

10 June, 2011

Thank you all very much for your letters. I have been campaigning for years to get the Portishead to Bristol railway line re-opened. However, when there was money available, the previous government were not interested. As you will know, I held an Adjournment Debate in the House of Commons on the issue in 2005 which was well supported.

You will be aware that the appalling state of our public finances, which have been so damaged by the previous government makes it impossible for us to give cast iron guarantees about any publicly funded projects. I am disappointed, but not surprised, that there is no money immediately available for the Portishead to Bristol rail link. The reduction in the deficit has to be the Government's top priority. I will continue to give my full personal support for the project, so that when the financial position eases, we may get some positive traction on this issue.

I have written to Lord Heseltine and to Nick Clegg making clear my view that this issue was dealt with in a disgraceful way by the previous government and offering to hold talks with them personally to brief them fully.

Yours sincerely

LIAM FOX