

[The Government must bring to an end the costly failure that is privatised rail – Andy McDonald](#)

Andy McDonald MP, Labour's Shadow Transport Secretary, responding to the failure of the East Coast franchise, said:

"The Government is trying to bury the news that they're giving Stagecoach and Virgin a get out of jail free card to walk away from their franchise and a potential £2 billion of payments to the Treasury.

"It is outrageous that the Transport Secretary Chris Grayling is refusing to answer what the true cost to the public purse will be.

"Under public ownership, the East Coast Mainline returned over £1bn to the Treasury, outperformed its commercial competitors and kept fares down when no private operators made the same move.

"When the Tories cynically re-privatised the line on the eve of the 2015 General Election, they said the decision would deliver for the British taxpayer, but we're now being left with a colossal tab.

"The Government must now come clean and reveal the true cost to the public purse of this decision and bring to an end the costly failure that is privatised rail."

[Google legal challenge seeks to bring justice to millions who may have had data unlawfully collected – Liam Byrne](#)

Liam Byrne MP, Labour's Shadow Digital Minister, responding to the news that Google are facing legal action for alleged unlawful data collection, said:

“The scale of this case shows the imbalance of power between everyday people and the companies that Hoover up their data to make money.

“Google ‘You Owe Us’ legal challenge seeks to bring justice to the millions of people who may have had their data unlawfully collected and, if successful, will ensure companies like Google act in good faith when it comes to users’ data.

“The Data Protection Bill is currently going through Parliament and Labour will be aiming to put trust at the heart of the UK’s new data protection system to ensure companies can innovate but only if they collect and use data responsibly.”

[This is just the latest evidence that the Government should abandon their privatisation of the student loan book – Angela Rayner](#)

Angela Rayner MP, Labour’s Shadow Education

Secretary, commenting on reports the Government are set to lose £800m from the private sale of student loans, said:

“This is just the latest evidence that the Government should abandon their privatisation of the student loan book.

“In the Budget, they promised to assess value for money before any sale. We now know that they have lost £800m of taxpayer’s money on this sale.

“This cannot possibly be value for money, and they should change course now before even more of our cash is wasted on their ideologically driven plans.”

[Tories need to act on resounding verdict of CMA & end cuts to local](#)

authority budgets – Barbara Keeley

Barbara Keeley MP, Labour's Shadow Minister for Social Care,

commenting on a report from the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA), which has found that the current system for providing social care is not sustainable without additional funding, said:

“The Tory Government needs to act on the resounding verdict of the Competition and Markets Authority and end their swingeing cuts to local authority budgets, which have caused underfunding and instability in the social care sector since 2010.

“Due to these cuts, £6.3 billion will have been lost from social care budgets by March next year. This has meant less publicly funded care for those in need, increased pressure on unpaid family carers and worse conditions for hard-pressed care staff.

“The Tory Government must now make clear how they will enact the will of the House of Commons to meet the funding gap for social care and act on the recommendations of the CMA so that the rights of self-funders are protected.

This will mean more and more patients waiting longer and longer in pain, discomfort and distress for elective operations – Jonathan Ashworth

Jonathan Ashworth MP, Labour's

Shadow Health Secretary, responding to NHS England's Board Meeting confirming waiting times standards will not be met next year, said:

“NHS England's unprecedented confirmation that NHS constitution waiting times standards ‘will not be fully funded and met next year’ is the direct result of Philip Hammond's failure to give the NHS the funding it needed in the recent Budget.

“Today NHS bosses have effectively

conceded that the 18 week target for treatment can't be met given continued underfunding of the NHS.

"This will mean more and more patients waiting longer and longer in pain, discomfort and distress for elective operations. This is the real debilitating impact on patients' quality of life as a result of Tory austerity.

"What's more, there are serious questions about the legality of effectively abandoning a standard of care enshrined in the NHS constitution. As a matter of urgency Jeremy Hunt must now tell us whether he intends to amend the law and the NHS Constitution through legislation and publicly accept his Government's funding squeeze is jeopardizing legally guaranteed standards of patient care."

Ends