

Andy McDonald response to the publication of the Gibb report into Southern Rail

Andy McDonald MP,
Labour's Shadow Transport Secretary, responding to the publication of the Gibb report into Southern Rail, said:

"Ultimately, the buck stops with the Government. Tory ministers, who designed and awarded the franchise, are responsible for the shambolic delivery of enhancement works and have directed this unnecessary industrial dispute.

"The Gibb report paints a picture of a chaotic relationship between Network Rail, the Department for Transport and Govia Thameslink Railway – none of which have sufficient oversight or responsibility.

"The report contains some sensible proposals for how to improve services, but without ending the industrial dispute and bringing the franchise to an end, passengers will continue to suffer.

"It is within Chris Grayling's power to end the industrial dispute tomorrow by calling off his plans to expand Driver Only Operation, which poses risks to passengers and severely restricts accessibility for those with disabilities. Similar disputes elsewhere on the network have been resolved and there's no good reason for this to drag on any longer.

"A Labour Government would stand up for the interest of passengers rather than train companies, taking Southern back into public ownership and creating a new body to have strategic oversight for the railway, thereby avoiding the chaos and fragmentation that has plagued Southern passengers for too long."