

Mayor Steve Rotheram and Doug Oakervee to lead the high speed North debate

December 4, 2020



Bringing high speed rail to the North's towns and cities will be debated by political and industry leaders at Transport for the North's free online conference this month.

Liverpool City Region Mayor Steve Rotheram will lead the discussion on why HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) are essential to rebuild and transform the North's economy. He'll be joined by Doug Oakervee, who led the HS2 review earlier this year.

The annual conference this year takes place online on Monday 14 December from 10.30am, with registration free.

Liverpool City Region Mayor Steve Rotheram said: "Investment in high speed rail in the North is crucial if we are to improve people's lives and open up opportunities for this and future generations.

"The North has for too long played second fiddle to the south when it comes to transport investment and delivering a high speed rail network for the region will play a part in addressing the inequalities Northerners face, but, of course, we know there is still much more to do beyond this."

It comes as the Government readies to publish an Integrated Rail Plan for the North and Midlands, anticipated to outline the level of investment in rail projects for the coming decades.

A significant part of that will be Northern Powerhouse Rail, the network of new and improved rail links spanning from Liverpool to Hull. Northern leaders recently recommended an initial preferred network to the Government.

Tim Wood, Director of Northern Powerhouse Rail, who'll also speak on the conference panel, said: "Northern leaders recently agreed the preferred phasing scenarios and initial preferred way forward on all corridors for Northern Powerhouse Rail, marking a significant moment for this transformational new rail network.

"NPR will deliver thousands of jobs, cut carbon emissions and slash journey times. It also opens up connectivity in a way that will help our region build back better and enjoy sustainable growth over the coming decades.

"Together with HS2, delivered in full, we can bring to life the high speed North that our people and businesses deserve."

The debate around how and when the North gets high speed rail connections will be part of a wider day of informative discussions during the #TfN2020 conference.

Lorna Pimlott, Director of Phase Two Policy & Sponsorship at HS2 Ltd, will also join the discussion on building a high speed North.

Lorna Pimlott said: "The new National Infrastructure Strategy has confirmed HS2's role as the spine of the UK's transport network, delivering essential North-South connectivity.

"Together with Northern Powerhouse Rail, HS2 will reshape the economic geography of the country by helping deliver the Government's plan to build back better – and greener – from the pandemic, while levelling up every part of the country. HS2 has already supported 13,000 jobs and construction of Phase One route alone is set to create 22,000 more – at a time when they are needed most."

The free #TfN20 event takes place online from 10.30am to 2pm on Monday 14 December.

Further breakout sessions and panellists will be confirmed in the coming days – visit transportforthenorth.com/annual-conference for the latest news. Tickets are [available here](#).

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