



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

The Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP
Secretary of State for Transport
Department for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

Our Ref: JM/SH25622
3 April 2020

Dear Grant,

I am writing to you regarding the financial support available for vital public transport links during the Coronavirus outbreak our country is currently dealing with.

Naturally, the correct advice issued by your Government for people to stay at home where possible has had a profound issue on the number of people using public transport services. Although many people are of course able to follow that advice, a significant number of key workers and frontline NHS staff in my constituency and across the country rely on public transport to and from work, and to the shops to get essential supplies.

It is therefore essential that public transport operators are able to run a service that enables those people to travel where necessary. I was pleased to see the steps you are taking to ensure that bus operators have the financial support they need to continue operating despite the drastic drop in passenger numbers and fare revenue.

Despite this, I am writing to you now to express my deep concern over the way in which public sector operators, including Nexus who run the extensive Metro rail service across the Tyne and Wear, are currently facing uncertainty despite suffering the same significant drop in passenger numbers and income as those in the private sector. It is vital that our entire public transport network remains operational not only in the short-term, but in the long-term when businesses resume, and a majority of employees are able to return to work.

I am therefore asking you to re-visit this situation, alongside the Chancellor, and take urgent steps to ensure organisations such as Nexus have access to the same support as their counterparts in the private sector.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Sharon Hodgson MP

Washington & Sunderland West Constituency

Covering the Castle, Redhill and St Anne's Wards of Sunderland, and the Washington Central, East, North, South and West Wards.

www.sharonhodgson.org

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