

Item:
16



Report to Partnership Meeting 23 April 2021

RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DELIVERY

Rail Policy - ScotRail Franchise

Scottish Government has announced that the Abellio franchise will be terminated on 31 March 2022. Until then Abellio will continue under an Emergency Measures Agreement (EMA) funding package. An Operator of Last Resort wholly owned by Transport Scotland will operate from 1 April 2022 similar to LNER and Northern DfT franchises and WAG's Transport for Wales operation.

Scottish Ministers may wish to see a publicly owned vertically integrated railway but are bound by the reserved legislation of the 1993 and 2005 Railways Acts. The much-awaited Williams Review may herald the replacement of franchises with concessions (cf Transport for London) where government takes revenue risk, but this will require primary Westminster legislation. The OLR is a stop gap to provide continuity of service.

While there is an oven-ready OLR for the Caledonian Sleeper franchise, services will nevertheless continue to be operated by Serco under an EMA.

Freight operations remain entirely commercial.

Network Rail remains a GB company, backed by HM Treasury, with Scottish Ministers funding its activity north of the border.

RISK REGISTER

RTS Delivery

Impact – Economy

Policy

Impact – Network resilience

Financial

Impact – n/a

Equality

Impact – n/a

Recommendation

1. Members are asked to approve the report.

Report by: Frank Roach

Designation: Partnership Manager

Date: 13th April 2021