

Robert Catherall

Principal

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Languages: English



Expertise

- Infrastructure
- Public Policy and Impact Assessment
- Regulation
- Strategy

Sectors

- Transport

Profile

Rob is part of Oxera's senior Transport team and specialises in public policy, impact assessment, economic regulation and commercial strategy. He joined Oxera in September 2022, following 15 years in the UK Civil Service, including eight years in the Government Economic Service. Rob has held a number of senior roles at the UK's Department for Transport (DfT), working in rail, buses, aviation and roads. He has also worked at the UK's Department for Work and Pensions and the UK's Department for Communities and Local Government.

For his work at the DfT during the COVID-19 pandemic, Rob was nominated by Sir Peter Hendy (Chair of Network Rail and the Secretary of State's COVID-19 Travel Tsar) and his team for the Civil Service Award for Inspirational Leadership.

Selected professional experience

- Managing a £10bn portfolio of c. 200 projects and funding to Local Authorities for local roads and public transport (2019–22)
- Leading the £4.8bn Levelling Up Fund for the DfT and working with HM Treasury and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to design and run the competition (2021–22)
- Advising Birmingham City Council on the DfT's requirements for the re-procurement of the Birmingham Highways Maintenance PFI (2021–22)

- Securing agreement in the Levelling Up White Paper to a new approach to funding local transport (2021–22)
- Leading the DfT's Spending Review 2021 negotiations with HM Treasury for local and regional transport, delivering 24 business cases and securing a £4.2bn per annum investment over three years—a 42% increase on Spending Review 2015 (2021)
- Leading the DfT's COVID-19 response for buses, trams, taxis, local roads, cycling and walking, including negotiating with HM Treasury for over £1bn of emergency bus and tram grants and securing agreement from Number 10 to a £2bn cycling and walking programme (2020–21)
- Developing the case for financial support for COVID-19 safety measures for taxis and private hire vehicles (2020)
- Leading the delivery of a DfT and Department for Education plan to deliver the biggest post-war shake-up of local transport to overcome severe transport capacity constraints when schools reopened during the COVID-19 pandemic (2020)
- Developing contingency plans for the DfT in the event of financial failure of rail franchises (2018–19)
- Leading the design of a new public–private partnership approach to the East Coast passenger services and infrastructure operations (2017–19)
- Advising the Secretary of State for Transport on the strategic approach and timings for upcoming rail franchise competitions (2016–19)
- Assessing the case and options for rail franchise reform, which led to the launch of the Williams Rail Review (2016–18)
- Leading the delivery of a joint Department for Work and Pensions and Department for Health White Paper on support for long-term sick and disabled people to get into and stay in work (2015–16)
- Designing a new proposition for future disability employment support programmes for the DWP (2015)
- Setting direction for the economics input across six rail franchise competitions and six rail direct award transactions let by the DfT (2014–15)
- Developed a framework for assessing the economic and financial impacts of applications for rail open access operations (2014–15)
- Leading the DfT's analytical programme and advising on the development and implementation of key commercial policies for the East Coast rail franchise competition (2013–14)
- Leading the cost–benefit analysis and the DfT's assessment of strategic alternatives to High Speed 2 (2013)
- Advised on the business case for a contribution from Heathrow to the cost of Crossrail (2012–13)
- Leading the development and implementation of reforms to the framework for UK airport economic regulation through the Civil Aviation Act 2012 (2010–12)

Qualifications

- BA (Hons) Economics, University of Leeds, UK
- MSc Economics, University College London, UK