

Lee Waters AS/MS
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Newid Hinsawdd
Deputy Minister for Climate Change



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref LW/592/21

All Members of Senedd

24 September 2021

Dear Members,

I am writing to share an update about Transport for Wales' plans for the December 2022 timetable change.

Please find enclosed a letter from James Price, chief executive of Transport for Wales, on the ongoing impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on our plans for the Wales and Borders franchise.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lee', written over a light grey rectangular background.

Lee Waters AS/MS
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Newid Hinsawdd
Deputy Minister for Climate Change

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1SN

Gohebiaeth.Lee.Waters@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Lee.Waters@gov.wales

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.



**TRAFNIDIAETH
CYMRU
TRANSPORT
FOR WALES**

3 Llys Cadwyn
Pontypridd,
CF37 4TH,
029 2167 3434
James.price@trc.cymru
trc.cymru

3 Llys Cadwyn
Pontypridd
CF37 4TH
029 2167 3434
james.price@tfw.wales
tfw.wales

Lee Waters MS

PSDMCC@gov.wales

16 September 2021

Dear Minister

I am writing to update you on Transport for Wales' plans for the December 2022 timetable change.

I want to be upfront and honest with you as early as possible and highlight some of the difficulties we have faced over the last 18 months of the pandemic and how these have impacted on our plans. Covid has had an enormous impact on all of our activities and plans, as of course has been the case across all other sectors. As a result, we have had to adapt our timetable improvement plan to reflect these Covid impacts. This is not a unique situation to Wales, and the whole of the UK rail industry is facing the same challenges.

When the Wales and Borders franchise was let in June 2018, the December 2022 timetable change was designed to be the critical point when the new rolling stock and new services would be delivered outside of the South Wales Metro area.

The plan was to have the following additional services delivered in one change in December 2022, along with the introduction of brand-new CAF trains at the same time:

- Cardiff – Cheltenham – A consistent one train per hour service to all stations
- Heart of Wales Line – One additional service per day to all stations
- Aberystwyth – Shrewsbury – A consistent one train per hour service to all stations
- Liverpool – Cardiff – A new service every two hours, with an hourly service between Shrewsbury and Liverpool
- Liverpool – Llandudno – A new hourly service
- Manchester Airport – Bangor – An extension of the current Llandudno – Manchester Airport service.

We have been working closely with Network Rail and wider rail industry colleagues to develop and deliver these improvements as part of an “Event Steering Group”. From our joint work it has become clear that the Covid pandemic has had a wide-ranging impact on supply chains, delivery of Network Rail infrastructure to enable the new services and train crew training (due to the backlog caused by Covid stoppages). The pandemic will have lasting impacts on all of these factors and as a result, there is a need to reconsider how and when to deliver the additional services.



Cwmni Cyfyngedig drwy Warrant. Cofrestrwyd yng Nghymru. Rhif Cwmni 09476013. Cyfeiriad
Swyddfa Gofrestredig: 3 Llys Cadwyn, Pontypridd, CF37 4TH
A Company Limited by Guarantee. Registered in Wales. Company No. 09476013. Registered Office Address: 3
Llys Cadwyn, Pontypridd, CF37 4TH



**TRAFNIDIAETH
CYMRU
TRANSPORT
FOR WALES**

3 Llys Cadwyn
Pontypridd,
CF37 4TH,
029 2167 3434
James.price@trc.cymru
trc.cymru

3 Llys Cadwyn
Pontypridd
CF37 4TH
029 2167 3434
james.price@tfw.wales
tfw.wales

Whilst we're absolutely committed to working collaboratively with our partners in Network Rail as part of the 'event steering group', we do need to caution that the delivery of our plan is contingent on Network Rail being granted the necessary funding by the UK government to deliver the infrastructure changes required to deliver the timetable improvements. Although we are working collaboratively with Network Rail and the Department for Transport, this funding and delivery commitment is currently outstanding.

Transport for Wales are now leading the rail industry in Wales to deliver a robust plan for the introduction of the additional services as follows:

- From December 2022 deliver:
 - Cardiff – Cheltenham – A consistent one train per hour service to all stations
 - Heart of Wales Line – One additional service per day to all stations
- From December 2023 deliver:
 - Liverpool – Llandudno – A new hourly service
 - Manchester Airport – Bangor – An extension of the current Llandudno – Manchester Airport service
 - Extend new Newport to Cross Keys service to Ebbw Vale
- From May 2024 deliver:
 - Aberystwyth – Shrewsbury – A consistent one train per hour service to all stations
- From December 2024 deliver:
 - Liverpool – Cardiff – A new service every two hours, with an hourly service between Shrewsbury and Liverpool.
- Bring the brand-new CAF trains into service as they are available to be used, replacing existing trains rather than waiting until the additional services are in place.

Additionally, we are also facing some delays on new rolling stock deliveries that will impact our ability to deliver some services. This is a further driver of our revised programme.

I appreciate that some of these changes will see additional services delivered later than was hoped and I will assure you that we will work hard to deliver these commitments sooner wherever possible. It is crucial to note that we will still be delivering our commitments just albeit at a later date.



**TRAFNIDIAETH
CYMRU
TRANSPORT
FOR WALES**

3 Llys Cadwyn
Pontypridd,
CF37 4TH,
029 2167 3434
James.price@trc.cymru
trc.cymru

3 Llys Cadwyn
Pontypridd
CF37 4TH
029 2167 3434
james.price@tfw.wales
tfw.wales

However, it is positive that the rail industry has worked together collectively, despite the challenges of the Covid pandemic, to prepare a revised proposal that is robust and deliverable, and we have been able to still commit to:

- South Wales Metro - We're investing three-quarters of a billion pounds to upgrade the railway lines to Aberdare, Coryton, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhymney and Treherbert, and the first Overhead Line Equipment (OLE) foundations have recently been installed.
- North Wales – We're currently working on the initial phases of the North Wales Metro, putting the foundations in place for transformative rail and bus services and active travel, and we have launched our new Liverpool to Wrexham service via the Halton Curve, improving links between Liverpool and North Wales.
- Swansea Bay and West Wales Metro – We have recently supported the public consultation for the development of a Metro, and although this is in early stages, the consultation has now been completed and is under consideration by the Welsh Government.
- March 21 – We opened our first brand-new TfW station in Bow Street, in Ceredigion
- Dec 22 – Introduction of additional Premiere Services from West Wales to Manchester as a result of the purchase of additional high quality intercity rolling stock
- By summer 23 – Introduction of active travel class 153s to the Heart of Wales line

We are now developing a stakeholder consultation plan which will outline how we plan to engage with passengers and representative groups on the details of the new plans. I would of course be happy to meet with you to discuss any of the details further.

I would like to apologise for the delays that have been caused, however I can absolutely assure you that the whole team (including many outside of TfW) are fully focused on delivering these and other improvements as quickly as possible.

Yours sincerely,

James Price
Prif Weithredwr / Chief Executive