

Andy McDonald response to Southern Rail fine

Andy

McDonald MP, Labour's Shadow Transport Secretary, responding to the fine given to Southern Rail today, said:

"It has taken over a year for the Transport Secretary to reach this decision. Long-suffering passengers should not have to resort to crowdfunding for legal action to seek accountability, and the Secretary of State should not have to be dragged kicking and screaming by the High Court to do the job he was appointed to do.

"Today's fine is small change compared with the £1.2billion Govia is paid to run passenger services and, with crucial parts of the Gibb report redacted and a lack of detail on today's decision, the management of the Southern rail fiasco continues to lack transparency.

"Ultimately, the buck stops with the Government. Tory ministers, who designed and awarded the franchise, have been ducking their responsibility for Southern's abysmal service and for directing this unnecessary industrial dispute.

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

The biggest risk to the UK economy is Theresa May's Government – John McDonnell

John

McDonnell MP, Labour's Shadow Chancellor, commenting on the Office for Budget Responsibility's (OBR) Fiscal Risks report this morning, said:

"The Tories want to blame Brexit for their failures on the economy, but what this

report really reveals is that one of the biggest risks to our economy is Theresa May's weak government, and the last seven years of Tory economic failure.

"Given recent poor economic news, showing a lost decade of productivity growth and falling real earnings, the risks highlighted today by the OBR of slower productivity growth, a persistent current account deficit, high level of household debt, and weak business investment are extremely worrying.

"The OBR have today put the final nail in the coffin of Tory economic credibility. They have confirmed health spending has been falling under the Tories, social care is in crisis and local authority budgets have been stripped to the bone. Rather than invest in our public services, the OBR notes this government's shambolic 'periodic policy reversals' while at the same time giving away billions in tax breaks to the super rich.

"It is a dereliction of duty of this government that the OBR can claim that after seven years of austerity, the British economy, and working people, are less prepared for the 50/50 risk of a recession in the next five years.

"Only a Labour Government will negotiate a sensible jobs-first Brexit which does not risk long-term damage to our economy and has set out a serious plan for the public finances. Labour's strategic investment will be underpinned by our Fiscal Credibility Rule, to help build the high wage, high skill economy of the future for the many not the few."

It is deeply worrying that delayed transfers of care attributed to social care have increased by almost 10,000 since last year – Barbara Keeley

Barbara Keeley MP, Labour's Shadow Cabinet Minister for Social Care, commenting on the latest delayed transfer of care figures, said:

"Over

the past seven years the Tories have presided over a crisis in social care. Today's delayed transfer of care figures show that crisis is still getting worse on their watch.

"It is deeply worrying that delayed transfers of care attributed to social care have increased by almost 10,000 since last year and have doubled in the last three years. We know that keeping older and vulnerable patients in hospital longer than needed poses significant risks to their morale, mobility and to their likelihood of contracting hospital-acquired infections. Under this Government these risks are increasing.

"The Tory solution of threatening to punish those councils struggling with social care is not the answer. Taking funding away from councils will only lead to worsening quality and safety issues in care. Rather than threatening councils, the Tories need to match Labour's commitment and provide urgent additional funding for social care."

[Jonathan Ashworth responds to Government's new ambulance service standards announcement](#)

Jonathan Ashworth, Labour's Shadow Health Secretary, commenting on the Government's announcement of new ambulance service standards, said:

"This Government have failed to hit any of their main NHS ambulance targets since May 2015 and an updated system that truly works for patients is clearly overdue. NHS ambulance trusts must now be given every support to build a new system which has the support of paramedics and patients alike.

"The truth is that the Tories' underfunding and mismanagement of the NHS has pushed ambulance services to the brink and left record numbers of patients suffering and in discomfort. The public will want to know that a new series of standards is truly based on the best clinical evidence and not just on the money which the Government are making available.

"Sir Bruce Keogh has shown great leadership in demanding the best for NHS patients. The Government must now match these ambitions and give ambulance trusts the support and resources they need to

deliver the best possible quality of care for ill and injured patients.”

Most people worse off after Theresa May's year as Prime Minister – Jeremy Corbyn

Jeremy Corbyn MP, Leader of the Labour Party,

commenting on Theresa May's year as Prime Minister, said:

“A year ago today, Theresa May stood on the steps of Downing Street, saying she wanted a country that works for everyone.

“One year on, most people are worse off, with vital public services cut to the bone, falling wages and stagnating living standards, soaring classroom sizes and a million more on NHS waiting lists under the Tories.

“Under her government, the privileged few have benefited from tax give-aways, at the expense of the majority, who have borne the brunt of Conservative cuts.

“Theresa May now heads a zombie government, with no ideas, no answers and no leadership. This is a government in name only, having to ask other parties to “clarify and improve” its policies and delaying most Parliamentary business until the autumn.

“The Conservatives have no plan for Britain. Labour is ready to fight the next election, whenever it may be, to form a government that will build a country for the many, not the few.”