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Llyr Gruffydd MS
Chair of the Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee

7 January 2025

Dear Llyr Gruffydd MS

I am writing regarding our previous Committee appearance and to follow up after our tour of the Taff's Well Depot on 7th November. As promised, please see below follow up commitments

Recommendation 6;

As part of our Strategic Equality Plan 2024 - 2028 We will complete an equal pay audit across the business, continue to review and act on reducing our gender pay gap, and look to identify and avoid additional pay gaps in the future. We will establish robust recruitment processes in partnerships with community organisations to improve the levels of diversity within the business. We will also ensure that a variety of EDI training, including anti-racism training, is rolled out across the business, to create an informed and aware workforce, ensuring that those who are from underrepresented and/or marginalised groups feel welcomed and belong among their peers and colleagues.'

In addition, We will continue to invest and support in a range of schemes such as:

- Women in Transport LEAD programme,
- Women in Transport Advance mentoring programme
- Women in Rail Moving Ahead Mentoring scheme
- 2025 launch of our internal Women in Leadership programme

The Welsh Women in Transport Hub will also continue its work in offering a range of events to share best practice, knowledge, engaging women across the transport sector and growing a male allyship to the work being undertaken.

These programmes support women to grow in confidence and achieve their full potential. Our Internal development statistics also show that more women proportionally are likely to undertake both vocational courses and qualifications.



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Recommendation 11:

In November, we started introducing the latest of our Brand-New Fleet, the Class 756s on the Aberdare and Merthyr Lines, including the Treherbert line as of Monday 6 January 2025. This will bring a welcome upgrade onto the TAM lines, and more Class 756s will follow on these lines over the weeks ahead.

Almost every line now has new units operating on them, with some lines such as the Wrexham - Bidston line or the Conwy Valley Line having every service entirely new. As of Sunday 15th December 2024, timetable change, the North Wales Branches will continue to have 100% of journeys on new fleet and the North Wales Mainline with over 80% of journeys on new fleet. Overall, over 87% of journeys will be on new fleet for North Wales services from December 2024 timetable.

Other key timetable changes have been

- Significantly more stops at Pontyclun, Llanharan and Pencoed – increase in total daily services from 38 per day to 59. A 55% increase.
- Increase in Swanline services during peak hours to 1 train per hour (Baglan, Briton Ferry, Skewen and Llansamlet).
- Two extra Milford Haven services and a more evenly spaced service to Fishguard Harbour, which removes a six-hour gap without trains during the middle of the day.
- The last train from Cardiff to Maesteg via Bridgend is now later - at 11:24pm.
- Later last train from Swansea to Cardiff leaving at 11:30pm Monday to Friday.
- More consistent departures with more trains leaving at the same time past each hour.
- Maesteg services towards Cardiff will now run through to Ebbw Vale, rather than Cheltenham Spa.
- Cheltenham Spa services will start and end at Cardiff Central.
- Instigation of the changes brought about by the Strategic Timetable Review on the Cambrian and Heart of Wales lines.
- Introduction of brand-new Class 756 trains on the Core Valley Lines (starting November) and dedicated active travel trains with extra bike spaces, a full refit and a dedicated livery for the Heart of Wales line.
- Some changes to the calling pattern on certain services between Cardiff and Manchester Piccadilly, to speed up some trains and deliver a standard pattern in the timetable.
- Some local services between West Wales and Cardiff will now use Platform 0 at Cardiff Central.
- The North Wales Branches will continue to have 100% of journeys on new fleet and the North Wales Mainline with over 80% of journeys on new fleet. Overall, over 87% of journeys will be on new fleet for North Wales services from December 2024 timetable.

These changes have been described as the “most significant mainline timetable change in a generation” and has taken four years to develop.



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However, it is true to say we are still experiencing delays from our manufacturers, both Stadler and CAF and it is important to both work in partnership with them and to hold them to account in every way possible. I very recently undertook a short visit to Spain to meet with the CEO of CAF to push them further on making deliveries.

Therefore, with our current fleet and journeys on new trains, we are around 70-75%, but this will increase with more Class 756s coming online and then bringing them onto the Coryton Line around Spring/Early Summer in 2025.

Recommendation 12

Last year, we've spent time reviewing our longer-term rail timetable commitments to ensure they best meet the demands of customers and are fit for the needs of passengers. In October we shared this work with Members as well as online for members of the public. [TfW Future Timetable Review | Have your say by Transport for Wales](#)

In the wake of the Covid 19 pandemic, the way people use public transport for work, education and leisure has changed significantly. We've changed too, becoming a public railway in the truest sense of the word. Nearly every service we run requires some form of public subsidy at a time where budgets are tight. Every penny we take on any service that is above and beyond our operating costs goes back into reducing the subsidy we receive. As a responsible operator it is imperative that we balance the need for a regular, robust and reliable service within our budgets and against our targets to deliver more sustainable transport.

We have developed our future timetable to better align with current travel habits and requirements of customers, whilst becoming a truly multimodal operator. That means we're looking at demand and the opportunities for growth across bus and rail together. On the railway, some routes will see little change, others will see slightly different calling patterns better targeted to current needs, but in other areas we have had to make some tough decisions to ensure we provide capacity where most needed, grow revenue and ultimately reduce public subsidy. Regular stakeholder feedback on our timetables has fed into this, alongside passenger counts and close consideration of alternative travel options.

Recommendation 14

We have supported over 1000 major and local events across our entire network, and we have successfully transported nearly 500,000 fans in and out of Cardiff (including Pontypridd for the Eisteddfod) this year alone, this includes:

- 100,000 fans for the Six Nations
- 160,000 music fans for various music gigs at the Principality Stadium
- 100,000 people in and out of the National Eisteddfod
- 130,000 rugby and football fans over the Autumn period



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Recommendation 20

Over the last few years TfW has been working ever more closely with Local Authorities and CJsCs to firstly further the technical ability of officers in Wales (both TfW and LAs) to develop and bring forward good active travel schemes and secondly to understand better how to evaluate their effectiveness and indeed how to encourage better usage and take up as part of a multi modal transport network.

The focus is currently in working in partnership with CJsCs and Local Authorities to support officers to bring forward and design excellent schemes as part of a rounded regional transport plan. The emphasis is on supporting and enabling and providing a service to local authority officers rather than in an enforcement role.

TfW has over the last 18 months developed the capacity for the first time to support scheme design, offering the ability to achieve much higher value for money for Wales in this space as we move forward.

Yours sincerely,

James Price
Prif Weithredwr / Chief Executive