

Georgia Ehrmann  
Head of Network Development and Operations Strategy  
Avanti West Coast

7 October 2022

Dear Ms Ehrmann,

I am writing to you as the Chief Executive of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce and in support of an additional rail service between Liverpool and London.

Liverpool Chamber is a trade association comprising more than 600 businesses across the Liverpool City Region, but primarily those based in Liverpool and Sefton, from a wide range of sectors and varying in size from sole trader to multi-national enterprises. We have been centred upon business since our formation in 1850 and continue to reflect our members' views to partners and stakeholders on issues which impact upon their business and those of the 46,000 businesses within the City Region.

Liverpool has long lagged behind other major cities in the North in the number of direct services to London. As both the city and its economy has grown over recent years, the case for improved transport connectivity is imperative if businesses are to invest and thrive in the city region.

If the city region is to grow the economy in line with expectations, it needs to be easily accessible to a wide range of stakeholders, providing integrated transport links which also support national and regional net zero targets.

Crucially it also needs to support wider employment opportunities, attracting new businesses and long-term investment in sectors like health and life sciences, STEM, and creative and digital technologies, where the city is leading the way. For example:

- The newly opened Royal Liverpool Hospital and Clatterbridge Cancer Centre which will cater for patients from around the country
- Paddington Village is establishing itself as a centre for health and life sciences, attracting the Royal College of Physician amongst other global brands
- Our universities have an international reputation attracting high calibre students from around the world as well as the UK

All lie within the Knowledge Quarter hub, which is adjacent to Lime Street Station.

Consistently named as a top tourist destination, Liverpool continues to have a thriving visitor economy which looks set to grow, including the weekly traffic from visiting football supporters. Everton FC's new complex at Bramley Moore Dock will not only enhance the experience for supporters but will also provide additional conference and exhibition space to complement current facilities. Most recently, it is estimated that the recent Labour Party conference generated £20 million for the city. Liverpool is seen as a destination of choice for big events including the World Gymnastics next month and potentially the Eurovision Song Contest next year. Improved transport links are vital if we are to exploit that potential to the full.

An additional service to London would also provide an opportunity for trains to stop at Liverpool South Parkway, allowing direct access to Liverpool John Lennon Airport who are continuing to grow their international routes as well as increasing patronage post Covid.

It would also help to address capacity issues at key times. Whilst Covid has had an impact on some working patterns, it has also highlighted the importance for many businesses of face to face meetings with clients and colleagues.

The connectivity provided by the West Coast Partnership is an essential part of the bigger rail picture for Liverpool city region, enhancing not only the city's links to London but also across the UK. Our members believe that as a key player in the region, Liverpool will both benefit and prosper from an additional service to London both directly and indirectly, particularly if we are to compete with other key cities who already have multiple services to London.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Cherpeau', written in a cursive style.

Paul Cherpeau,

Chief Executive