

## **Ref Campaign for Rail Query**

I fully support the transfer of responsibility for local rail services to Transport for the West Midlands (TfWM) where we can ensure our priorities are addressed and at the same time we can ensure that the strategic rail issues we rely on are given national accountability via the Infrastructure Commission.

My three priorities are:

1. For TfWM to review the region's existing rail infrastructure and determine how it can be brought back into service or more effectively utilised to increase rail usage by the most residents within the region and decrease congestion
2. For the same review to address infrastructure needs (access, stations, amenities) so we can move towards creating a passenger rail system that is the envy of the world
3. For the WMCA Mayor and 7 leaders to review best practice for zero emission rail transport across the world and to choose an option to adopt for the West Midlands

You may be aware that there is a £4 billion funding gap projected for the region to 2020 so resources are already tight as well as an annual shortfall in infrastructure funding into TfWM. We need a new model to fund our infrastructure needs and if we are able to develop a long term infrastructure plan for rail in the region and we can persuade the National Infrastructure Commission to do the same for the non-regional components upon which we will rely. Only by securing strategic cross party commitment will we be able to tap into new funding models and deliver the kind of rail network we deserve.

With very best wishes,

**Beverley Nielsen**

Lib Dem Candidate for  
West Midlands Metro Mayor