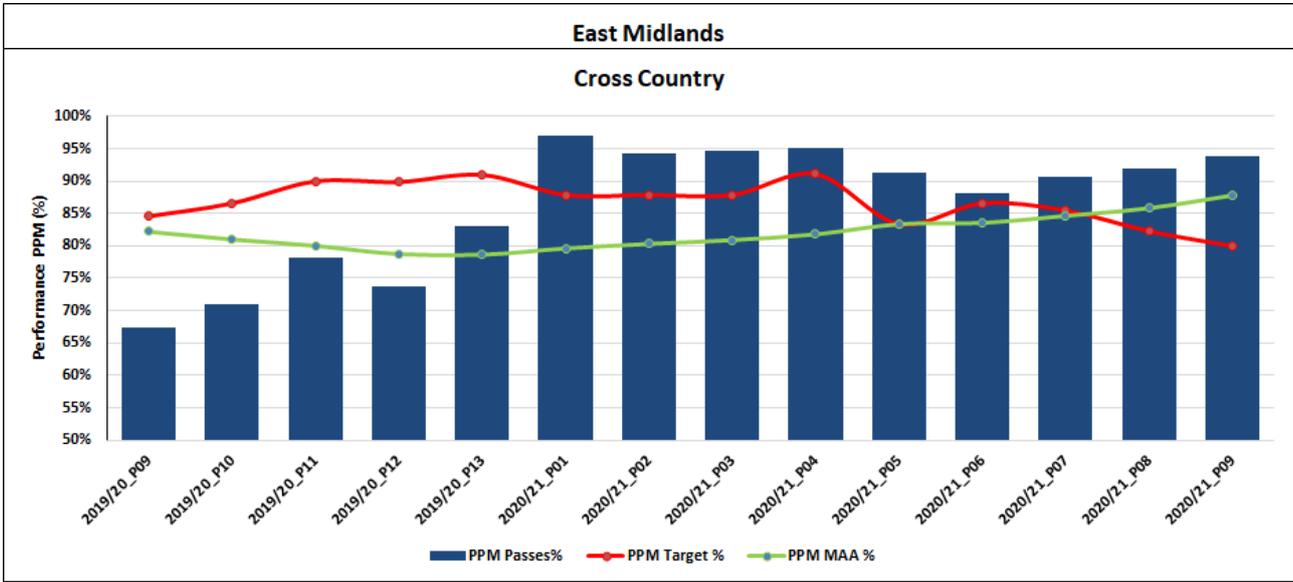
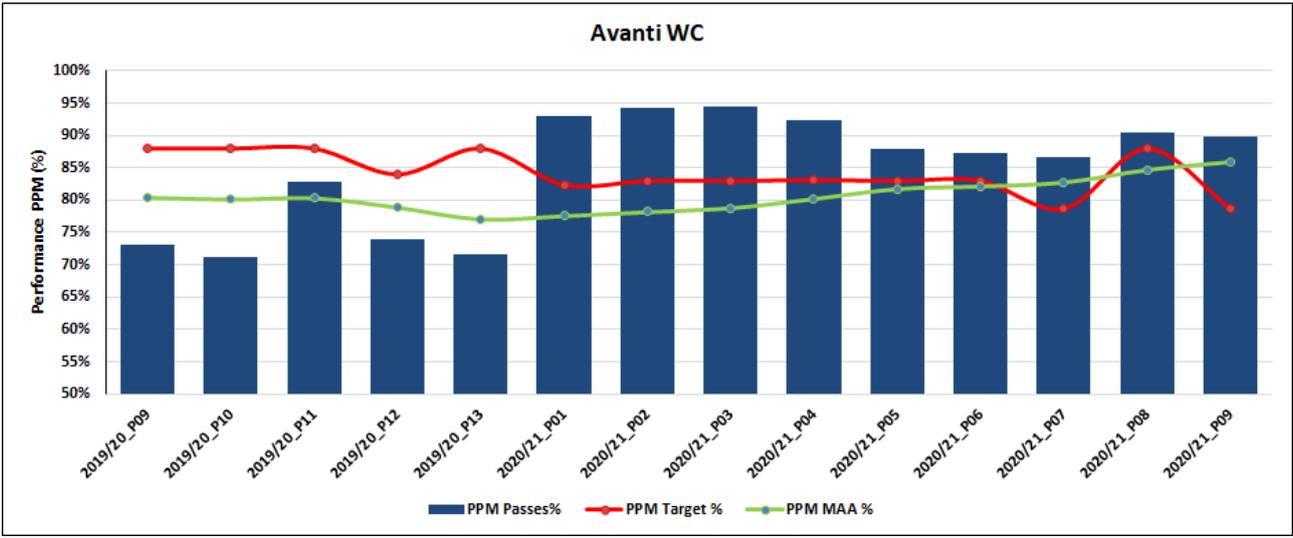
APPENDIX B: Greater Manchester Map



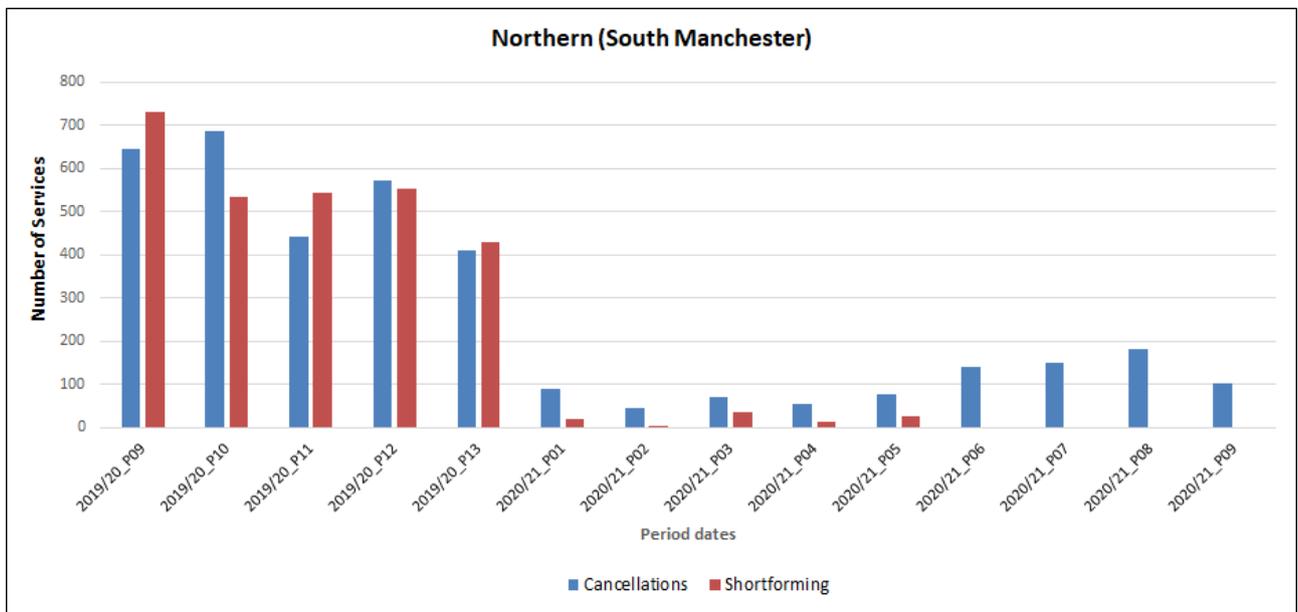
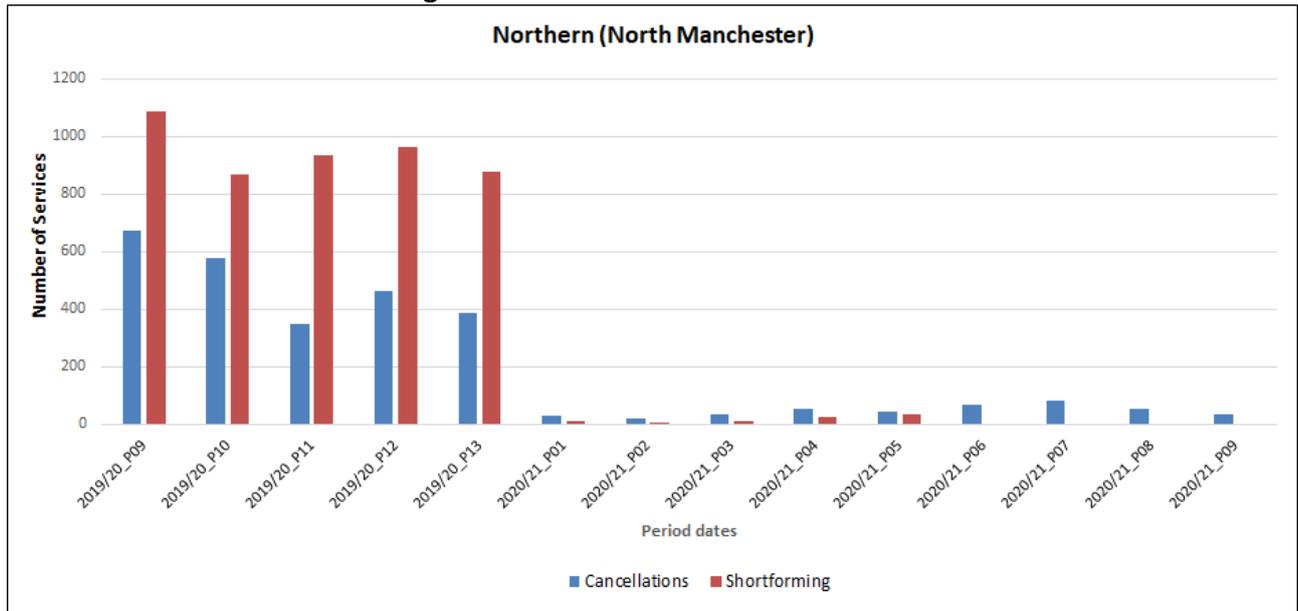
Appendix C – Individual TOC PPM vs Target and Moving Annual Average graphs

TOC PPM vs Target and Moving Annual Average graphs

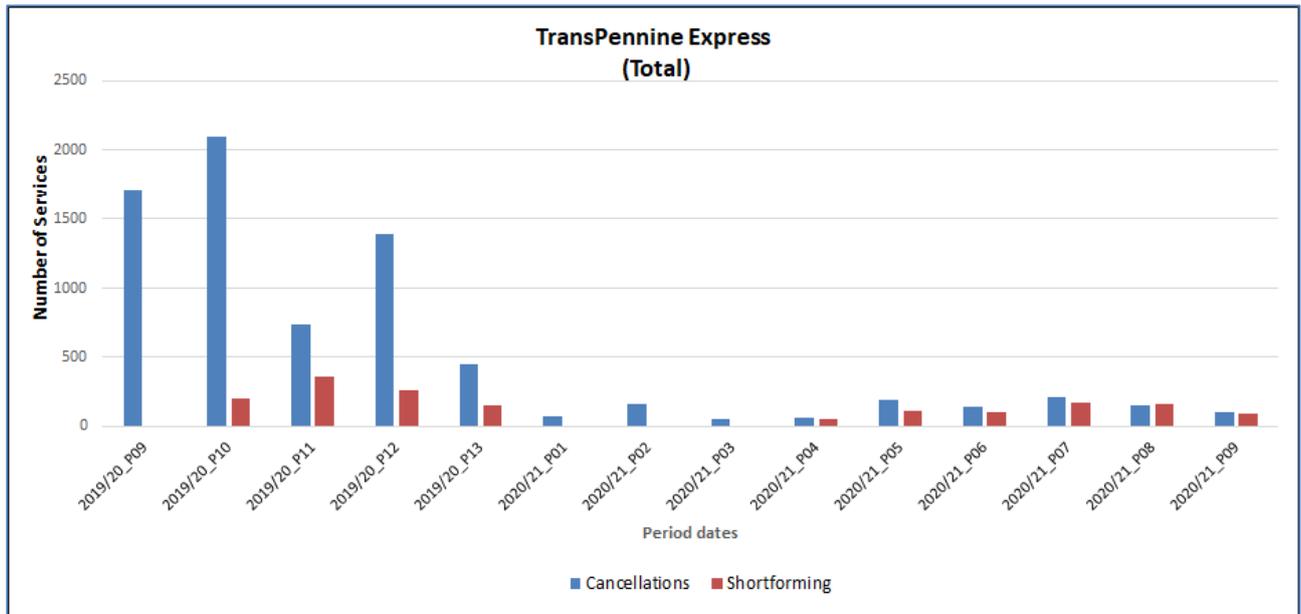




Cancellations and Short Forming – Northern



Cancellations and Short Forming – TPE



Appendix D – Northern Line of Route Right Time/TPE Service Group Right Time

Northern Line of Route 2020/21 Right Time	P08	P09	YTD
CLITHEROE - BOLTON - VICTORIA	81.6	85.6	88
PICCADILLY - STOCKPORT - CREWE	76.3	81.1	86.7
PICCADILLY - BUXTON	76.2	80.6	86.1
LEEDS - WIGAN	65.9	69.3	84.2
SOUTHPORT/VIC - STALYBRIDGE	67.2	71.3	81.1
KIRKBY - VICTORIA	66.4	75.8	81.1
PICCADILLY - NEW MILLS CENTRAL	64.2	73.2	80.7
LIVERPOOL - MANCHESTER OXFORD RD	67.1	73.6	80.1
PICCADILLY - STOKE	64.6	74.1	79.1
PICCADILLY - CHESTER	56.6	66	78.2
PICCADILLY - HADFIELD/GLOSSOP	55.2	62.3	78
LIVERPOOL - CREWE via Airport	62.1	67.9	77.9
BLACKPOOL - WIGAN - LIVERPOOL*	66.1	72.8	77.8
MANCHESTER - PRESTON	68	73.1	77.1
HAZEL GROVE - BLACKPOOL	68.9	75.4	77.1
CLITHEROE/BLACKBURN - TODMORDEN - VICTORIA	71.8	73	76.8
BLACKPOOL Nth - BOLTON - AIRPORT	71.6	76.3	76.6
BLACKBURN - VICTORIA - ROCHDALE (stopper)	89.3	85.8	75.2
PICCADILLY - SHEFFIELD	60.9	72.5	74.8
PICCADILLY - ROSE HILL/MARPLE	63.6	70.8	74.5
PICCADILLY - AIRPORT - CREWE	55	66.7	74.1
SOUTHPORT - OXFORD RD/ALDERLY EDGE	56.5	62.4	74
LIVERPOOL - WARRINGTON - AIRPORT	70.6	66.6	71.9
AIRPORT - WIGAN NW - BARROW/WINDERMERE	54.6	61.6	66.8
MANCHESTER VICTORIA - LEEDS	43.7	48.8	63
LEEDS - CHESTER	43	48.6	59.3

TPE RT	P08	P09	YTD
North	70.1	74	79.3
South	64.2	73.4	74.9
Scottish	64.9	71.4	72.2

Appendix E – Revised: GM Northern Train Plan from 18/01 until further notice

West and Central Region Service Group	From 18 January 2021
Barrow - Manchester Airport	Two Hourly
Windermere - Manchester Airport	Two Hourly
Blackpool North - Hazel Grove	Hourly
Blackpool North - Manchester Airport	Removed, except for AM and PM peak
Preston - Manchester Victoria	Hourly
Liverpool - Manchester Oxford Road	Half hourly
Liverpool - Manchester Airport via Newton-le-Willows	Hourly (no longer operates through to Crewe)
Southport - Manchester Oxford Rd	Replaces SOP – SYB. Hourly to/from Oxford Road. SOP - ALD withdrawn
Liverpool – Warrington Central - Airport	Service withdrawn
Stoke - Manchester Piccadilly	Hourly
Clitheroe - Rochdale	Hourly
Blackburn - Manchester Victoria	Hourly during AM and PM high peak only
Wigan - Leeds via Dewsbury	Hourly
Manchester Victoria - Leeds via Bradford	Hourly, with a two hourly extension to Chester
Manchester Piccadilly - Chester via Altrincham	Two Hourly (from hourly)
Manchester Piccadilly - Buxton	Hourly, with some peak additional
Manchester Piccadilly - Sheffield via New Mills Central	Hourly to Sheffield
Manchester Piccadilly - New Mills Central	Two Hourly with additional morning and evening services
Manchester Piccadilly - Hadfield	Half hourly
Manchester Piccadilly - Rose Hill	Hourly
Manchester Piccadilly - Crewe via Stockport	Hourly
Liverpool - Wigan	Hourly
Victoria - Blackburn via Todmorden	Three Hourly (Hourly Wigan – Blackburn withdrawn)
Manchester Victoria - Kirkby	Hourly
Manchester Victoria - Rochdale	Hourly during AM and PM peak
Manchester Victoria - Stalybridge	Hourly
Liverpool - Blackpool North	Mix of Hourly/Two Hourly