

REPORT TO PICKMERE PARISH COUNCIL

3rd March 2020

AGENDA ITEM 8.7 HS2 UPDATE

1. Background

1.1 The Government has recently announced that HS2 will go ahead in full, along with transport improvements around the country.

- The first phase of the high-speed rail network, from London to Birmingham, will go ahead immediately, largely as planned.
- The prime minister said HS2 would be built in the north to Manchester and Leeds – but “simultaneously permitting us to go ahead with Northern Powerhouse Rail”. The second phase will be reviewed – potentially meaning other schemes, such as parts of Northern Powerhouse Rail, could be prioritised.
- A new body is expected to run both NPR and HS2 beyond Crewe, with the government planning to rebrand all the programmes as High Speed North.
- A minister for HS2, whose sole responsibility is the high-speed rail project, will be appointed.
- There will be “a full-time oversight group” to monitor HS2 Ltd. The PM said the company had “not made the task easier” and had handled communities along the route badly.
- He also promised a £5bn investment in bus and bicycles. He said: “The transport revolution is local. It must be local. Greener, cleaner, more frequent.” However, he added, to justify HS2: “But we cannot make these improvements in isolation from one another ... We’ll only be doing half the job. We have to fix the spine.”

1.2 With implications including alterations to the operational and therefore construction specifications for the scheme north of Crewe, and also in relation to the relative phasing of various elements of the section of HS2 passing through Pickmere and of Northern Powerhouse Rail (now jointly rebranded by the Government), it is assumed that further consultation exercises with local communities will take place.

2. Recommendation

2.1 That the current position be noted and that members consider what action may be appropriate.

Jack Steel
Clerk to Parish Council