

In The News | 21st February 2024 | Latest Rail News

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Long-awaited plans to overhaul Britain's railways have been published by the Government in a draft Bill.

An article on The Standard website says proposals include the creation of a new public sector body named Great British Railways (GBR) to hold responsibility for rail infrastructure and awarding contracts to operate

trains.

Attempts to improve punctuality and simplify ticketing are among other measures set out by ministers in the draft Rail Reform Bill.

It is unlikely the legislation will make it on to the statute books before the next general election.

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The firm responsible for getting the Tyne and Wear Metro's trains into service every day has been fined £1.4m for underperformance.

An article on the BBC website says Metro operator Nexus confirmed that it has hit Swiss manufacturer Stadler with financial penalties for not having enough carriages in a usable state over the past year.

The network has been beset with problems over recent months, with passengers left increasingly frustrated by regular delays and cancellations.

Stadler said the 43-year-old fleet has reached its life expectancy, making "maintaining high levels of performance increasingly difficult to achieve".

A spokesperson for Stadler said: "Despite these challenges, we are doing our utmost to ensure that they are as reliable as they can be, and are constantly looking for new ways to ensure a good service for passengers."

Rail Partners last night hosted the annual rail industry event, the George Bradshaw Address, where it called on the main parties to 'follow the evidence' backing a public private partnership for the railway, and 'get on with reform'.

At the event, which saw both Huw Merriman MP, Minister of State for Rail and HS2, and Stephen Morgan MP, Shadow Minister of State for Rail address more than 200 senior rail industry representatives, the trade body, which represents rail operator owning groups and freight operating companies, warned that government overinvolvement in the railway leads to poorer outcomes.

Chief executive, Andy Bagnall told the speakers that, 'without actual legislation to create Great British Railways, the central tenets of the Plan for Rail are in the sidings' and that 'we don't agree that a public monopoly is the best way to fix the industry'.

Finally, Leading rolling stock financier and asset management company Porterbrook has agreed a deal to take a 49 per cent stake in Brodie Engineering.

Kilmarnock-based Brodie Engineering specialises the heavy maintenance, refurbishment, and overhaul of

freight and passenger vehicles. It is the only active rail engineering business in Scotland.

“Brodie Engineering is an excellent fit for us” said Mary Grant, CEO of Porterbrook. “The expansion in recent years into the Caledonia Works underlines the ambition of Gerry Hilferty and his team. They’re doing a fantastic job and will continue to run the day-to-day operations of the company.

[Click here for more details.](#)

Photo credit: Porterbrook