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Dear Florence,

The Crossrail Board meeting in August approved the more detailed schedule and cost plan to deliver the Elizabeth line between Paddington and Abbey Wood. Our judgment is that we remain within the six-month window between October 2020 and March 2021 and that when taking into account the remaining cost to go, compared with the amount of risk held, we still expect that the project can be delivered within the financing package agreed by our Sponsors in December 2018. However, this is the most difficult and challenging phase of the Crossrail programme with significant integration and testing to complete.

To reflect this uncertainty, our cost forecasts contain additional risk contingency provisions. Current projections show a central cost forecast (including risk contingency) of £15,005m. This is £42m more than the funding committed under the financing package. Additional modelling scenarios that we have carried out include a significantly higher level of risk contingency, up to £394m more than the committed funding, and opening later in 2021. We have further work to do to fully develop our cost forecasts and risk mitigation actions including quantifying the potential savings that could arise from their implementation. We have not requested additional funding, and through appropriate cost control and risk mitigation strategies, delivery can be achieved within the financing package.

Notwithstanding this the programme is now making steady progress to our immediate goal of the start of Trial Running in the first quarter of 2020. While we are starting to see demonstrated performance against our schedule baseline, the challenge ahead remains significant but achievable if we continue to work in a transparent way and as one team with our Tier 1 and Tier 2 partners, who are clearly crucial to this mission.

Safety

On health and safety, overall performance remains under scrutiny as unfortunately there were two accidents that left staff injured. There was a serious accident at Farringdon station where two scaffolders were injured when the scaffolding they were installing collapsed. The investigation is continuing, and senior intervention included an alert going out to all sites to remind people of the rules when working at height and a project-wide stand down.

MOVING LONDON FORWARD





At Bond Street station three members of the workforce were hurt when a temporary wooden bench collapsed. A programme-wide campaign has been initiated to review all temporary work equipment a programme-wide safety alert was issued and follow up safety inspections were carried out.

Central Section Progress

In late August we successfully handed over Victoria Dock portal to the Infrastructure Manager (IM) and, in the first week of September, Pudding Mill Lane portal followed this. Mile End shaft will be the next of the shafts and portals to be handed over ahead of the first major station and routeway handovers later this year.

We have also removed the full height hoarding in the integrated ticket hall at Farringdon station which is a visible sign of progress on site.

We published the last in the series of videos showing the progress at our central London stations and the complex work that remains. We were also able to provide the first in a new series of quarterly updates about the project including a film about the progress that has been made. On social media we also shared a video of the close-headway multi-train testing showing two trains passing through the tunnels shortly after one another.

Main Dynamic Testing

The software configuration that is planned for use when we are in the Trial Running phase (PD+10) is now being tested in the Crossrail Integration Facility (CIF) in Chippenham. This is helping to refine the specific test activities that will be required during Trial Running next year. A working group, led by our systems integration team, has begun developing the more detailed test plan for that phase.

Safety approval was obtained in August to proceed with close-headway, multi-train testing in 'integrated' mode which allows testing of the full signalling systems in the central section. This is the first time this type of testing has taken place on the programme and is a significant achievement.

It is critical that the next version of Siemens' software (PD+10) meets the required functionality for Trial Running. We have experienced good collaborative behaviours from them however challenges remain as many of the outstanding tests are awaiting the release of the next version of signalling software onto trains at the end of October.

Operational Readiness

The successful handover of Victoria Dock portal and Pudding Mill Lane to Rail for London Infrastructure (RfLI) in line with the date in our new schedule, means that RfLI is now maintaining these assets. Lessons around the process and safety assurance required have been learned from these first two handovers which will allow us to improve the process for the next 28 major handovers.



The planning phase of bringing a Shadow IM into place has now been completed. The Shadow IM has been developed to bring into use as many of the processes and procedures that it will need to manage the infrastructure before taking over the central section from the Crossrail project.

Significant progress was also made with the testing of 'Yellow Plant' engineering trains in the central section for the first time with signalling tests undertaken at speeds of up to 20 mph.

Further supporting readiness for Stage 3 services, simulated desktop exercises have taken place to rehearse the response from the operational and maintenance teams. A visit to Siemens in Germany is planned next month to user test the next version of the signalling software to allow for better understanding of our requirements and delivery of a more reliable simulator.

MTR Crossrail are on course to start operating the stopping services from Paddington mainline station to Reading in December this year under the TfL Rail brand. MTR Crossrail already staff 11 of the 15 stations between Paddington and Reading after taking over the running of these from Great Western Railway (GWR) in December 2017.

Network Rail

Network Rail is continuing to progress the infrastructure works required for these services to commence in December 2019. Platform extension works at West Drayton, Slough and Maidenhead are currently on target and due to be complete this month.

Hayes & Harlington, Southall and West Drayton station enhancement works are continuing while works at Acton Main Line, Ealing Broadway and West Ealing have now commenced. Stakeholder drop-in sessions are being held in September on the western route to explain the upgrade works and the services starting this December.

At the end of August Network Rail awarded the contract for the enhancement works at Ilford and Romford stations.

Kind regards



Mark Wild
CEO