



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

The Rt Hon Chris Grayling MP  
Secretary of State for Transport  
Department for Transport  
33 Horseferry Road  
London  
SW1P 4DR

29 October 2018  
MR/SB

Dear Chris,

Northern Services in Cheadle Constituency

Along with Conservative Councillors from my constituency, I am increasingly concerned by the issues still affecting rail services in Cheadle. Constituents who use all three lines with stations in the constituency are in touch on a regular basis, and people are questioning the suitability of Northern to continue operating the franchise.

Following the disastrous timetable change in May, I have remained in contact with Northern and was pleased to hear that, as promised to both me and others, they still intend to try and address these service gaps in the December timetable change, despite the fact that electrification of the Manchester-Preston via Bolton line will now not happen until 2019. It is also good news that the new fleet of trains is being introduced, which will mark a real noticeable difference in the physical quality of the service.

We all welcome the review into rail franchising and are hopeful that this will restore confidence in a system which many local residents lost faith in earlier this year, however many issues remain and constituents are consistently in touch with us relaying their experience of delayed and cancelled services, and incorrect information on the Northern app.

People deserve reliable information, however there have been numerous reports of constituents checking the timetable before leaving home, then turning up to the station to find a service is cancelled. This issue has been raised with Northern, however it is clear that it continues to persist and we would greatly appreciate an update on how the Government is working with Northern to iron out these issues.

It is clear that the ongoing dispute with the RMT and subsequent strike days are affecting services. While we understand that the union must take some responsibility for cancellations, people looking to travel are still having their plans thrown up in the air and are feeling the effect of this. Any information and reassurances you can provide as to the role which the Government is playing in trying to resolve this dispute would be extremely helpful.

The constant delays to Network Rail projects have also compounded the situation, with yet another delay to electrification of the Manchester-Preston via Bolton line in May being responsible for the sub-standard timetable our constituents are experiencing. We would urge the



Government to put every possible pressure on Network Rail to deliver future projects on time and outstanding ones as soon as possible.

We know that the Government is committed to resolving the issues which have blighted our railways in recent months and also welcome the huge investments being made in our future rail links too. However it is clear that constituents are still feeling let down by the current system and we believe it is imperative that these issues are addressed as a matter of urgency in order to reassure them.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of these issues, and I look forward to hearing from you.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mary".

Mary Robinson MP  
Member of Parliament for Cheadle

Cllr Brian Bagnall - Bramhall South & Woodford, Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council

Cllr Paul Hadfield - Stepping Hill, Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council

Cllr Linda Holt - Bramhall North, Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council

Cllr Mike Hurleston - Bramhall South & Woodford, Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council

Cllr John McGahan - Bramhall South & Woodford, Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council

Cllr Alanna Vine - Bramhall North, Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council

Cllr Lisa Walker - Bramhall North, Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council

Cllr John Wright - Stepping Hill, Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council