

Motion: Trams and Light Rail

Proposer:

Summator:

1 Conference notes

- 2 A. The impressive knowledge of Northern transport infrastructure evident in Conservative plans to extend
3 Metrolink to Manchester Airport.
- 4 B. The proven success of current UK tramways.
- 5 C. The widespread recognition within the UK and internationally of the benefits of light-rail as an
6 environmentally friendly form of mass-transit.
- 7 D. That electric buses and other vehicles, despite their other benefits, remain a source of significant particulate
8 pollution arising from the friction between tyres and road surfaces while steel wheels running on steel rails
9 create zero emissions of this type.
- 10 E. The proposal for a demonstration project in Coventry City Centre for very light rail, a system involving
11 lightweight vehicles on much lighter rails compared to current tramways with the potential for dramatic
12 reduction in construction costs faster construction and less disruption.
- 13 F. The scope for further innovations such as hydrogen-powered trams which also have the potential to
14 transform the business and environmental case for further development of light-rail systems.
- 15 G. That current Federal Party recognises the potential for future growth of light-rail systems in the UK and
16 affirms its support for Autumn 2023 Federal Conference motion "Connecting Communities - Building a
17 Transport Network Fit for the 21st Century".

18 Conference believes

- 19 i) Light rail has a proven record of getting people out of their cars while produce zero emissions and
20 particulates and that, in future, very light rail offers significant potential for enabling these benefits
21 to be realised on a significantly larger scale.
- 22 ii) That local authorities, with their detailed knowledge of population distribution anticipated housing and
23 industrial development and current infrastructure pressures are best placed to provisionally identify
24 opportunities for the development of light-rail within their areas.
- 25 iii) That it is unrealistic, especially given the current financial and other pressures which they face, to expect
26 local authorities to acquire the in-house expertise necessary to develop themselves, or oversee the
27 commissioning of, business cases, detailed feasibility and engineering studies.
- 28 iv) That delivering an integrated transport system will often involve initiatives that span local authority
29 boundaries and mechanisms for co-ordination at regional level are needed to help promote and deliver
30 such schemes.
- 31 v) That expertise and funding for supporting the development of initial scoping studies through to fully de-
32 tailed "shovel-ready" proposals should be available to local and regional authorities who identify realis-
33 tic potential light-rail schemes.

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- 34 vi) That should new opportunities for the expansion of light-rail arise through environmental pressures
35 and/or significant cost reductions arising through engineering innovation then significant economies of
36 scale could be realised through a coordinated approach to light-rail development at a regional level.
- 37 vii) That early evidence available from the development of proposals for Coventry suggest it may be timely
38 to identify and undertake initial scoping studies for new schemes and revisit potential schemes
39 previously rejected on cost grounds.
- 40 viii) That should the potential of very light rail technology be proven there is scope for generating economies
41 of scale plus new manufacturing and construction employment opportunities through the development
42 of a sequence of schemes.
- 43 ix) That in addition to the Coventry proposal for an very-light rail pilot project in a major city centre there is
44 a case for identifying an additional proof of concept for connecting suburban areas in a large town to
45 their rail-hub and town centre.
- 46 x) That there is significant potential, not hitherto adequately explored, for adopting a light-rail solution to
47 the reopening of branch lines, including the use of tram-trains capable of running at speed over the
48 heavy rail infrastructure.

49 Conference Calls for

- 50 1. The implementation of proposals to extend Manchester Metrolink to Bolton, Wigan and Heywood and
51 Stockport.
- 52 2. Government support for the development and evaluation of very-light rail and other innovations which may
53 transform the business case for light-rail development.
- 54 3. Transport for the North to collaborate actively with local transport authorities through the Restoring our
55 Railways scheme by offering support for scoping and evaluating light rail and very-light rail schemes and,
56 where initial feasibility studies are promising to assist with development of the business case and
57 engineering studies.
- 58 4. The go-ahead of the very-light rail project in Coventry with the gathering of data and monitoring of progress
59 from the outset so that its implications for new schemes and re-appraised schemes in the NW and
60 elsewhere can be realistically appraised.
- 61 5. Identification of a potential further very-light rail prototype scheme in the NW.
- 62 6. Pre-feasibility scoping and initial appraisal of potential schemes in the NW to include;
- 63 a. A Warrington North-South tramway from Newton-le-Willows to Stretton as a the potential
64 NW exemplar of very light rail technology.
- 65 b. A potential light rail option for re-opening the Penrith-Keswick branch.
- 66 c. Tram trains for the Rose Hill (Marple) branch.