

ANDY BURNHAM

**MAYOR OF
GREATER
MANCHESTER**

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Ref: AB/JP

Dear Nav,

Thank you for contacting me regarding the proposed changes to the Northern rail timetable. Please accept my apologies for the delay in responding, I have recently received a higher-than-expected volume of correspondence which has impacted my ability to respond within my usual timeframes.

I appreciate the concerns you have raised around the proposed timetable changes. As you may already be aware, the May 2018 timetable led to a major reduction in train performance, which affected passengers all over Greater Manchester and the wider north. In response, the rail industry established the Manchester Recovery Task Force (MRTF), on which Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) sits as a key stakeholder. This group has worked closely together over the last two years since its formation in early 2020 and has tested options for best achieving balance between train service levels and connectivity and reliability.

The proposed timetable options were first consulted upon in late 2021, to which Greater Manchester provided a firm and evidenced reply, which included cross-Manchester links between Stockport and the northwest of Manchester. The final adopted timetable plan for December 2022 was shared for consultation by MRTF again in December 2021 and this included the breaking of the link between Stockport and Salford Crescent/Bolton. The Greater Manchester response provided a strong argument for retaining such a link, including, as you mention, the numbers of students travelling from southeast Greater Manchester to Salford Crescent. Unfortunately, in seeking to find a balance between reliability and connectivity, the final timetable also severs this link, which has been justified by the reliability problems that trains often encounter when crossing Slade Lane Junction between Levenshulme and Manchester Piccadilly.

Moving forward, the MRTF board is looking at options for service changes beyond December 2022 and TfGM has pressed that reinstatement of this link should be a top priority.

I trust the above information proves useful and once again, thank you for taking the time to contact me. Please be assured that I will continue to work with Government and the rail industry to bring in the vital improvements to services that the North has been promised.

Best wishes,

Andy Burnham
Mayor of Greater Manchester

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<u>BOLTON</u>	<u>MANCHESTER</u>	<u>ROCHDALE</u>	<u>STOCKPORT</u>	<u>TRAFFORD</u>
<u>BURY</u>	<u>OLDHAM</u>	<u>SALFORD</u>	<u>TAMESIDE</u>	<u>WIGAN</u>