

"ONTRACK"

Walton On Naze, Frinton On Sea, Kirby Cross, & Thorpe Le Soken Rail Users Association
Representing Clacton & Walton Lines Rail Users for over twenty years

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FAO Ben Maskell Special Advisor
Secretary of State for Transport
The Rt. Hon Patrick McLoughlin MP
Department for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

Dear Rt. Honourable Patrick McLoughlin MP

CLACTON CONSTITUENCY BY ELECTION: TENDRING PENINSULAR RAIL TRANSPORT ISSUES & ECONOMIC REGENERATION

I was attending in private capacity as a member of the local conservative party, when we spoke about rail transport at the reception held, Tuesday 16th September, in the **Legacy Kingscliff Hotel** for the Clacton By-Election Conservative Candidate Cllr. Giles Watling. As you may remember Cllr. Giles made some jocular comments on the subject of the local railways.

However, I am now writing on behalf of the Rail Users Association, which is a non-party political organisation that has representatives on its committee and in membership from across the political spectrum, and "ONTRACK" RUA aims to spread a common understanding of local rail issues across all local parties and seek out a collaborative consensus on improvements.

Further to my telephone conversation yesterday with Ben Maskell, your adviser, copies of the following are attached

- MS Power-Point slides already circulated to local Councillors and Rail Future,
- The response to the NORWICH IN NINETY campaign's latest consultation draft as part of an initial briefing.
- Alongside these are some key facts produced the other year by local government.

We will also forward in due course send out the recent Rail Passenger Headcount Census reports and other related resource information, which all point to local rail services being woefully inadequate. Our headcounts carried out in collaboration with local councillors, officers and other volunteers highlights serious doubt as to the ORR official usage estimates.

You are no doubt already aware that the north east Essex coastal peninsular is economically depressed, with one of the highest concentrations of retired persons in the country, plus a large a large number seeking employment. However although a London commuting area, as The Times in the property supplement last year pointed out, its attractiveness as destination and place to live are constrained by the poor railway service and crowded A12/A133 roads. It is also interesting to note that all the main By-Election candidates that the association have contacted so far are advocating improved rail services to the area. Transport will have a key role in economic regeneration, promoting tourism and enabling accessible transport to employment opportunities outside of the immediate area (e.g. London. Chelmsford, Colchester, Ipswich). I believe Local senior Council Officers and Councillors, would welcome the opportunity to discuss further such issues.

Yours sincerely

John K Smock, Hon Chair