

[This is a slap in the face for commuters and businesses in the north-McDonald](#)

Andy McDonald MP, Labour's Shadow Transport

Secretary, commenting on Chris Grayling's comments that the full electrification of the Leeds to Manchester train line won't go ahead, said:

"This is a slap in the face for commuters and businesses in the North.

"Just six weeks ago the Tories promised the electrification of the Trans-Pennine route as an integral part of the government's 'Northern Powerhouse'.

"For years the Tories have promised electrification for the North, delivering faster, greener and more reliable services along with the significant economic benefits brought about by improved connectivity.

"The Tories have gone from Northern Powerhouse to Northern Powercut! Another broken promise from a Government that's hit the buffers.

"Chris Grayling had to be forced to come to parliament to give his HS2 statement and has sneaked this out in an interview after the Commons has risen.

"Voters won't be fooled by Grayling's claim that the same benefits will be realised without electrification.

"With our commitment to deliver a Crossrail for the North, it's clear only Labour has the ambition to transform the economies of the North of England for the many not the few."

Ends

[Richard Burgon congratulates Lady Hale](#)

on her appointment as President of the UK Supreme Court

Richard Burgon MP, Labour's Shadow Secretary of State for Justice, following the appointment of Lady Hale as President of the UK Supreme Court, said:

"I congratulate Lady Hale on her appointment. It is a welcome step forward to have the first female president of the Supreme Court.

"Such positive change is far too slow across the judiciary. Labour will review the judicial appointments process to ensure a judiciary that's more representative of society."

It is imperative that the warm words in Michael Gove's speech today are followed by robust action – Sue Hayman

Sue Hayman MP, Labour's Shadow Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, responding to the speech given by Michael Gove MP today, said:

"It is imperative that the warm words in Michael Gove's speech today are followed by robust action, and we will hold the Government's feet to the fire to ensure that they deliver on their promises when it comes to the environment, agriculture and fisheries. Gove has been notoriously dismissive of expert advice in the past, so Labour will closely watch that he follows the science when it comes to our precious environment.

"The agricultural sector needs long-term certainty post-Brexit. Gove says he wants to continue supporting farmers after we leave the Common Agricultural Policy, but we must get the detail on this as soon as possible, so that farmers can plan for the future.

"Britain must lead by example when it comes to tackling climate change. We welcome the Environment Secretary denouncing President Trump's reckless and irresponsible approach to climate change and the Paris Agreement. Labour wants to see EU environmental protections transposed into British law and strengthened where necessary. We will not allow the Government to use Brexit as an excuse to attempt to water down this important legislation.

"We must champion sustainable farming and fishing by investing in and promoting skills, technology, market access and innovation. Labour in government will reconfigure farming and fisheries subsidies on the basis of

environmental management, innovation, and productivity – not just the amount of land you own – and reconfigure funds for farming to support smaller traders, local economies, community benefits and sustainable practices.”

[Today's warning from NATS is yet another example of the Government's failure – Andy McDonald](#)

Andy McDonald MP, Labour's Shadow Transport Secretary, commenting on the warning from the National Air Traffic Services (NATS) over airspace, said:

“The Government's approach to aviation has been to rely on autopilot while they have a chat among themselves. Labour has been pressing for action for years on aviation safety, drones and airspace modernisation: the Government say they are in listening mode but it seems they're not listening to anyone in the industry.

“Today's warning from NATS is yet another example of the Government's failure to act and comes as uncertainty over Brexit is threatening the UK aviation industry. The Government must listen to what NATS and the industry more broadly are warning and take action to protect and modernise UK airspace.

“The Government must also urgently provide clarity on our post-Brexit relationship with the European agencies that maintain aviation safety standards and through which our air service agreements are secured. If the Government continue to fail to address the challenges facing the aviation industry, the UK's connectivity, competitiveness and ability to trade will be severely undermined.”

[John McDonnell response to latest ONS Public Sector Finance figures](#)

John McDonnell MP, Labour's Shadow Chancellor, commenting on the latest Public Sector Finance figures published this morning by the ONS, which show that £128.5 billion was added to the national debt since June 2016 and public

sector net borrowing increased by £2 billion last month compared with June 2016, said:

“These figures reveal the continued failure of Philip Hammond and the Conservatives. Seven years of Tory cuts have left our economy weaker with falling wages, yet the deficit has not been eliminated two years after they claimed it would be, and the national debt continues to rise.

“The Chancellor should stop handing out massive tax giveaways to big businesses and the super-rich, and instead give our hard-pressed public sector workers a pay rise; so we can end the travesty in our country of nurses having to rely on food banks.

“Only a Labour Government will set out a serious plan for the public finances with strategic investment underpinned by our Fiscal Credibility Rule, to help build the high wage, high skill economy of the future for the many not the few.”