

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.”

Jeremy Corbyn speaking ahead of EU elections

Jeremy Corbyn MP, Leader of the Labour Party, speaking ahead of the EU elections today, said:

“Today, the country has an opportunity to have a say on what kind of country we want Britain to be.

“A vote for Labour is a vote for a tolerant and fairer country, and an end to the division and austerity which has devastated our communities for a decade.

“The threat from the far-right is real. They serve only to sow division and offer no solutions. A vote for Labour today will challenge the far-right in Britain and across Europe.

“A vote for Labour is a vote to bring our divided country together, whether you supported Remain or Leave. We are the only party working for a sensible solution to break the Brexit deadlock and protect jobs, rights and living standards.

“We will continue to oppose the Tories’ bad deal or a disastrous No Deal. If we can’t get an agreement along the lines of our alternative plan, we will take it back to the people whether it’s through a public vote or general election.

"A vote for Labour is a vote for the only party that stands for the real change our country desperately needs, to benefit all communities, not just a privileged few."

Treasury response to LCF scandal – John McDonnell comment

John McDonnell MP, Labour's Shadow Chancellor, responding to the directions issued today about the FCA's handling of the LCF scandal, said:

"The Government has not taken this seriously, and these directions from the Economic Secretary do not change that. The Government has not joined the dots of successive scandals. They have not seen that the root of multiple scandals is systemic regulatory failure, rather than one-off acts of misconduct or 'bad apple' individuals. The Chancellor needs to front up and review the entire regulatory architecture.

"The investigation into the approach of the FCA and 'wider policy questions' is encouraging, but a 12 month investigation is far too long to wait for people whose lives have been torn apart by the collapse of LCF, and are desperate for answers.

"The Government's actions reflect a combination of incompetence and a blinkered ideology: their commitment to 'new and innovative forms of finance' has blinded them to the harms of inadequate regulation.

"A Labour Government would take a fundamentally different approach. We've commissioned work on overhauling the regulatory architecture. We will ensure that finance is a servant to, not master of, the public – and that our regulators bear this in mind at all times."

Labour calls on the Government to hold social media companies to account over discrimination in sport

Today (Wednesday), Labour will use an Opposition Day Debate in the House of Commons to call for tougher action to tackle discrimination in sport.

Labour would like to see a system introduced where offending content on social media is shared with sports governing bodies and clubs to ensure the offender can be banned from matches and sporting events.

Labour MPs will be calling on the government to hold social media companies to account given the unacceptable levels of discrimination that remain in sport.

Racism, sexism and homophobia targeted at players and fans are often left unpunished on social media. It affects athletes of all levels, across the country.

Labour recognises the work done by governing bodies, clubs and supporters' groups across all sports to combat discrimination and encourages these organisations to work with fans to stamp out the behaviour of a minority of supporters.

Rosena Allin-Khan MP, Labour's Shadow Sports Minister, said:

"Parliament has a responsibility to send a strong message that we need to combat discrimination across all sports. This is an important debate because right now, our national sport is being ruined by racists, sexists and homophobes.

"The comments being made on Twitter would be indefensible in a court of law, indefensible in front of an employer, and yet they are going unpunished on social media. We want social media companies to have a responsibility to remove hate speech within 24 hours or face serious

fines that hit their bottom line.

“There is no greater unifier in the world than sport, so we want Parliament to send a clear message today, that discrimination in sport must no longer be tolerated.”