

Topical Motion: HS2

Proposer:

Summator:

1 Conference re-affirms its support for the 2021 Federal motion “A Framework for England in a Federal UK”
2 implementation of which would confer Regional level political control over future decisions on transport
3 infrastructure and economic development.

4 Conference Condemns

- 5 A. The betrayal of the North of England through Government failure to proceed with HS2 to Manchester to-
6 gether with its integration with Northern Powerhouse Rail.
- 7 B. The failure to ring fence 100% of savings from the cancellation of HS 2 for expenditure on infrastructure in
8 the North of England.
- 9 C. The lifting of the safeguarding order on land acquired for the construction of HS2 and its resale in order to
10 preclude the possibility of reversal of the Government’s decision.
- 11 D. The gross mismanagement of the HS2 project by Government including the decision to begin construction at
12 the Southern end rather than in the North.
- 13 E. The failure of recent Tory governments to proceed expeditiously with promises made in their 2015
14 manifesto for improving rail infrastructure across the North of England and the attempt to effectively renew
15 some unfulfilled promises as new ideas claimed to compensate for the cancelling of HS2.

16 Conference Notes

- 17 a) The statement from Lord Broughton, Chair of Transport for the North;” It’s undeniable that this will be seen
18 by many as a missed opportunity for the region, and the country as a whole. Only last week, northern
19 business and political leaders came together at our TfN Board to speak with ‘one voice’ to reaffirm our
20 position that HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail in full are vital to truly transform the North.”
- 21 b) The contrast between Government determination to proceed as quickly as possible with the planning and
22 construction of East-West Rail between Oxford and Cambridge in the midst of years of prevarication over
23 projects in the North.
- 24 c) That central to the thinking behind the “Northern Powerhouse” concept was the improvement of
25 connectivity to help drive levelling-up by enabling the talent pool in the North to experience mobility of
26 labour comparable to that in the South of England.
- 27 d) That many of the schemes identified for using HS2 savings are vague, un-costed and lacking in detailed plans
28 and we have no confidence in the Government to honour its pledges to speed up investment new and
29 existing projects.

30 Conference Believes

- 31 i. That the conduct of the HS2 project and its cancellation leave the UK open to the derision of the
32 international community and potential inward investment partners.
- 33 ii. That the productivity gap between the North and South of England not only diminishes the prosperity and
34 life chances of citizens of the North but acts as a drag anchor on the UK economy and its ability adequately
35 to fund public services.

- 36 iii. That the failure over many decades of underfunding of transport infrastructure in the North by both
37 Conservative and Labour Governments has been a key factor in the creation of the productivity gap.
- 38 iv. That the present Tory Government has abandoned the Northern Powerhouse in favour of a
39 Northern Poorhouse.
- 40 v. That it is not possible to improve an already frequently gridlocked M6 or other roads to and within the North
41 without a massive modal shift of freight from road to rail that is unachievable with capacity limitations on
42 the West Coast Mainline
- 43 vi. That congestion at rail bottlenecks in Stockport, Crewe and elsewhere render the use of HS2 trains over
44 existing lines meaningless in terms of increasing capacity.
- 45 vii. That offering passengers from the North new trains terminating at Old Oak Common, at least for a period of
46 years, adds insult to injury.
- 47 Conference Calls for;
- 48 1. Parliament to block Government plans to lift the safeguarding order in land acquired for HS2, accompanied
49 by an immediate review of potential cost savings aimed at reinstatement of the HS2 leg to Manchester, if
50 necessary, with modifications.
- 51 2. In the event that Government Proposals proceed, the immediate ring fencing of any savings from HS2 for
52 allocation to transport infrastructure for the North of England followed by;
- 53 a. A review led by Transport for the North in collaboration with Network Rail of alternative options for
54 increasing rail freight capacity to destinations in the North from major ports and industrial centres
55 further South and the development of a strategy for a modal shift of freight from road to rail.
- 56 b. A review of Transport for the North's Strategic Plan that would identify how spending priorities and
57 timetables could be revised on the basis of all savings from HS2 being allocated for use in the North.