



**Department
for Transport**

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Dear Huw,

I wanted to thank you for the hard work of your Committee in producing its report on the Integrated Rail Plan (IRP). I have read your recommendations with interest. You will also be aware that the Prime Minister has made clear her commitment to a fuller version of Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR).

In normal circumstances, a Department would aim to respond to a select committee report within two months of publication. However, given the change in both Government and the Prime Minister's position, this will not be possible in this case if the Committee is to receive a meaningful response. These are decisions on multi-billion pounds of future commitments which will define our country's transport network for decades and generations to come. As with the original IRP, I expect they will take some time to work through.

My preference would therefore be to give the Committee a full response to its Report by March 2023. I am keen to work constructively with the Committee, and hope this suggestion proves acceptable to you and your committee. However, if you wish a response more quickly I am alternatively prepared to respond by the end of December, but in this case would need to explain in a number of areas work remains in progress.

With my very best wishes

Yours sincerely,

KEVIN FOSTER MP

MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT