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A cross-party coalition of MPs, peers and business leaders has urged the Prime Minister to commit to the eastern leg of the High Speed 2 rail link to protect regions at risk of economic damage because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The i paper reports on a letter signed by more than 50 people, including Conservative MPs and peers, urging Boris Johnson to “provide certainty to the communities of the Midlands and the North that so urgently need investment to speed their recovery from COVID-19”.

The proposed eastern leg, phase 2b, would run from Birmingham to Leeds.

Ministers are shortly expected to publish the Government's Integrated Rail Plan, which will include details of the second phase of HS2.

Boris Johnson risks falling short of his pledge to "level up" all regions of the UK due to a "complicated and restrictive" rail fare structure, industry leaders and politicians have warned.

The Rail Delivery Group said the current system made it "difficult to offer the more flexible fares and ticketing options that passengers will increasingly demand".

According to an article in The Daily Telegraph there are 55,000 different rail fares on offer across the UK, varying in prices depending on whether fares are split between destinations, between groups of people, or if people own a railcard.

Powerful new air filters are to be fitted to trains to cut the risk of coronavirus transmission under measures designed to draw passengers back to the railway.

The technology has been designed to catch and eliminate traces of the virus inside carriages, potentially making it safer to travel by train.

The article in The Times, says Bombardier Transportation, which has a large plant in Derby, said the filters could be fitted to new trains on the assembly line or retrofitted to most carriages already in operation.

Finally, and the Unipart Group has announced the appointment of Neil Walker as the Managing Director of Unipart Rail and Unipart Manufacturing Group.

Neil joins from MTR Corporation Limited and is an accomplished leader, whose extensive career spans the rail, transport and infrastructure sectors including a technology led e-mobility start-up.

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