

Andy McDonald responds to calls for the Northern Rail franchise to be terminated

Labour's Shadow Transport Secretary Andy McDonald, commenting on the call by Metro Mayors Steve Rotherham and Andy Burnham for the Northern Rail franchise to be terminated said:

"Labour Metro Mayors Steve Rotherham and Andy Burnham are absolutely right to call for the termination of the Northern Rail franchise which was awarded by the last Conservative government. The contract has been a failure in every possible sense with delayed and cancelled trains, new services not being delivered and the dreaded Pacer trains still in operation.

"Northern Rail passengers deserve better than this and they also deserve long overdue investment in the Northern Rail network.

"A Labour government will end the failed franchising system and unite the whole railway under a single publicly owned company. We will support and empower Transport for the North to build a railway fit for purpose and fit for the 21st century.

"Chris Grayling can't wait for another review. He needs to act immediately and bring this failed franchise to an end."

Metropolitan Police comments on Extinction Rebellion prosecutions

Shami Chakrabarti, Labour's Shadow Attorney General, commenting on reports that the Met will push for the prosecution of more than 1,100 people arrested during last month's Extinction Rebellion

protests, said:

“The Deputy Assistant Commissioner would be wise to remember his constitutional role, which is not that of prosecutor, judge or commentator. The police performs a vital role in preserving the law and keeping the peace, which includes safeguarding the rights of peaceful protesters.

“The next Labour Government will review the statute book to ensure that the right to peaceful protest is robustly protected.”

Whoever becomes the new Conservative Leader must let the people decide our country's future, through an immediate General Election – Corbyn

Jeremy Corbyn, Leader of the Labour Party, responding to Theresa May's resignation announcement, said:

“The Prime Minister is right to have resigned. She has now accepted what the country has known for months: she cannot govern, and nor can her divided and disintegrating party.

“The burning injustices she promised to tackle three years ago are even starker today.

“The Conservative Party has utterly failed the country over Brexit and is unable to improve people's lives or deal with their most pressing needs.

“Parliament is deadlocked and the Conservatives offer no solutions to the other major challenges facing our country.

"The last thing the country needs is weeks of more Conservative infighting followed by yet another unelected Prime Minister.

"Whoever becomes the new Conservative Leader must let the people decide our country's future, through an immediate General Election."

New Stagecoach legal action shows franchising system beyond reform – McDonald

Andy McDonald MP, Labour's Shadow Transport Secretary, commenting on reports that Stagecoach, Virgin and SNCF are taking legal action against the Department for Transport over the West Coast franchise:

"Transport Secretary Chris Grayling's oversight of departmental procurement gets worse with each passing week.

"The news that four transport groups are now taking legal action against his department over its handling of two rail franchising processes shows that this system is beyond reform. It is failing on its own terms but Chris Grayling refuses to see it.

"Labour's plans to bring track and trains together under one public company will deliver the affordable fares and reliable rail services passengers desperately need and deserve."

The Prime Minister's authority is shot

and her time is up – Ian Lavery

Ian Lavery MP, Labour Party Chair, commenting on Andrea Leadsom's resignation from the Cabinet, said:

"The Prime Minister's authority is shot and her time is up.

"While the Tories are ripping themselves apart, our country is in crisis. The government has made a catastrophic mess of the Brexit negotiations, our steel industry is under threat and universal credit is pushing people into poverty.

"For the sake of the country, Theresa May needs to go, and we need an immediate general election."