



## NORTHERN POWERHOUSE ALL PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

**Co-Chairs:** Caroline Flint MP, Kevin Hollinrake MP,  
Julie Elliott MP and John Stevenson MP

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Cllr Judith Blake, Cllr Nick Forbes  
and Cllr Sir Richard Leese



## Minutes | Northern Powerhouse All Party Parliamentary Group Northern Powerhouse Rail

15:00-16:00, Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2018

Committee Room 10, House of Commons, SW1A 0AA

### Welcome

**Co-chairs Rt Hon Caroline Flint MP and Kevin Hollinrake MP, Co-Chairs of the Northern Powerhouse APPG,** welcomed all attendees to the launch of the groups campaign for Northern Powerhouse Rail. Caroline emphasised that it is essential that Northern Powerhouse Rail should not have to wait to start until HS2 rail infrastructure to be built. The APPG campaign is calling for both schemes to be completed at the same time in 2033.

Lord O'Neill of Gatley, Vice-Chair, Northern Powerhouse Partnership and Vice-Chair, Northern Powerhouse APPG. **-How Northern Powerhouse Rail will boost connectivity and growth**

*Lord O'Neill* reflected that he has always believed that better connectivity in the North would have a bigger transformative effect on UK GDP and productivity than any other scheme. The independent economic review confirmed this. The campaign is not just about trains and lines – ultimately it is about making travel easier and affordable across the UK.

He urged everyone to articulate the benefits of Northern Powerhouse Rail and help to make it a bigger priority for Government. This is not a campaign of a north vs south issue or that the north does not get enough. The North is on an exciting journey that Government and others should join us on.

**Making Northern Powerhouse Rail happen** *Cllr Susan Hinchcliffe, Leader, City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council -*

NPR is a real opportunity to have step change in investment in the north and for Bradford. An investment in a city centre station is essential to deliver proper connectivity across the North. A city option for the station gives £1.3bn uplift to the local economy – which would be a significant increase, as now only 10bn. History has showed that investment in transport has a legacy for hundreds of years. The £70bn investment is good value for money for UK plc as well as the north.

For further information on the Northern Powerhouse All Party Parliamentary Group, please contact [npappg@devoconnect.co.uk](mailto:npappg@devoconnect.co.uk).

Follow the NP APPG on Twitter @NPAPPG.

Bradford is the UK's youngest city – but the current transport to Manchester and Leeds is too slow and inefficient.

*Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester-*

The work of the APPG is an exciting initiative to bring cross party and business support behind such an important campaign. Decades of under investment now means that travel times between Liverpool and Manchester is only four minutes faster than the sixties and actually four minutes slower for Manchester to Sheffield. Let's therefore take politics out of this issue – all Governments and parties have let us down. But given the Government's support now for a Northern Powerhouse, NPR is a big litmus test of whether it is really committed. In particular their support for plans for Piccadilly will demonstrate if the Government shares our ambition.

The current HS2 plan is to build out to the north of the station but that would mean NPR services have to go in and back out at Piccadilly – losing journey frequency and train times. Getting the right Piccadilly station option is absolutely crucial because it will impact on Bradford, Leeds and across the North.

He went onto discuss how to build this campaign to a crescendo so it is heard loudly and clearly. Westminster is London centric which is why Mayors and council leaders are proposing a Convention of the North to take place alongside the Exhibition of the North. This will call for the required investment in NPR including Piccadilly station. This is justified due to the historic unfairness in the way that transport funding has been distributed. Ultimately the Government may not be able to fund Crossrail 2 and NPR so we really do need to make case for its greater importance.

*Steve Gillingham, Director for the North and Scotland, Mace*

Mace are an international construction company with a strong focus in the north. We got involved in Northern Powerhouse Partnership as excited by the prospect of a public private partnership with a strong vision for the future. It also wants to see some more funding given – for skills and infrastructure – which is a fundamental requirement for growth.

NPR really is an opportunity of a lifetime: a game changer. There are already 30 % more passengers than since Beeching but NPR, with its new lines, would mean 1.3 million people would be within an hour of the four major cities in the North– boosting productivity and connectedness. Northern infrastructure is national infrastructure. Delivering HS2 and NPR as just one project has obvious cost benefits and would achieve growth for quicker and greater than letting them be twenty years apart.

### **Panel Discussion, Comments and Q&A**

*Caroline Flint MP* said it is about connecting major towns as well as cities – many suffer from fact that cannot attract best to work in local hospitals and schools. But if better connections then people can live in cities and then work in places like Doncaster

*Louise Ellman MP* said NPR was a terrific initiative and wanted to check that Liverpool would link with HS2 and NPR? (The benefits to Liverpool are in briefing document).

*Johnny Reynolds MP* said if the Northern Powerhouse means anything then it means one labour market. The danger is the dichotomy between local and national investment – NPR is both but must not suffer because of that. What we need now are some practical steps for progressing this project.

*Tony Lloyd MP* pointed out that if you take any conurbation – for example the 2.8million in Greater Manchester – they do not all live near one place (Piccadilly) so need to actively win their support for that

investment in that specific location. The same will need to happen across the north so all see the benefit of investing in Piccadilly.

*Andy Burnham* said it is essential HS2 and NPR are not seen as two schemes: they are one big project. And there is a strong case to build Liverpool in from the start so it is one coherent initiative. This would help build support for HS2. We are asking MPs to start to make the case.

*Lord O'Neill* said the goal of the campaign is to provide focus, prioritisation and to allow TfN to do its job better But we do need to be realistic – ultimately we must convince the HMT of the merits of the scheme

*Tim Wood, director Northern Powerhouse Rail* at TfN said they would publish their Strategic Business Plan business case by September. They will do so with DfT and it will include both options: an underground and a 'turn-back' station in Manchester.

*Lord Wrigglesworth* said the north east was in the Northern Way but it does tend to feel isolated. Newcastle does have a metro but we must ensure Sunderland and Teesside as well as Newcastle are linked into NPR.

*Andy Burnham* said that as a Treasury Minister he funded Crossrail 1 in 2007 and at same time had asked for other projects in the north but got nothing back from officials as HMT projects are scored by GVA. But in truth Jubilee Line did not pass any such test – nor would Olympics. We need to make big picture vision, not a narrow justification, and then provide advocacy via IPPR North, DevoConnect and fully involve the North East. And we should not meekly point out the unfairness of the transport funding deficit.

*Lord O'Neill* said he has been involved in the Northern Powerhouse debate since first devo deal was discussed. Key point is that if it becomes a genuine powerhouse then this would affect trend growth rate of country. Better to couch arguments for investment in the language of changing national economic performance not redressing north-south unfairness.

*Henry Brooks of Tatton Estates Management* said housing investment and transport go hand in hand in place making – need to ensure it is a virtuous circle not a vicious cycle of underinvestment.

*Steve Gillingham* said Mace had helped develop New Street station which had transformed the area. There won't be any problem getting wider investment if there is transport investment. That is the leap of faith required from the public sector. The North West is the top performing region - may be to do with spirit of devolution – and ultimately the £70bn required is not a big number.

### **Next steps for the Northern Powerhouse Rail campaign**

*John Stevenson MP, Co-Chair of the Northern Powerhouse APPG* concluded the meeting saying that it was very important that the APPG set up as it is critical that all parties buy in to the Northern Powerhouse ambition and agenda. He went onto say that all need to get behind TfN. Although Crossrail 2 only helps some almost all in London will support it. We need to generate the same awareness and support from across the whole of the north for Northern Powerhouse Rail. He ended by thanking all for their attendance.