

COUNCIL

26 OCTOBER 2022

ITEM NO:**TITLE:** Motion on Rail Cuts**PROPOSING COUNCILLORS:** David Gardner, Averil Lekau
Matt Hartley, Pat Greenwell, John Hills, Christine May, Denise Hyland, Calum O’Byrne
Mulligan, ‘Lade Olugbemi, Rowshan Hannan, Cathy Dowse, Ivis Williams, Christine St
Matthew-Daniel, Lauren Dingsdale, Majella Anning, Aidan Smith, Adel Khaireh, Mariam
Lolavar, Anthony Okereke, Denise Scott-McDonald, Nas Asghar, Matt Morrow, Ann-
Marie Cousins, Gary Dillon, Pat Slattery.

This Council is appalled at the proposed Southeastern rail timetable from December 2022 meaning cuts of up to a third in services, an end to any pretence of a metro rail service and huge inconvenience for passengers. Since 17 October 2021 the franchise has been in the hands of the Operator of Last Resort, which is the Government via its company SE Trains Ltd, trading as Southeastern. We believe these cuts are unjustified, fly in the face of the climate emergency, will hold back further sustainable regeneration in the north of the Borough and severely reduce public transport options and connectivity for residents in the south of the borough.

In particular, we oppose:

- Cuts from the pre-pandemic 8 to 6 trains per hour off-peak and Saturday services on the Woolwich and Charlton line and from 6 to 4 trains per hour on Sundays.
- Cuts from Westcombe Park, Maze Hill and Greenwich from 6 to 4 trains per hour on off-peak and Saturday services.
- The abolition of a Sunday service altogether on the North Kent line from Abbey Wood, Woolwich and Charlton through to Blackheath and Lewisham forcing many passengers into cars.
- Cuts from the pre-pandemic levels of 6 to 4 trains per hour at New Eltham of off-peak and Saturday services.

- The loss of Charing Cross services on the Eltham and Woolwich lines making it much more difficult for St. Thomas's hospital, Southwestern services from Waterloo and the West End.
- The loss of Cannon Street services from New Eltham and Mottingham making it much more difficult for those working in the City, and the loss of the half-hourly 'loop' service connecting the Sidcup and Woolwich Lines which is the only direct public transport link from the very south of the borough to the Elizabeth Line.

While understanding the need for some revision to reflect fewer peak commuters and more weekend and off-peak travellers, the changes – which are being introduced without any public consultation - singularly fail to achieve this. Council welcomes the letter from the Leader and Deputy Leader to Southeastern and requests the Cabinet to lead a high-profile campaign to restore these services in conjunction with local MPs, Bexley and Lewisham councils, rail user groups taking our economic, social and environmental message direct not only to Southeastern railway but to the Department for Transport and ministers.

Council also reaffirms its call on the Secretary of State for Transport to grant repeated requests from the Mayor of London to devolve Southeastern Metro services to a properly-resourced TfL, in order to secure the future of Metro rail services."