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**
Senior Parliamentarian

9.05 **The vision for Great British Railways and key priorities moving forward**
Senior representative, policy
Questions and comments from the floor

9.25 **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
Senior representative, passengers
Senior representative, train operator
Questions and comments from the floor

10.15 **Next steps for regulatory reform and independent oversight**
John Larkinson, CEO, Office of Rail and Road

10.30 **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

10.45 Questions and comments from the floor

11.05 **Chair's closing remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian

11.10 Break

11.20 **Chair's opening remarks**
Julia Buckley MP

11.25 **Devolved powers and assessing opportunities for regional transport, development and growth**
Mike Bull, Strategy and Programme Director, Midlands Connect
Questions and comments from the floor

11.45 **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
Senior representative, investment
Questions and comments from the floor

12.30 **Development of the Long-Term Rail Strategy and implementing the *Railways Bill***
Senior speaker confirmed from the **Department for Transport**
Questions and comments from the floor

12.55 **Chair's and Westminster Energy, Environment & Transport Forum closing remarks**
Julia Buckley MP
Sean Cudmore, Westminster Energy, Environment & Transport Forum