

CORRECTED TRANSCRIPT

HOUSE OF LORDS

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

taken before the

STANDING ORDERS (PRIVATE BILLS) COMMITTEE

on the

HIGH SPEED RAIL (CREWE - MANCHESTER) BILL

Before:

Lord Gardiner of Kimble (Chair)

Baroness Finlay of Llandaff

Lord Geddes

Lord Jones

Lord McColl of Dulwich

Lord Naseby

Baroness Thomas of Winchester

PAUL IRVING, of WINCKWORTH SHERWOOD LLP, appeared as parliamentary agent for the Bill.

There also appeared:

MARK AANENSEN, Parliamentary Clerk, Winckworth Sherwood LLP

DARREN WHITE, Parliamentary Clerk, Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP

CLAIRE THOMAS, Interim Head of Powers and Parliamentary Management, HS2 Ltd

AMBER CORFIELD-MOORE, Powers and Consents Manager, HS2 Ltd

ROSALIND READ-LEAH, Bill Manager, High Speed Rail (Crewe - Manchester) Bill,
Department for Transport

(2.15 pm)

- 1. THE CHAIR:** A very warm welcome. This session is now in public. Welcome to this meeting of the House of Lords Standing Orders Committee, which has been convened to consider the Examiner's certificate relating to the High Speed Rail (Crewe - Manchester) Bill. Does any member wish to declare any interests? I think not. Thank you. The Examiner's certificate states that certain private business Standing Orders have not been complied with. Our task is to decide whether to dispense with these Standing Orders. The House of Commons Standing Orders Committee has already met and has decided in favour of dispensing. We have received and read a statement from the promoter, and I would like the statement to be read into the record, please. I wonder, Mr Irving, whether you would

introduce yourself and, indeed, any accompanying you. Therefore, I would very much welcome you speaking to the promoter's statement.

2. **PAUL IRVING:** Thank you very much, my Lord. I am the parliamentary agent for the Bill. Perhaps I might ask the others to introduce themselves.
3. **MARK AANENSEN:** I am parliamentary clerk at Winckworth Sherwood.
4. **DARREN WHITE:** I am from Eversheds Sutherland, parliamentary agents.
5. **AMBER CORFIELD-MOORE:** I am the powers and consents manager from High Speed 2 Ltd.
6. **CLAIRE THOMAS:** I am interim head of powers and parliamentary management at HS2 Ltd.
7. **ROSALIND READ-LEAH:** I am the DfT bill manager.
8. **THE CHAIR:** A very warm welcome.
9. **PAUL IRVING:** We have set out in appendix A to the statement, which you may have seen, the requirements of the various Standing Orders with which there was non-compliance. The statement itself sets out the reasons why we think it was not possible to comply with the Standing Orders in question in relation to the three areas of non-compliance and the steps we took to mitigate that non-compliance. As a result of that, we do not consider that any person was prejudiced by these various non-compliances. If you have any questions or anything you would like me to elaborate on, I am very happy to do so, but I was not proposing to go through the note again.
10. **THE CHAIR:** We have all considered and read it. I had a more general observation, perhaps for futureproofing, particularly in rural areas with community hubs and other places for consideration. It was very pragmatic to consider the library and so forth. Obviously, I understand the requirements, but there could be a little bit of innovation. If the purpose is to inform communities and keep people aware of proposals, for future reference, it is important that we reflect on the ways in which we should communicate, possibly also with those communities that do not have parish councils, for instance. I was very pleased to see that you had had that lateral thinking of depositing in a library. It is something for a pragmatic reflection as to how best to communicate with communities where there might be, for instance, a community hub, but it is not the parish council meeting room or the library because there is not one. I just had that as a general comment, but, my Lords, are there any points that any Member would like to raise?
11. **BARONESS THOMAS OF WINCHESTER:** Were disabled people able to get to all the libraries? Does anyone know if there was any problem there?
12. **PAUL IRVING:** Perhaps, if I may, I will ask Ms Thomas to comment on that.

- 13. CLAIRE THOMAS:** I could not say for certain that I know that all the libraries are accessible. They are public places and have members of the public going there on a daily basis, but it is not something that I know for sure.
- 14. THE CHAIR:** The point Lady Thomas makes is always an important one. I think nearly all libraries have wi-fi and connectivity, so, again, it is a very important communication hub.
- 15. CLAIRE THOMAS:** We have the HS2 helpdesk. We always publicise the contact details of our HS2 helpdesk, which is always there to help people access information.
- 16. BARONESS FINLAY OF LLANDAFF:** My question was going to be quite similar. How much information did the public have as to where to go? Were there notices in post offices and other places that people commonly go to, and noticeboards that are used a lot by people, to steer them and guide them as to the nearest place for them to go to look?
- 17. PAUL IRVING:** Yes. The Standing Orders provide for this information to be made available in places of public resort in each area, and so we did put up that information in places that the public would frequent.
- 18. BARONESS FINLAY OF LLANDAFF:** Does that include guidance as to how to get there such as suitable bus routes or walking directions? There may be people who would not normally have gone to those places or do not know that there is a library near them that is still open or whatever.
- 19. CLAIRE THOMAS:** No. We did not provide travel arrangements. We provide the full address and, again, the HS2 contact details, but that is a very good point that we could take on board for any future deposits.
- 20. LORD GEDDES:** Just as a generality, do you come across this sort of problem frequently or is this almost a one-off event?
- 21. PAUL IRVING:** This is pretty much a one-off event, certainly in relation to the temporary closure of offices because of the impact of Covid, which was the reason why these five offices that we mentioned in the newspaper notice were temporarily closed. That, obviously, is very much to do with the particular circumstances at the moment. It is not something we have had generally in the past.
- 22. LORD GEDDES:** It intrigued me, because I did not think it was legal—but then I am not a lawyer—that there were parish councils that did not exist. I did not think that was allowed, but maybe you know better than I do.
- 23. PAUL IRVING:** I am not sure about the legality of that. I think they probably lawfully ought to exist. In one case, all the members of the council had resigned. It is probably rather difficult to enforce.
- 24. LORD GEDDES:** If I might say so, your actions were admirable. I was just very surprised that you had to take them.

- 25. LORD JONES:** I am new to this committee, but I want to say that I found all the notes and papers very helpful. I can imagine the lengthy devilling that went on to get it to us in this state. I have brief simple questions. I read about Dumfries and Galloway through Manchester. I am perplexed. Can you tell us why?
- 26. PAUL IRVING:** Dumfries and Galloway is mentioned because, although the HS2 railway is not currently extending to Scotland, we have a depot there for stabling trains.
- 27. LORD JONES:** I have seen references to the mystery shopper. Can you elaborate a little on what it is, how, how many and why?
- 28. PAUL IRVING:** Perhaps Ms Thomas can explain a bit more about that.
- 29. CLAIRE THOMAS:** Of course, yes. Once we have completed our deposit of all the documents to the locations, so once our delivery has told us that everything has been successfully delivered, we have a group of contractors that will go to visit the locations for us to see whether they are readily available for inspection by members of the public. They will turn up to the locations and ask to see the documents. We know they have been delivered, but it is a good way for us to know that they are there for members of the public should they need it. It is a really helpful and useful exercise for us to understand that.
- 30. LORD JONES:** At the turn of the year, I saw in my *Times* there might have been four pages relating to this very issue. There was every stream, bridge and road. I know the area fairly well. I thought it was magnificently detailed. My question is this. That was in the *Times*. I presume you so advertised in other broadsheets. I would like to ask you what they were. It seemed to me that a page in the *Times* costs a great deal. Will you give us an idea of the costs?
- 31. PAUL IRVING:** Perhaps I could ask Mr White to elaborate a bit. Yes, we advertised in a large number of local newspapers. I think the *Times* was the only national paper.
- 32. DARREN WHITE:** The *Times* was the only national newspaper, yes.
- 33. LORD JONES:** I do not cavil at that. I commend you for putting it in the *Crewe Chronicle* and the newspaper in Northwich, since, as long ago as 31 March 1966, I was a general election candidate, and the area and the newspapers I know well. It was good to read the pre-deposit liaison. Would you enlarge on how many of you, who they were and essentially your agenda?
- 34. CLAIRE THOMAS:** Our engagement with the pre-deposit locations started quite early on in the process, so mid last year. We made contact explaining what we were planning to do, the hybrid Bill process and the requirements that each of the locations are required to follow under the Standing Orders. We started with email correspondence and it was regular communication with them from that first point. We have an engagement team at HS2 Ltd that also engages with local parish councils and local authorities.
- 35. LORD JONES:** My last brief question is rather charming. Page 33 at 379 just reminded me of a marriage ceremony insofar as I saw that Claire, Mr Kelly and Amber all said successively, "I do". I thought, at that time, Mendelssohn's "Wedding March" might have

been appropriate. Really, it is so helpful, informative and detailed. Whether it is in Westminster or where you are, the devilling impresses. If I may say, that is how it should be done. Will it get to Scotland? Do not answer.

36. THE CHAIR: My Lords, our task is Crewe to Manchester, and we have had a very absorbing discussion with you on a range of issues beyond Standing Orders, but I hope you will understand our task is scrutiny. Our inquiring minds have come also to the fore. The committee is familiar with the concept of non-compliance solely as to time. It arises simply because of certain dates set out in the Standing Orders that are applicable to private Bills but cannot apply to hybrid Bills.

37. The committee is also content with the explanations in relation to the additional breaches of Standing Orders 4 and 36. I think we agree, my Lords, that we therefore do not need to go into a private session following the deliberations we have had with you. We agree that all Standing Orders referred to in the Examiner's certificate, namely Standing Orders 4, 4A, 10, 10A, 11, 12, 12A, 13, 14, 15, 27, 27A, 29, 33, 34, 36, 39, 41, 42, 45 and 47 should be dispensed with.

38. The decision of the committee will be reported to the House in today's minutes of proceedings and will be posted on the committee's website. I would like to thank all those who have attended today, noble Lords, and Mr Irving and your colleagues for your help. The committee now stands adjourned.

The Examination was adjourned at 2.35 pm.