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October 2, 2020



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Boris Johnson has handed control of the Crossrail project to London Mayor Sadiq Khan as crunch talks begin on a major bailout for the capital's financially crippled transport network.

An article in The Daily Telegraph says the Prime Minister has passed responsibility for the £19 billion project to Andy Byford, who as Transport for London commissioner reports to Mr Khan.

The change removes influence from the Department for Transport, which was jointly responsible with TfL for the 73-mile link into central London from the west and east.

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The eastern leg of HS2 is at risk because of a Whitehall battle over the spiralling cost of the high-speed line, it was claimed yesterday.

An article in The Times says Lord Adonis, the project's original architect, claimed that powerful forces within Downing Street and the Treasury wanted to scrap the 120-mile link between Birmingham and Leeds.

The Labour peer said yesterday that a "key decision" was pending over the route, with Dominic Cummings, the prime minister's senior adviser, among those who want it to be cancelled.

A Department for Transport spokeswoman said the final scope and phasing of the phase 2b section of the route will be informed by the integrated rail plan.

Network Rail's fleet of 61 leaf-busting trains and 80 leaf-busting teams are being readied to help tackle the annual blight of 'leaves on the line' and keep passengers moving safely and reliably over autumn.

Staff are preparing specialist equipment, undertaking specialist driver training and ensuring teams are on standby 24/7.

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Finally, and a plaque in honour of Asquith Xavier, the pioneer for black equality who successfully broke the racist 'colour bar' at Euston station over 50 years ago, was unveiled in Chatham in Medway.

Representatives of Asquith's family, Southeastern, Network Rail and the RMT trades union were present at the waiting room on platform 1 at Chatham station where the commemorative plaque was revealed for the first time.

Asquith was a Chatham resident and a guard with British Rail.

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