

Portishead line – a new body blow



The end of the line?

Last December, North Somerset Council applied to the DfT for a grant of £47m from the DfT's "Large Local Major Transport Scheme Fund". This was to make up the shortfall of the costs of re-instating the passenger service to Portishead.

In May it was announced that the bid has not been successful. This is despite all the encouraging signs given by the Transport Secretary Chris Grayling who promised to open the project "sooner rather than later".

Just to add insult to injury, the £173m pot of money that was up for grabs will be split between three new road schemes (in North Devon, Yorkshire and Leicestershire).

This has cast serious doubt on whether the re-opening will ever occur although WECA, and the non-WECA North Somerset Council, are both still making positive noises that the scheme will go ahead.

FOSBR are investigating all the funding options to determine where to most effectively apply pressure.

In the meantime, a new pressure group, #PortisheadBackOnTrack, has sprung to support the 20 year ongoing efforts of Portishead Railway Group.

#PortisheadBackOnTrack have set up a petition to Chris Grayling on change.org. Please sign it and share it. The link is here:

<https://www.change.org/p/chris-grayling-fully-fund-the-portishead-to-bristol-metrowest-rail-line-portisheadbackontrack>