

Northern leaders to discuss formal response to rail reform

September 14, 2021



Transport for the North's (TfN) Rail North Committee will meet this week – **at 11am on Wednesday 15 September** – to discuss the Sub-national Transport Body's formal response to the Government's proposals for rail reform.

A new report, developed by TfN for consideration by leaders from across the North of England, sets out the added value of TfN as a strategic partner for Great British Railways (GBR) and the need for a dedicated North of England region.

The proposal is based around four key pillars:

- Establishing Transport for the North as a 'strategic partner' with GBR;
- Using TfN's statutory Strategic Transport Plan as the basis for identifying investment priorities for the North;
- Harnessing TfN's regional evidence base as the foundation for all work on strategic transport infrastructure;
- Using TfN's 'single voice' to ensure that the North's needs are properly reflected in GBR's work.

The report, 'Rail Reform Matters: Responding to the White Paper' will be considered first by TfN's Rail North Committee next week, and then by the TfN Board on 29 September.

Martin Tugwell, Chief Executive of Transport for the North, said: "We are already in talks with the transition team for Great British Railways on a number of aspects of this new relationship – including how we use TfN's evidence and local knowledge to inform the development of the Whole Industry Strategic Plan for Great British Railways – and, to date, these talks have been extremely encouraging."

The Department for Transport's White Paper, 'Great British Railways: The Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail' was published on 20 May 2021. The key purpose of GBR is to provide a single focus of accountability for the rail industry: a move supported by TfN.

TfN's experience – through the Rail North Committee and Rail North Partnership – provides valuable insight that it believes can help with the establishment of GBR.

"We are well-placed to assist GBR in understanding the diverse requirements of the North, both from an operational and strategic perspective," said Martin.

"GBR will also have specific powers and skills that can complement those of Transport for the North. We need to ensure that investment in the North's railways supports delivery of our Strategic Transport Plan, making these early discussions with the transition team important. Rail has a key role to play in realising economic opportunities and doing so in a way that supports decarbonisation."

For the full Rail North committee details and link to watch live online, visit: [Rail North Committee | Consultation Call | 15 September 2021 | Transport for the North – Transport for the North](#)

Rail reform and encouraging people back to public transport will also be discussed at the Transport for the North third annual conference on Monday 20 September. The event will be streamed live online, to register, visit: [Watch online: Transport for the North Annual Conference 2021 Tickets, Mon 20 Sep 2021 at 10:30 | Eventbrite](#)

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