

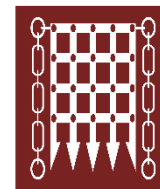
Westminster Energy, Environment & Transport Forum policy conference:

Next steps for Britain's rail network

Timing: Morning, Monday, 13th April 2026

Taking place online

Draft agenda subject to change



WESTMINSTER ENERGY
ENVIRONMENT &
TRANSPORT FORUM

- 8.30 Registration
- 9.00 **Chair's opening remarks**
Chair to be announced
- 9.05 **The Railways Bill and establishing GBR - design, responsibilities and oversight**
clarifying the statutory remit and responsibilities of GBR | maintaining passenger service performance, reliability and value during the transition to public ownership | the role and duties of the new passenger watchdog including consultation, transparency and redress | implications for independent regulation and the future role of the Office of Rail and Road | accountability frameworks and the sharing of responsibilities across GBR, devolved authorities and operators
Eddie Dempsey, General Secretary, National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers
Lord Berkeley, Co-Chair, All-Party Parliamentary Group for Rail
John Davies, Vice-President, Industry Relations, Trainline
Jools Townsend, Chief Executive, Community Rail Network
Senior representative, train operator
Questions and comments from the floor
- 9.55 **Next steps for regulatory reform and independent oversight**
John Larkinson, CEO, Office of Rail and Road
- 10.10 **Public ownership, private sector access and open access frameworks**
GBR's duties relating to public service alongside freight, private sector and open access needs | priorities for implementing the new Access and Use Policy | safeguards, monitoring and enforcement for open access and freight targets | alignment of capacity allocation and growth targets with funding cycles | addressing disparities arising from access and track usage charges
Steve Montgomery, Managing Director, First Rail
Maggie Simpson, Director General, Rail Freight Group
Darren Fodey, Partner, Stephenson Harwood
- 10.25 Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.55 **Chair's closing remarks**
Chair to be announced
- 11.00 Break
- 11.10 **Chair's opening remarks**
Julia Buckley MP
- 11.15 **Devolved powers and assessing opportunities for regional transport, development and growth**
Mike Bull, Strategy and Programme Director, Midlands Connect
Toby Rackliff, Strategic Lead, Rail Policy, West Midlands Rail Executive
Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.50 **Delivering the UK's rail infrastructure pipeline - planning, finance and skills**
delivery risks across major projects including the Transpennine Route Upgrade, East West Rail, Midlands Rail Hub and Northern Powerhouse Rail | managing the impact of inflation, supply chain pressures and constrained capital budgets | prioritisation of maintenance, renewals, enhancements and digital upgrades within CP7 | reconciling national priorities with government-backed devolution plans and regional ambitions for greater control over services, fares and investment | approaches to maintaining confidence in how funding is planned and delivery timetables are set
Neil Robertson, CEO, National Skills Academy for Rail
Darren Caplan, Chief Executive, Railway Industry Association
David Lawrence, Head, Engineering, Transpennine Route Upgrade
Martin Heffer, Technical Director, Rail and Transit, WSP
Amanda Leness, Managing Director, Asset Management, Equitix
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.40 **'An update on the government's rail reform agenda'**
Lucy Ryan, Director, Rail Reform, Department for Transport
- 12.55 **Chair's and Westminster Energy, Environment & Transport Forum closing remarks**
Julia Buckley MP
Sean Cudmore, Westminster Energy, Environment & Transport Forum