

## **GREATER MANCHESTER TRANSPORT COMMITTEE**

### **METROLINK AND RAIL NETWORKS SUB-COMMITTEE**

Date: 14 January 2022

Subject: Local Rail Services Performance Report

Report of: Simon Elliott, Head of Rail Programme, TfGM

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### **PURPOSE OF REPORT:**

To update Members on local rail service performance and operations between rail periods 07 and 08, 2021/22 (19 September – 13 November 2021).

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Members are asked to note the contents of this report.

### **CONTACT OFFICERS:**

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## **Equalities Implications**

Not applicable

## **Climate Change Impact Assessment and Mitigation Measures**

Not applicable

## **Risk Management**

Not applicable

## **Legal Considerations**

Not applicable

## **Financial Consequences – Revenue**

Not applicable

## **Financial Consequences – Capital**

Not applicable

## **Number of attachments to the report: 4**

Appendix A – Railway Period Dates 2021/22

Appendix B – Greater Manchester Rail Network Map

Appendix C – TOC PPM vs Target and Moving Annual Average

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

## **Comments/recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

Not applicable

## **Background Papers**

Nil

## **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?

No

## **GM Transport Committee**

Not applicable

## **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Not applicable

# **1. INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND**

- 1.1. This report provides an update on local rail service operations and performance, covering rail periods 07 and 08, 2021/22 (19 September – 13 November 2021).
- 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 07 and 08 overview
  - Network Rail performance and updates
  - Route crime
  - Train operator performance and updates
  - Details of current train plans and MRTF updates for December 2022 timetable
  - Patronage and footfall figures
  - Christmas and New Year Services
  - Engineering and Events
  - Community Rail
- 1.3. A list of rail period dates for 2021/22 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 PPM vs Target and Moving Annual Average graphs can be found in Appendix C for all six GM TOCs. This also includes cancellation and short formation graphs for Northern and TPE.
- 1.6. Right Time Line of Route performance for Northern and Service Group performance for TPE can be found in Appendix D.

# **2. OVERVIEW**

- 2.1. This report covers rail periods 07 and 08, between 19 September and 13 November 2021.
- 2.2. Operational performance remained broadly consistent in Period 07 but declined in Period 08, largely as a result of weather-related events and the onset of autumn, with associated railhead issues across the network.
- 2.3. Train services over the periods covered by this report represented around 82% of pre-Covid levels, following the re-instatement of some services which had been

temporarily suspended in August. These plans mirrored a similar pattern to the timetable operating briefly in December 2020.

- 2.4. A new national rail timetable was launched on 12 December 2021, featuring some planned enhancements to Greater Manchester services on Sundays and the return of three Avanti trains per hour between Manchester and London.
- 2.5. Patronage levels over the period continued to increase, with Northern reporting around 78% of pre-Covid levels at its highest. Footfall correspondingly increased at Manchester Piccadilly, largely driven by weekend leisure and event demand.
- 2.6. TfGM is currently responding to the detailed timetable consultation as part of the Manchester Recovery Task Force (MRTF). Whilst the preferred option B+ has been chosen, TfGM has some concerns over degradation of connectivity, notably in Wigan and Stockport.
- 2.7. Service delivery has begun to be impacted by crew availability as a result of new and emerging Covid strains. Industrial action and rest day working arrangements are also beginning to impact on staff numbers available for work on certain days.

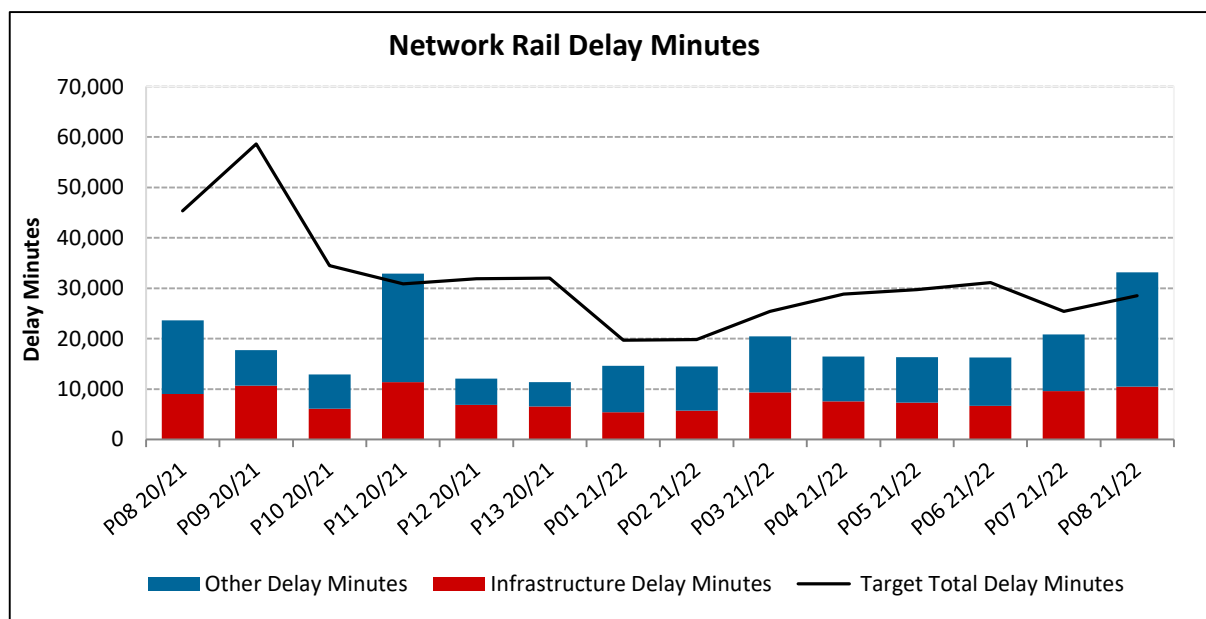
### **3. OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE**

#### **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. Total delay minutes have more than doubled across Network Rail's Manchester Delivery Unit (DU) since Period (P) 06 and reached over 33,000 at the end of P08. Delay minutes in P08 were adverse to target for the first time in ten periods, by 16%
- 3.3. The number of individual infrastructure incidents has risen from 75 in P06 to 88 in P08. Correspondingly, total delay minutes as a result of this have increased from just 6,660 in P06 to 10,505 in P08.
- 3.4. The single largest infrastructure incident involved a damaged OHLE dropper arm at Golborne Junction on 11 October, which resulted in 4,284 minutes delay and a total of 30 cancellations. An emergency speed restriction (ESR) of 20 mph at Chinley on 11 October caused 3,168 minutes delay and 23 cancellations.

- 3.5. Other infrastructure incidents in the periods included signalling failures at Stockport on 30 September (1,223 mins) and at Guide Bridge on 04 October (1,267 mins). Damaged track across Hope Valley caused 1,425 minutes delay on 11 October, whilst a defective rail was responsible for 3,520 minutes delay to Anglo-Scottish services on 02 November.
- 3.6. External delay minutes have been the main driver of increases in overall delay, rising from 9,604 minutes in P06 to 22,675 in P08. Widespread flooding across the network, as a result of Storm Arwen, impacted service delivery and caused multiple cancellations and delay between 26 and 28 October. Locally, lines were flooded at Parkgate and Astley, with further flooding to already saturated ground in the Greenfield area on 02 November.
- 3.7. The largest single External incident involved a repeat trespasser at Slade Lane on 18 October. This caused a 6,179 minutes delay and resulted in 68 full and part train cancellations.

#### NETWORK RAIL DELAY MINUTES (MANCHESTER DU)



#### ROUTE CRIME, MANCHESTER DELIVERY UNIT

- 3.8. Criminal activity, theft and trespass causes significant delay and cancellations to passengers. Network Rail is responsible for this delay and works closely with train operators, British Transport Police and other agencies to mitigate and prevent such incidences occurring.

- 3.9. Trespass, vandalism and theft on the railway continue to impact service delivery across Greater Manchester. The largest single incident over the periods covered was a trespasser at Slade Lane Junction on 18 October. BTP were called lineside to apprehend the trespasser, who left the railway only to re-appear later. In total, over 6,000 minutes delay were caused and 68 trains cancelled due to this. It is subject to a Network Rail incident learning review to look at how this type of event can be prevented or better managed in future.
- 3.10. Extensive work is already underway on enhancing physical deterrents at key locations on the network, plus engagement with known offenders and local mental health agencies.
- 3.11. There was a total of four fatalities recorded over the two periods, including incidents at Levenshulme on 07 October and Edgeley Junction on 27 October. Further incidents of threatened suicide were recorded, including at Eccles on 03 October.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Incidents/ Minutes P07</b>	<b>Incidents/ Minutes P08</b>
<b>Trespass</b>	39 (1609)	35 (8262)
<b>Vandalism</b>	5 (101)	6 (264)
<b>Cable Theft</b>	-	-
<b>Fatality</b>	3 (2131)	1 (647)
<b>Grand Total</b>	47 (3841)	42 (9173)

## **TRAIN OPERATOR PERFORMANCE**

- 3.12. Operational performance remained broadly consistent in Period 07, with PPM in the high 80% for the longer distance operators, around 90% for Northern and almost 95% for TPE. Right Time at Destination figures for both Northern and TPE remained strong at around 70%. Cancellations remained relatively low through the period.
- 3.13. Period 08 saw the onset of autumn and seasonal deterioration in railhead conditions due to accumulated leaf-fall. This year's delays as a result of leaf-fall have not impacted performance as significantly as in previous years. Class 142 (Pacer) units which were highly susceptible to wheel-flats as a result of braking

during autumn, have all been removed from service and both newer and some legacy fleet are now fitted with more advanced braking systems and wheel-slip protection.

- 3.14. Storm Arwen, between 26 – 28 October, was responsible for severe flooding across the network and resulted in emergency speed restrictions in several locations on the network. Additionally, saturated ground led to further flooding at Astley and Greenfield on 02 November.
- 3.15. Crew availability remained relatively stable over the periods and did not largely impact service delivery. For Northern, Sunday Rest Day working arrangements in its Central and West regions continue to present a challenge.
- 3.16. Unit availability has remained strong over autumn, with a reduction in units being taken out of service for wheel repairs (see above). Miles per technical incident have continued to improve for both TPE and Northern's new fleet of vehicles. Northern, however, continues to experience problems on its Class 769 bi-mode units when changing from electric to diesel operation. This has resulted in some of these units being taken out of service and de-strengthening of other services to provide additional diesel stock to cover Southport routes.
- 3.17. Period 08 performance this year has declined for all six GM TOCs compared to the same period last year, when a similar number of train services were operating (82% of pre-Covid). The average of the TOCs PPM scores was 90.1% in 2020 and 79.3% in 2021. This compares to an average of just 72.7% in P08, 2019, when a full timetable was operating.
- 3.18. Period 08 over the past two years has seen severe weather events, however Storm Arwen this year was responsible for greater overall delay. Passenger numbers were also significantly lower last year (during the second national lockdown) at just 15 – 20% of normal, compared to 70 – 75% this year.

TOC/PPM%	P08 2019	P08 2020	P08 2021
Northern	71.5	87.1	81.1
TPE	69.4	93.8	89.8
Virgin/Avanti	66.8	90.5	78.4



Cross Country	76.6	91.9	81.0
TfW	77.7	93.9	73.6
EMR	74.3	83.1	72.1

- 3.19. Towards the end of P08 and P09, crew availability has become the key focus of concern for train operators as new, easier transmissible variants of Covid have emerged. This looks set to progressively worsen as winter approaches, although up to time of publication, emergency train plans have not been implemented.
- 3.20. Industrial relations are affecting crew availability at East Midlands Railway (guards and senior conductors), Cross Country and now TPE. There has been an end to rest day working at TPE and its members of the RMT have been balloted for strike action. Cross Country guards have announced strike days planned for Christmas and New Years' Eves (24 and 31 December). Avanti staff have also been balloted for industrial action. These measures will likely affect service delivery in the run up to Christmas and there is potential for late notification service cancellations.

#### **SIGNIFICANT INCIDENTS, LOCAL NETWORK, PERIODS 07/08**

Date	Incident	Delay Minutes	Cancellations
18 October	Trespass, Slade Lane	6,179	68 full/part
11 October	OHLE issues, Golborne	4,284	9 full/21 part
27 September	Tree on line, Rochdale	2,089	17 full/56 part
28 October	Points failure, Stalybridge	1,992	47 full/part
01 November	Track circuit failure, Hall Royd Junction	1,650	16 full/part

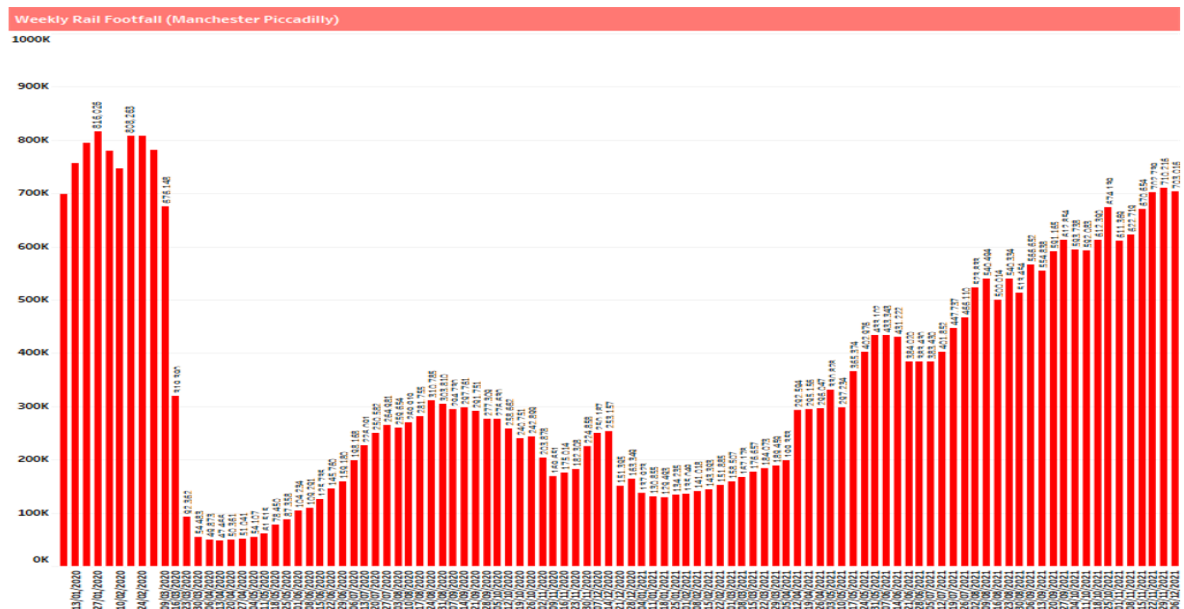
#### **SIGNIFICANT INCIDENTS, LNW NETWORK, PERIODS 07/08**

Date	Incident	Delay Minutes	Cancellations
28 October	Unit loss of power, Watford Junction	10,529	38 full/46 part

19 October	Fatality, Watford Junction	4,408	20 full/18 part
20 October	Embankment issues, Chinley	3,875	2 full/part
02 November	Defective rail, Oxenholme	3,520	2 full/part
11 October	20 mph ESR, Chinley	3,168	19 full/4 part

## 4. PATRONAGE

- 4.1. Nationally, rail patronage increased to around 70% of pre-Covid levels, with some areas, including the north-west, recovering quicker than areas such as London and the south-east. Northern achieved around 78% of its pre-Covid passenger levels over the periods. Patronage remains increasingly driven by leisure travel, with weekends seeing the strongest growth.
- 4.2. TPE reported 68% of its pre-Covid passenger levels, with Anglo-Scottish and weekend services being the busiest. Traditional peak-time demand continues to be suppressed, with those who can, opting to work from home where possible
- 4.3. Longer distance operators experienced demand at around 60% for Avanti West Coast and 50% for EMR on its Liverpool – Norwich services. Fridays and Saturdays remain the busiest days for travel on longer distance services.
- 4.4. More recently, patronage stabilised and has now started to decline, as fears increase around contagion from newer Covid variants. Plan B, brought in by the government on 13 December 2021, will see people advised to work from home again and the re-introduction of mandatory face coverings on public transport.
- 4.5. The chart below shows weekly footfall totals at Piccadilly station since the start of the pandemic. The busiest days of the week continue to be Friday/Saturday (dependant on events), with Sundays now third busiest. Monday and Tuesdays continue to be the quietest days. Footfall on Saturdays had reached almost pre-pandemic levels of 120,000+ on certain days.



## 5. FACE COVERING USAGE

- 5.1. Face coverings became non-mandatory on 19 July and have gradually declined across summer and autumn. Usage has varied by time and day and on individual routes, with morning peaks and city centre services experiencing greater use. Usage has also varied considerably demographically, with younger people far less inclined to wear coverings.
- 5.2. Coverings became mandatory once again on 13 December, as part of the government's Plan B to try to limit the spread of the Omicron variant. Usage is currently reported at between 65 - 80%, although appears far less at weekends and with younger travellers.
- 5.3. Train operators' staff continue to lead by example and there remain regular automated announcements for passengers to wear masks, particularly when moving about the train and at stations.

## 6. TIMETABLE CHANGES

- 6.1. Nationally, train timetables changed on 12 December. For Greater Manchester, this saw train services reach approximately 85% of pre-Covid levels, with some improved Sunday services and the return of three trains per hour between Manchester – London.

**Northern:**

- Re-instatement of Sunday Wigan – Bolton – Manchester Victoria service
- Extension of Liverpool – Airport via Newton services to Wilmslow (Sundays)
- Hourly, all-day Sundays Liverpool – Manchester Airport via Warrington Central
- Half-hourly Sunday service re-instated on Hadfield line
- Some additional (Monday – Saturday) later trains on Liverpool and other routes
- Re-instatement of 0740 New Mills Central service from Piccadilly (school flows)

**TPE:**

- Re-instatement of full Manchester Airport – Scotland service
- Strengthening of eight additional Hull – Manchester services from 3 to 6 car

**Avanti:**

- Return to 3 trains per hour between Manchester – London

**EMR:**

- Return of 4 temporarily suspended Monday to Saturday Norwich – Manchester - Liverpool services.

**MANCHESTER RECOVERY TASK FORCE (MRTF)**

- 6.2. The government made an announcement regarding the timetable planned for December 2022 on 12 October, alongside publishing the official response to the Manchester Recovery Task Force consultation, which took place between 14 January and 10 March 2021: [Timetable options to improve rail performance in the north of England - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/timetable-options-to-improve-rail-performance-in-the-north-of-england).
- 6.3. The next stage of this process is a detailed operator timetable consultation which TfGM is currently responding to, along with the ten districts and other key stakeholders. TfGM is requesting additional station calls and amendments to some of the Option B+ proposals, which would see an enhanced offer for some Greater Manchester stations, should they be accepted.
- 6.4. The MRTF Board and Mayor of Greater Manchester continue to press for guarantees from central government that promised infrastructure improvements to Central Manchester will be delivered.
- 6.5. The consultation closes on 31 December 2021, with timetable changes scheduled to be implemented from December 2022.

## **7. OPERATOR UPDATES**

### **NETWORK RAIL**

- 7.1. Staff resources are stable across all key locations, including managed stations and at operational sites. Network Rail continues to monitor cases and staff isolations across its business. There has been an increase in absence and isolation, but cover has been maintained. To date, there has been no noted increase in Omicron variant cases.
- 7.2. Network Rail has updated its website and social media channels around engineering works taking place this Christmas and New Year. Details as below.
- 7.3. Network Rail has given advance notice of lift refurbishment at Manchester Piccadilly station on platforms 13 and 14. The work will take place between 03 January – 16 May 2022 and sees lifts replaced to improve reliability. A temporary stairlift will be available on platform 14, with additional staff on hand to help passengers. Passengers are advised to pre-book assistance if needed and that rail tickets will be valid to/from nearby fully accessible stations during the period.

### **NORTHERN TRAINS LIMITED**

- 7.4. Customer journeys were reported at 73% of pre-Covid levels up to early December. These have declined from around 78% over the past couple of weeks, since new restrictions came in on 27 November.
- 7.5. Resource picture remains challenging due to Covid and other seasonal sickness. High absence rates have been reported at key depots including Blackburn, Barrow-in-Furness, Blackpool North, Liverpool and Wigan.
- 7.6. Traincrew unavailability (which changes quickly) in mid-December – 15% across the Central Region, 19% across the West Region but higher at some locations.

### **TRANSPENNINE EXPRESS**

- 7.7. In a rail industry first, customers looking to book assistance can now benefit from a new WhatsApp service making it even easier, and providing another option, when booking Passenger Assist prior to travelling.
- 7.8. The new service is monitored seven days a week between 6am and 11pm (except Christmas Day and Boxing Day) and can be accessed at: 07812 223 336. Anyone requesting assistance is asked to message 'Assisted Travel' to the number and a member of staff will help make the booking.

- 7.9. The rail industry, with approval from the Department for Transport, is extending the existing 'Book with Confidence' policy allowing customers to change their booked journey free should their circumstances change. Walk-up tickets already have flexibility inbuilt, but the industry will continue the temporary amendment to Advance ticket terms & conditions to help customers gain confidence travelling by rail again.
- 7.10. Book with Confidence will now run up to and including 31 March 2022 so that Advance ticket bookings can be exchanged to travel at a different time or date free.

## **8. ENGINEERING**

- 8.1. There was significant engineering planned over the Christmas and New Year period, affecting trains using Manchester Victoria, Leeds and Anglo – Scottish services. Manchester Victoria was closed to all rail services on 27 and 28 December and 01 – 03 January. Trains from the north and west were diverted, to start/terminate at Manchester Oxford Rd or Piccadilly. Replacement bus operated to Salford Crescent station. Buses also replaced trains for Ashton and Rochdale services. TPE services for Stalybridge that served Victoria were diverted to/from Manchester Piccadilly.

## **9. DISRUPTION DUE TO STAFF SHORTAGES**

- 9.1. At the time of publication, train operating companies are experiencing crew availability issues as a direct result of Covid and services are subject to both pre-planned and some late-notification cancellations.
- 9.2. On Sundays 12 and 19 November, Northern pre-cancelled around 115 Greater Manchester services on some routes, in order to preserve deliverability on others. This looks likely to continue until the new year and passengers are urged to check before they travel on any train journey. Services have mainly been thinned out and cancelled on Liverpool and other routes in the west of the region and have been targeted, so that alternative services are available.
- 9.3. TPE has now introduced ticket acceptance on other operators' services, should its own services be cancelled. This is available on Northern, LNER and EMR routes until 10 January 2022 and on Cross Country services until 04 January. Northern currently has ticket acceptance in place during disruption to enable its passengers to use TPE services (until 10 January).

- 9.4. It is likely that other operators will follow suit and an update will be provided at Committee.

## 10. COMMUNITY RAIL

- 10.1. TfGM continues to work with local communities and station groups on various projects in the region. Working closely with colleagues at Northern, we have managed to set up new adoption Friends groups at Ince, Moorside, Hyde North, Hyde Central and Deansgate stations.
- 10.2. Northern has been instrumental in the local school's adoption of Moorside station, which has seen the burnt-out ticket office brought to life with colourful artwork. Other station projects include Ashton (planters and college artwork), Glossop Line (information and local history boards) and Ince (planter and Christmas decorations).
- 10.3. TfGM continues to support our local Community Rail Partnerships (CRPs) and is pleased to congratulate South Lancashire CRP on its recent wins at the national community rail awards, with its Hate Crime and Sunday Rivington bus projects.



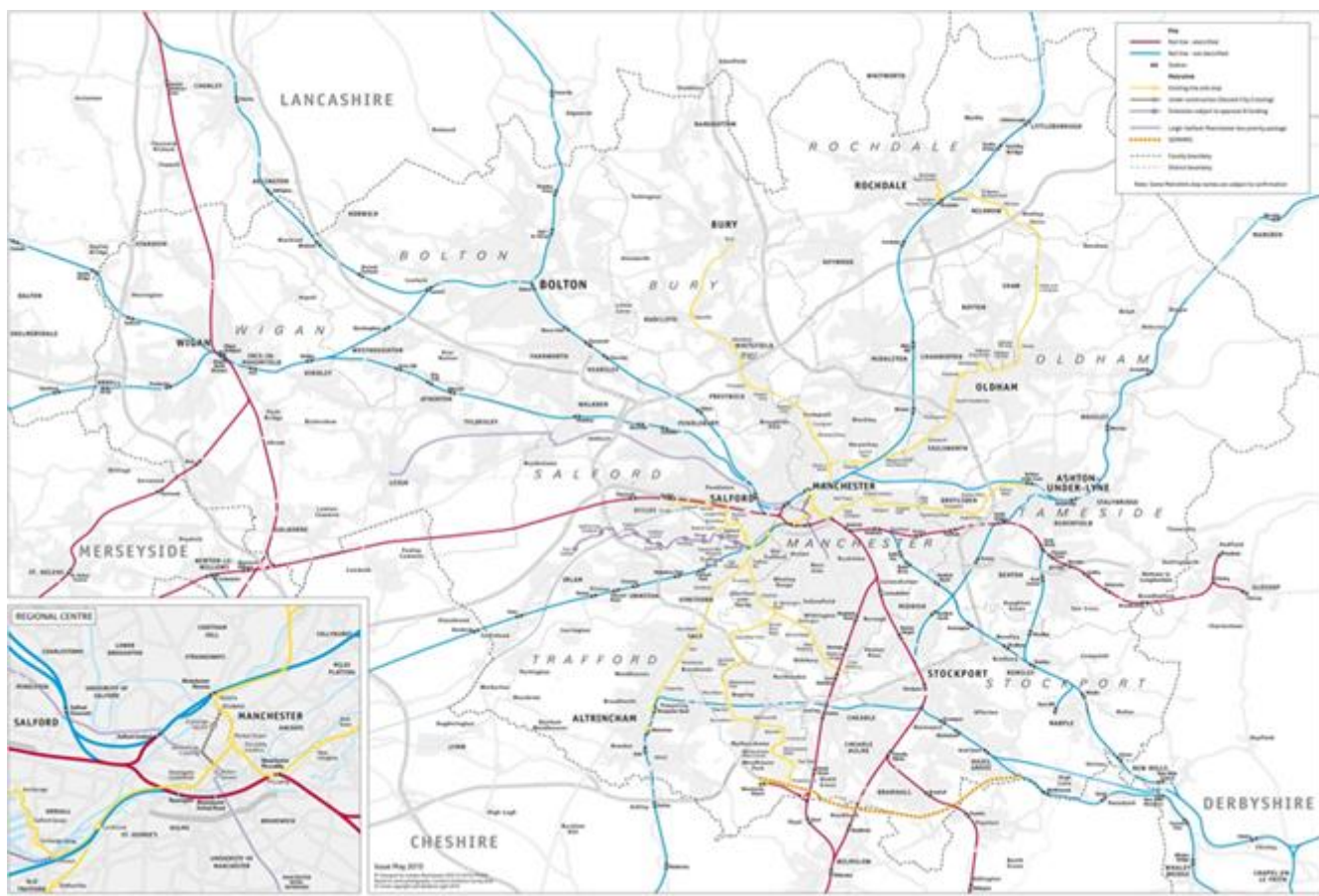




APPENDIX A – RAILWAY PERIOD DATES 2021/22

<b>2021-22</b>	<b>Start date</b>	<b>End date</b>
Period 1	01.04.2021	01.05.2021
Period 2	02.05.2021	29.05.2021
Period 3	30.05.2021	26.06.2021
Period 4	27.06.2021	24.07.2021
Period 5	25.07.2021	21.08.2021
Period 6	22.08.2021	18.09.2021
Period 7	19.09.2021	16.10.2021
Period 8	17.10.2021	13.11.2021
Period 9	14.11.2021	11.12.2021
Period 10	12.12.2021	08.01.2022
Period 11	09.01.2022	05.02.2022
Period 12	06.02.2022	05.03.2022
Period 13	06.03.2022	31.03.2022

## APPENDIX B: GREATER MANCHESTER RAIL NETWORK MAP



**BOLTON**  
**BURY**

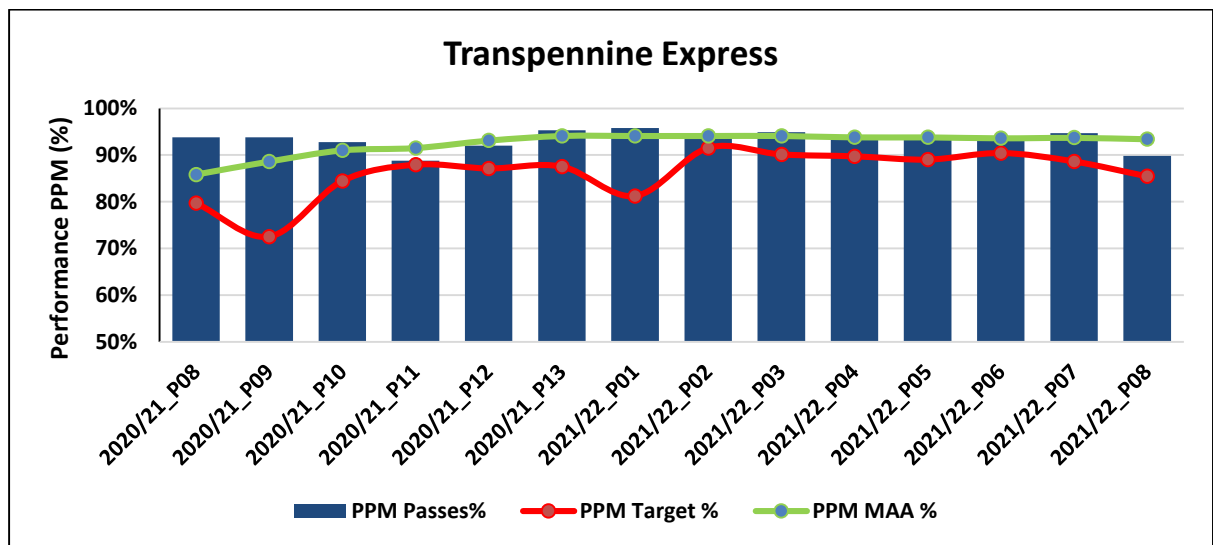
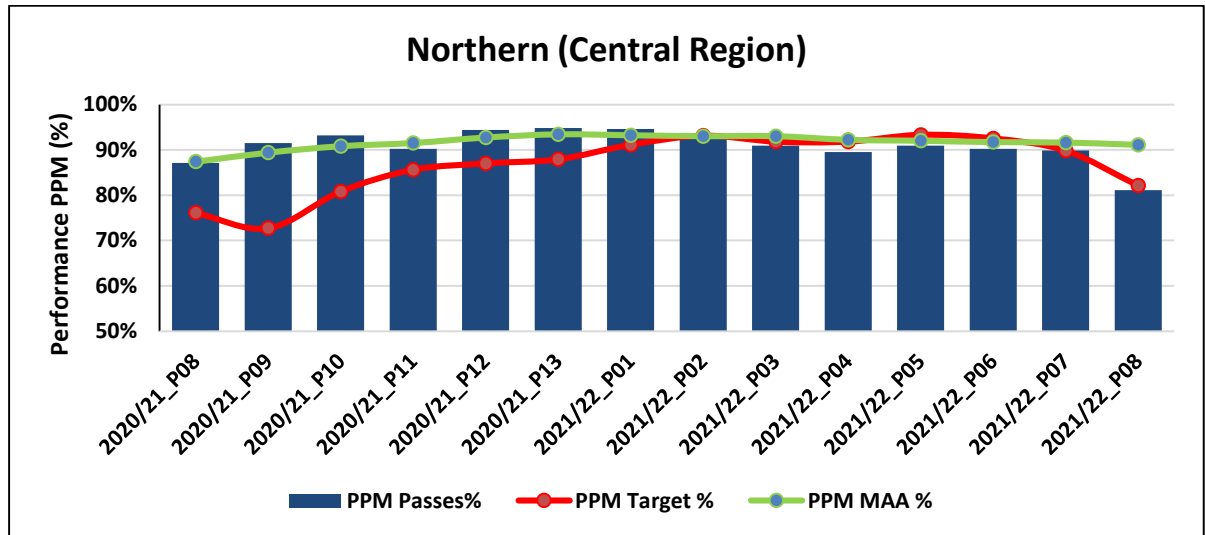
**MANCHESTER**  
**OLDHAM**

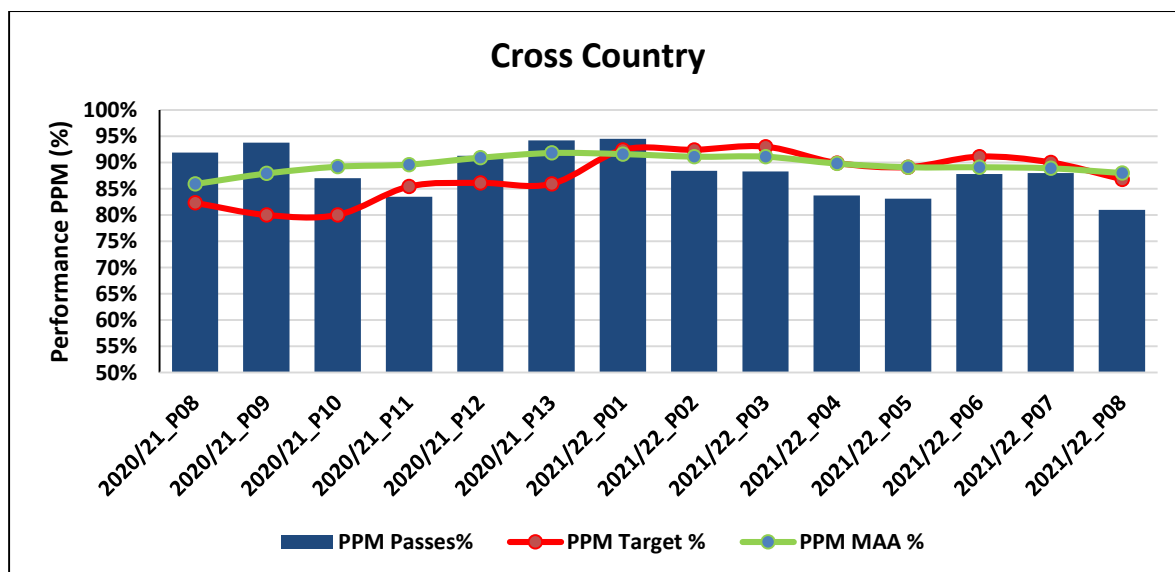
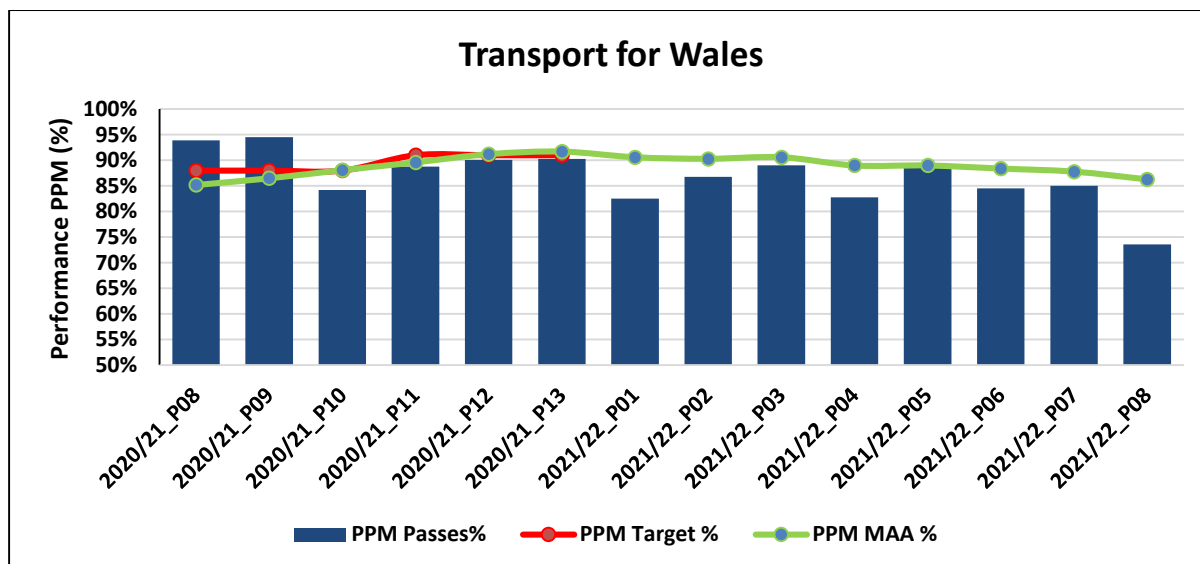
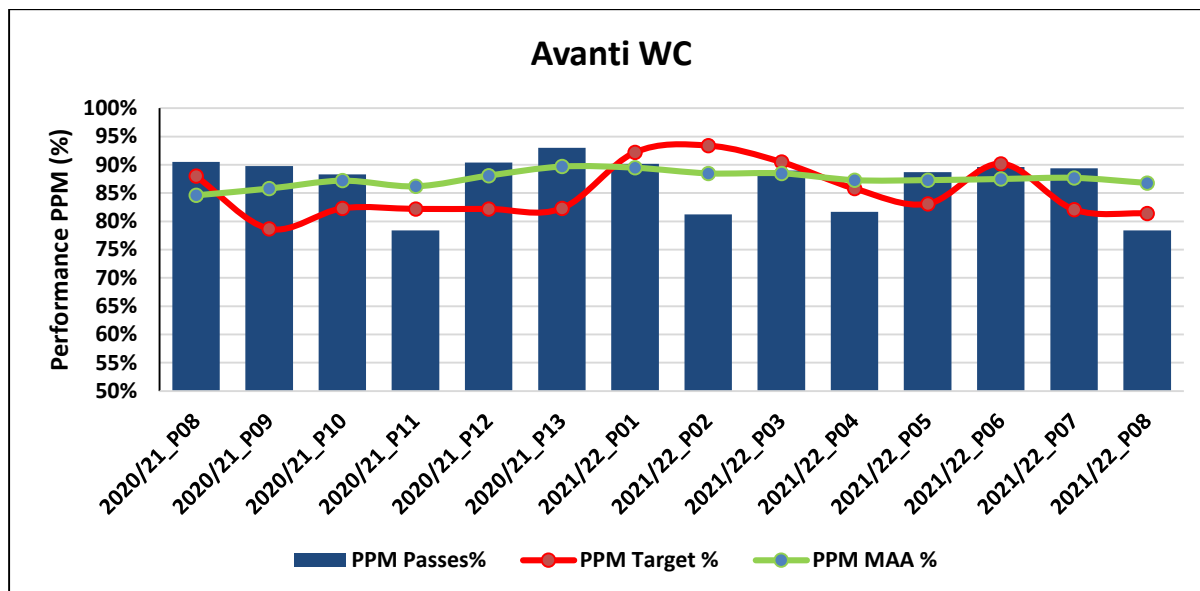
**ROCHDALE**  
**SALFORD**

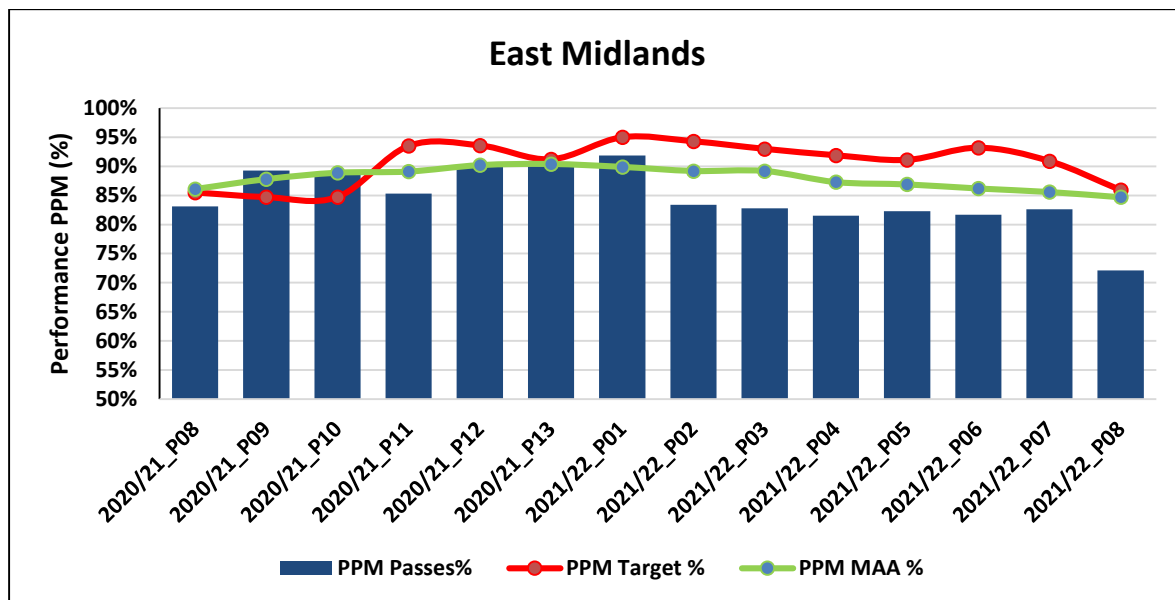
**STOCKPORT**  
**TAMESIDE**

**TRAFFORD**  
**WIGAN**

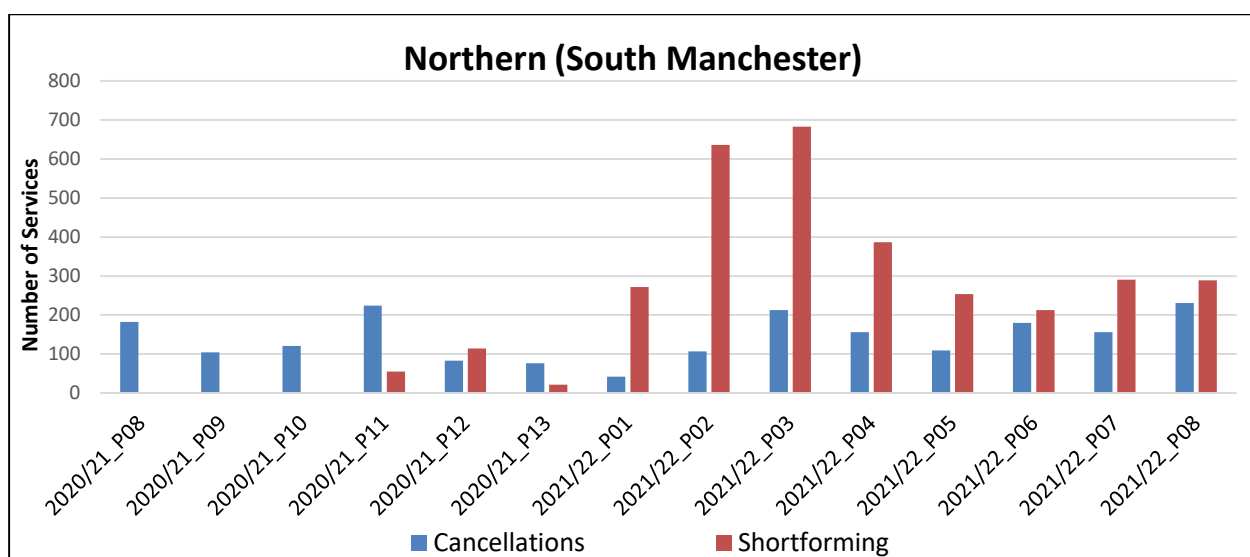
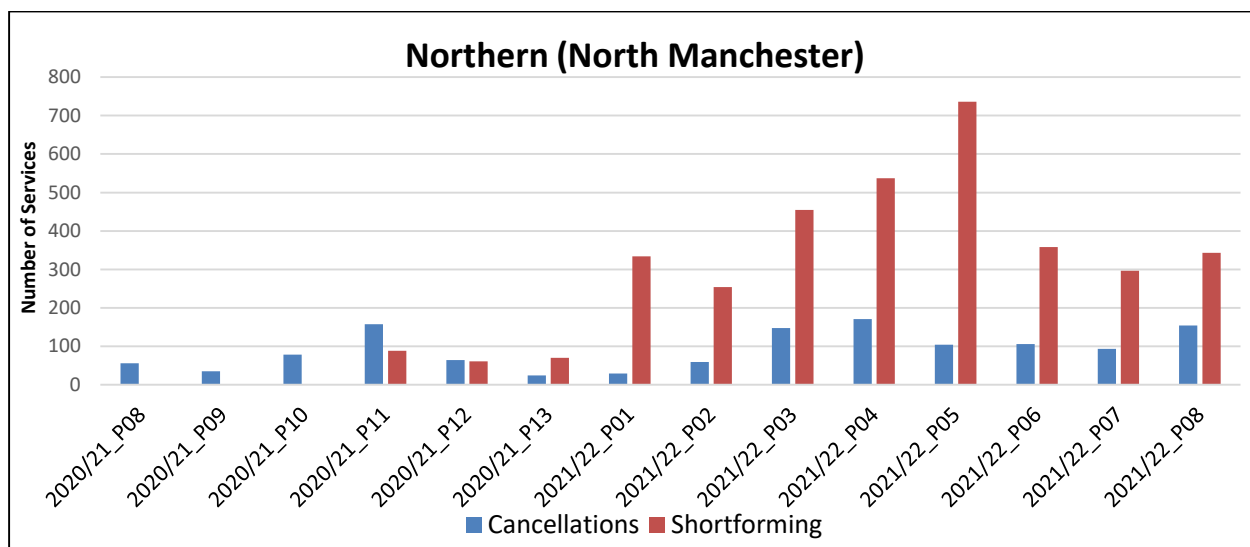
APPENDIX C: TOC PPM V TARGET AND MOVING ANNUAL AVERAGE, PLUS  
CANCELLATIONS AND SHORT FORMING

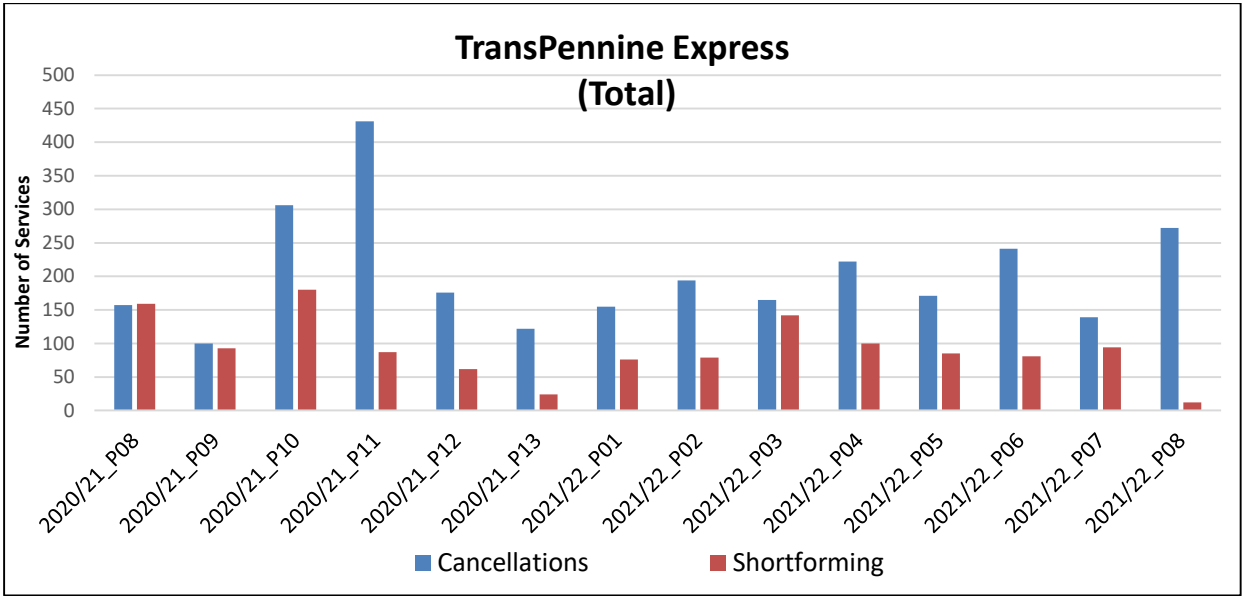






## Cancellations and Short Forming – Northern/TPE





**APPENDIX D – NORTHERN LINE OF ROUTE/TPE SERVICE GROUP RIGHT TIME at  
DESTINATION %**

Northern Line of Route	P07	P08	Year to Date
CLITHEROE - BOLTON - VICTORIA	81.7	72.4	82
PICCADILLY - STOCKPORT - CREWE	77.8	67.2	81.4
PICCADILLY - BUXTON	75.3	69.6	80
LEEDS - WIGAN	55.2	49.6	71
KIRKBY - VICTORIA - BLACKBURN*	72.1	53.9	75.2
PICCADILLY - NEW MILLS CENTRAL	70	62.9	79.3
SOUTHPORT/VICTORIA - STALYBRIDGE	68.6	56.8	68.3
LIVERPOOL - MANCHESTER OXFORD RD	69	59.2	72.9
PICCADILLY - HADFIELD/GLOSSOP	67.9	56	72.1
BLACKPOOL - WIGAN - LIVERPOOL *	68	57.7	71.1
PICCADILLY - STOKE	66.6	55	71
BLACKPOOL Nth - BOLTON - AIRPORT	67.9	59.1	71.7
LIVERPOOL - CREWE via Airport	61.7	52.2	68.8
BLACKBURN - VICTORIA - ROCHDALE (stopper)	n/a	74	83.8
HAZEL GROVE - BLACKPOOL	65	57.6	69.8
PICCADILLY - CHESTER	59.5	50	67.8
MANCHESTER - PRESTON	79.9	65.9	78.4
PICCADILLY - SHEFFIELD	60.3	43.6	64.8
PICCADILLY - ROSE HILL MARPLE	65.6	54.8	69.7
SOUTHPORT - OXFORD RD/ALDERLY EDGE	56.8	45.4	60.4
LIVERPOOL - WARRINGTON - AIRPORT	69.7	59.9	72.2
AIRPORT - WIGAN NW - BARROW/WINDERMERE	57.2	47.9	60.7
MANCHESTER VICTORIA - LEEDS	55.2	35.2	53.3
LEEDS - CHESTER	54.3	34.9	52.8

**BOLTON  
BURY**

**MANCHESTER  
OLDHAM**

**ROCHDALE  
SALFORD**

**STOCKPORT  
TAMESIDE**

**TRAFFORD  
WIGAN**

TPE Service Group	P07	P08	Year to Date
North	72.8	59	75.6
South	69.7	57.5	72.1
Scottish	60.1	42.7	60.6

