



East West Railway Company

Chair

July 2026





Contents

Welcome Note from Rt Hon Heidi Alexander MP, Secretary of State for Transport	3
About East West Rail Company	5
About the role	6
How to Apply	10
Indicative Timetable	10
Selection Process	11
Additional Information	12
Appointment Term	12
Time Commitment	12
Remuneration	12
Location	12
Availability	12
Security clearance	13
Equal Opportunities Monitoring	13
Disability Confident	13
Nationality	14
Standards in public life	14
Disqualification for appointment	14
Registration of interests	14
Political activity	15
Due diligence	15
Data Protection	15
Complaints	17
Annex A Seven Principles of Public Life	18



Welcome Note from Rt Hon Heidi Alexander MP, Secretary of State for Transport



Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the role of Chair of East West Railway Company (EWR Co.).

As one of Britain's largest transport projects, East West Rail forms a cornerstone of the government's infrastructure strategy, unlocking £6.7 billion of regional economic growth by 2050, enabling up to 100,000 new homes and supporting tens of thousands of new jobs along the route. Central to our mission is delivering transport that works for everyone in our society.

At the 2025 Spending Review, the government announced £2.5 billion to progress the next stages of the scheme, bolstering government's commitment to realising the full potential of the Oxford-Cambridge Growth Corridor and delivering improved connectivity for communities in the region. EWR Co. is now entering a critical phase, moving from definition and design to formal scheme approval and commencement of delivery where all partners are working seamlessly to deliver the benefits.

We are seeking a politically astute individual with Board-level experience and a track record in major project delivery who can guide the organisation through complex stakeholder dynamics and demanding objectives as construction activities accelerate. This role is for someone who excels at relationship management and who can support EWR Co's core role as the programme integrator and drive forward collaborative decision-making on infrastructure and services delivery, working with Network Rail and the DfT Operator and in future Great British Railways.

We strongly welcome applications from all backgrounds. As part of the Department's commitment to diversity, we believe our public appointments should reflect our customers - the travelling public – who come from all walks of life and have different



experiences. We very much welcome fresh talent, expertise, and perspectives, to help us better understand the needs of the communities we serve and support better decision making for all. This includes people who may have never applied for a public appointment – but could bring new ideas, insights and energy.

If you are interested in the role and work of EWR Co., I would like to encourage you to apply.

Our dedicated DfT Public Appointments Team would be happy to talk through the process and answer your questions.

Rt Hon Heidi Alexander MP
Secretary of State for Transport



About East West Railway Company

EWR Co. is responsible for the development, design and delivery of the new Oxford-Cambridge railway link.

East West Rail is a new railway which will connect Oxford, Milton Keynes, Bedford and Cambridge, making it easier for people to live and work in the area, with faster and more affordable connections to get around the region, bringing people together, connecting communities and helping new ones grow.

The strategic objectives for EWR Co. are to:

- Connect communities with better east-west rail links, improving journey times and convenience compared to travelling by road.
- Strengthen links with existing north-south routes across the national rail network, opening up the wider UK transport network.
- Expand access to jobs and skills, allowing businesses to recruit from a wider labour market and creating more employment opportunities.
- Support investment and economic growth in both the region and on a national scale.
- Enable new homes and growing towns to be well-connected with modern transport connections.
- Offer a sustainable alternative to road travel, allowing people to make better transport choices.
- Take lorries off local roads by supporting rail freight as an essential part of the UK's supply chain.

The Company's vision is to achieve easy everyday journeys, bringing people and places together. This vision will be measured by EWR Co's core outcome which is creating a railway that is:

- safe
- reliable
- accessible
- sustainable

EWR Co operates as a standalone public body of DfT and works closely with Network Rail and DfT Operator Limited to design and build the new rail connection and plan the introduction of new train services on the route. Following structural reforms to unify the sector, EWR Co will pursue close alignment with the new single rail body, Great British Railways, to streamline planning and operations ahead of introducing services in Bedford and Cambridge areas.



The Board

The EWR Co Board is responsible for establishing appropriate corporate policies and scrutinising major decisions, whilst holding EWR Co Management and EWR Co's CEO to account.

The EWR Co Board consists of seven non-executive members: a Chair and six non-executive directors (NEDs) including a Shareholder NED, and three executive directors

EWR Co. operates 'best practice' standards of corporate governance, and where applicable is aligned to the Corporate Governance in Central Government Departments: Code of Good Practice. The Board is supported by the following sub-committees, each of which is chaired by a NED:

- Audit and Risk Committee
- Remuneration and Nomination Committee
- Safety, Health and Environment Committee; and
- Investment Committee

The Board meets formally in person, in the Milton Keynes office, every two months and holds informal calls during the alternate months, with the above sub-committees meeting as a minimum on a quarterly basis.

Strategic Priorities in 2026-27

- Lock down the baseline and deliver the programme. EWR Co will establish programme cost and schedule and will begin enabling works. Alongside this, EWR Co will continue to refine the design and submit their Outline Business Case in early 2027.
- Build a high performing project delivery capability. The Company will strengthen client and partner capability as procurement for main works contracts progresses, and deliver a step change in safety, commercial and delivery capabilities.
- Drive meaningful engagement with external stakeholders. EWR's route-wide public consultation will be a key opportunity before the submission of plans to the Secretary of State for development consent.

Further information can be found on www.eastwestrail.co.uk or East West Railway Company Limited - GOV.UK



About the role

Title:	East West Railway Company Chair
Reports to:	Secretary of State
Duration:	An initial term of 3 years, with the possibility of re-appointment
Remuneration:	£75,000 per annum for 2 days per week time commitment

As a Non-Executive Chair for EWR Co., you will have recent and relevant Executive Board or Non-Executive Director experience or be able to demonstrate the ability to operate at this level. You will understand and be committed to the pivotal role that the Board plays in underpinning Government confidence.

Candidates will need to demonstrate resilience, with experience of or demonstrate the ability to operate in a high-profile organisation tasked with delivering against demanding objectives. Success will rely on the ability to welcome diverse perspectives, navigate complex stakeholder dynamics and build a strategic partnership with Great British Railways Company as part of the drive to deliver aligned design, construction and passenger experience from the ground up.

We are looking for someone who is politically astute and has proven experience in delivering sound, impartial advice on complex delivery programmes. The successful candidate should be able to demonstrate ability to engage positively and collaboratively in Board discussions, bring strong relationship management skills to drive integration efforts and have a passion for delivering excellence.

The role holder will have the ability to cope with ambiguity/change and have credibility and persuasiveness in dealings with elected members and officials. Ability to demonstrate media handling skills and being comfortable in the media spotlight would be beneficial.



Essential criteria:

1. Proven experience in leading large-scale or complex projects/programmes and ability to steer the organisation through different phases while fostering clarity.
2. Recent and relevant Executive Board or Non-Executive Director experience, or clear ability to operate at this level in a high-profile organisation with impartial judgement, the ability to engage collaboratively in Board discussions and constructively challenge and encourage;
3. Ability to navigate complex stakeholder landscapes and build strategic partnerships, handle public scrutiny, manage differing viewpoints, with a strong demonstrable understanding of working with Government and ensuring strategic alignment;

Desirable skills, knowledge and experience

- experience or knowledge of working in capital-intensive programme delivery, large civil engineering programme or overseeing complex commercial arrangements;

Candidates' suitability for the role will be assessed against the essential criteria.

Please note, should a large number of applications be received, a shortlist may be undertaken using a lead criteria **1**.

Chair

Your function is to provide external advice and expertise to inform the Ministers' decision-making process. You will add value by offering independent constructive challenge to the operation of the Board, contributing towards the Board's primary aims, which include:

- Being responsible for the proper running and effective management of the EWR Co Board. You will guide and influence the Company at a strategic level, providing confident, clear and consistent leadership.
- Guiding the Board in ensuring Executive accountability for the effective and efficient delivery of the programme, for building the necessary capability, and for the overall performance of the Company, including: ensuring the Company has robust risk management, internal controls, governance and assurance processes, efficient and effective use of resources.



- Working closely with the Chief Executive and the Senior Leadership Team, both supporting and challenging the Executive to lead and develop the organisation to ensure it delivers the vision for East West Rail.
- Being accountable, through the Chief Executive, for the development of a capable, high-performing organisation that can deliver across the full project lifecycle and produce social and community, as well as financial, benefits to the region.
- Act as an ambassador for the Board and for EWR Co, heading up the development of collaborative strategic partnerships that support and promote the vision for the Oxford – Cambridge Growth corridor, and influencing key decision-makers across the line of route.
- Promote the highest standards of integrity, probity, and corporate governance, ensuring that EWR Co complies with all governance requirements. The successful candidate's personal performance may be assessed based on the delivery of EWRCo's strategic aims, the details of which will be agreed with the Secretary of State for Transport (as applicable).

You will chair the meetings of the EWR Co. Board, held remotely or in person by agreement.



How to Apply

If you wish to apply for these positions, please apply through the Cabinet Office's [Public Appointments website](#) by **Midday on Friday 7 August 2026**

Any applications submitted after the closing date, or that are missing any of the following documents, will not be accepted.

- A **CV or equivalent biographical information** (maximum two sides A4, minimum 12 font) setting out your career history and including details of any professional qualifications.
- Provide a **summary of why you are interested** in the role and **how you meet the specification and essential criteria**. This can be in a form that allows you most ably to present your interest and credentials, for example a short, bullet-point slide presentation (no more than 5 slides), a short video (no more than 2 mins) or supporting letter (no more than two A4 pages, minimum 12 font). Make sure you refer to the contents of this document and provide specific examples. **If you wish to provide your supporting summary in video format, please contact Dftpublicappointments@dft.gov.uk in advance of the closing date.**
- You will also be asked to **provide diversity data, and to declare any potential conflicts of interest or reputational issues.**

If you have any queries about this role, please contact Public Appointments Team by email dftpublicappointments@dft.gov.uk



Indicative Timetable

Please note that these dates are only indicative at this stage and could be subject to change. Please let us know if you are unable to meet these timeframes.

Advert Launch	8 July 2026
Advert Closing Date	7 August 2026
Shortlist Meeting	Mid-August 2026
Final Panel Interviews	Late September 2026
Meeting with Secretary of State (if required)	October 2026

Selection Process

This role is being competed in accordance with the Governance Code (October 2025)¹, which sets out the regulatory framework for public appointments processes. The Code is based on three core principles – merit, openness, and fairness.

The Panel Chair for this appointment competition is Richard Goodman, Director General for Rail Reform and Strategy, and Lynette Ryals, Senior Independent Director, EWR Co. The panel will also include an Independent Panel Member.

The Public Appointments Team will acknowledge your application and keep you updated on the progress of the competition.

At the short-listing meeting the selection panel will assess each application against the essential criteria and decide who to invite for interview.

Interviews are expected to take place in person in DfT's offices in Great Minster House (London) and to last for between 45 and 60 minutes. Further details about the format will be provided to you in advance.

The decision to appoint to this role rests with the Secretary of State. Appointable candidates may be invited to meet with the Secretary of State, or another Department for Transport Minister, before they make a final decision.

Please note: Expenses incurred by candidates during the recruitment process will not be reimbursed except in exceptional circumstances and only when agreed in advance with the DfT Public Appointments Team.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-code-for-public-appointments>





Additional Information

Appointment Term

Your appointment as Chair of the East West Railway Company will be made by the Secretary of State.

The appointment will be for an initial term of 3 years, with the option of re-appointment for up to a further 3 years by mutual agreement, subject to satisfactory annual performance appraisal.

It should be noted that this post is a public appointment; Chairs/ Non-Executive Board members are neither employees of the Crown nor the Department for Transport. Such appointments are not normally subject to the provisions of employment law.

Appointments may be ended prior to the conclusion of the period of appointment.

Time Commitment

The anticipated time commitment is a minimum of 2 days per week. The role involves attendance at Board meetings, providing specialised advice as required, preparation time, travel, and work outside of meetings.

Remuneration

- £75,000 per annum Remuneration is not taxable through payroll, and the appointment is not pensionable.
- Members can claim reimbursement for reasonable travel and subsistence costs necessarily incurred at rates set centrally by EWR Co.

Location

The role will be based in Milton Keynes but will include remote work and meetings as well as occasional travel to locations across the route and London.

Availability

The successful candidates are expected to commence the role as soon as possible following the confirmation of appointment, subject to the successful completion of pre-appointment checks and security clearance.



Security clearance

The successful candidate will be required to have or be willing to obtain security clearance to Security Check (SC) level. Pre-appointment checks will also be undertaken on immigration and criminal convictions. It usually takes between 4-6 weeks to obtain the security clearance. The role will be offered on a conditional basis until the successful candidate has passed all checks.

Equal Opportunities Monitoring

We believe that by being a diverse and inclusive workplace, where everyone is valued, we are more motivated, higher performing and more committed to our team. We welcome all applicants, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, social background, religious beliefs, ethnicity, or age.

As part of the application process, we ask candidates to complete equal opportunities monitoring information in the application portal. This will help us to monitor selection decisions to assess whether equality of opportunity is being achieved. This part of the form will be treated as confidential and used for statistical purposes only. The form will not be treated as part of your application.

Disability Confident

The Department for Transport values and promotes diversity and is committed to equality of opportunity for all and to the appointment of disabled people. As part of the Disability Confident scheme, we will select the disabled candidates who best meet the essential criteria for the role. 'Best meet' is defined as providing/ demonstrating strong examples of all essential criteria.

In order to guarantee an interview to all disabled candidates ([as defined by the Equality Act 2010](#)) who satisfy all the essential criteria for the role and wish to be considered under the Disability Confident Scheme, we need candidates to declare a disability and that they wish to be considered under the Scheme.

What do we mean by a disability?

To be eligible for consideration under the Scheme, you must be considered disabled under the Equality Act 2010. This means that you must have or have had in the last 12 months, a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial long-term adverse effect on your ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. This includes those whose disability has lasted, or is likely to last, for 12 months, or if the disability or condition is likely to progress or recur.

You do not have to be registered as a disabled person to apply under this scheme.



Nationality

This is a non-reserved post and therefore open to UK Nationals, British Nationals Overseas, British Protected Persons, Commonwealth Citizens, EEA Nationals and certain non-EEA family members and Swiss Nationals under the Swiss EU Agreement. There must be no employment restriction or time limit on your permitted stay in the UK. You will not be asked to produce evidence to confirm your eligibility at the application stage, but you will be required to do so should you be invited to the final panel interview.

Standards in public life

You will be expected to demonstrate high standards of corporate and personal conduct. All successful candidates will be asked to subscribe to the Review Body's "Codes of Practice". Candidates will be expected to abide by the ["Seven Principles of Public Life" set out by the Committee on Standards in Public Life.](#)

Disqualification for appointment

There are circumstances in which an individual will not be considered for appointment. They include:

- people who have received a prison sentence or suspended sentence of three months or more in the last five years.
- people who are the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order.
- in certain circumstances, those who have had an earlier term of appointment terminated.
- anyone who is under a disqualification order under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986.
- anyone who has been removed from trusteeship of a charity; and
- Roles listed under the [House of Commons Disqualification Act 1975](#) or the Devolved Administrations equivalent.

Registration of interests

The purpose of these provisions is to avoid any danger of Board members being influenced, or appearing to be influenced, by their private interests in the exercise of their public duties.

Public appointments require the highest standards of propriety, involving impartiality, integrity, and objectivity, in relation to the stewardship of public funds and the oversight and management of all related activities. This means that any private, voluntary, charitable, or political interest which might be material and relevant to the work of the body concerned should be declared. It is important, therefore, that you



consider your circumstances when applying for a public appointment and identify any potential conflicts of interest, whether real or perceived.

There is a requirement to declare any actual or potential conflict of interest you may have in being appointed to the Board upon applying. Any actual or perceived conflicts of interest will be fully explored by the Panel at interview stage.

Political activity

Members will need to show political impartiality during their time on the Board and must declare any party-political activity they undertake in the period of their appointment. Details of the successful candidate's declared political activity must be published by appointing departments when the appointments are publicised.

Your political activity will be kept separate from your application and will only be seen by the Panel prior to interview – the Panel may at that stage explore with candidates any potential for conflict of interest. It is appreciated that political activities may have given you relevant skills, including experience gained from committee work, collective decision making, resolving conflict and public speaking. If, therefore, you have had such experience and you consider it relevant to your application for this post, you may if you choose include it separately in the main body of your application.

Due diligence

Due diligence will be carried out as part of the application process. As well as checks made regarding the above, searches will be carried out via internet search engines and any public social media accounts. It will be seen by the Panel prior to interview – the Panel may at that stage explore with candidates any findings.

Data Protection

The Department for Transport (DfT) is the joint controller, with the Cabinet Office, for any personal data which you provide to us as part of your application.

Information provided as part of this application will be kept securely within DfT and destroyed within 5 years of the conclusion of the recruitment campaign.

DfT uses this form to gather evidence on DfT's public appointments.

The lawful basis that applies to this processing is that it is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest to inform DfT's recruitment policies in accordance with the Department's public sector equality duties. For processing special category personal data (disability, religion, sexual orientation and ethnicity), we rely on Article 9(2)(g), reasons of substantial public interest (equality of opportunity and treatment).



Complaints

If you are not completely satisfied with the way your application is handled at any stage of the competition, please raise any complaint in the first instance with:

Via email: DfT Public Appointments DfTPublicAppointments@dft.gov.uk

Public Appointments Team
Public Bodies Centre of Excellence
Department for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

We will reply to your complaint within 20 days.

If you remain unsatisfied, please [contact the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments](#). The Commissioner can only investigate complaints relating to regulated Public Appointments.



Annex A: THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC LIFE

Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

Integrity

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisation that might influence them in their performance of their official duties.

Objectivity

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interests.

Leadership

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.