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

30 May 2025

Dear Llyr Gruffydd MS

I am writing in response to the Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee's report on rail services and Transport for Wales' performance 2024-25. As always, the Committee's scrutiny of our performance is truly welcomed and we're grateful for your recommendations which help us continually challenge ourselves to ensure we're delivering a transport network that the people of Wales deserve.

I'd like to thank you for the time you've taken to prepare this report and for taking into consideration the evidence we've presented to you. As I acknowledged during our scrutiny session earlier this year, 2024 was not without its operational challenges for TfW. However, last year we achieved some major milestones and are closer than ever to delivering our vision for truly integrated transport in Wales. Further to this, the first part of 2025 has been no different and since we met with the Committee in January, we've made progress across several areas of the business.

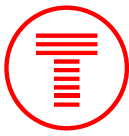
We've continued to introduce our new rolling stock across the network and 77% of customer journeys are now taking place on new trains. As further new rolling stock becomes available for passenger use and the legacy fleet exits, over time, this percentage will increase. From April, we began testing our brand-new electric tram trains for the first time on the Valleys lines, a significant step in the South Wales Metro transformation, and engineering work has commenced on the Upper Rhymney line to enable us to electrify the final section of the Metro network towards the end of this year. In April, we launched a new subscription and loyalty partnership app, called JurnyOn, that rewards passengers for their travel on TfW services as part of our commitment to offering customers greater value fares. The app offers customers a host of benefits, including discounts on advance train tickets and the opportunity to earn loyalty points for mileage travelled on the TfW services.

As always, we're committed to sustaining this exciting momentum into the upcoming year, and I look forward to sharing our continued improvement with the Committee. I'll now take this opportunity to respond to each of the 20 recommendations set out in the report.



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**Recommendation 1: TfW should take further action to recruit women into key operational roles, such as train driving and engineering, through targeted recruitment, mentoring, and leadership schemes. An update on progress, including details of specific interventions, should be provided within six months.**

**Response:** Accept

Over the last two years, TfW have made significant improvements in the number of women in key operational roles, such as Drivers and Engineers. However, we are continually striving to ensure that TfW is truly representative of the people we serve. As I evidenced in our scrutiny session in January 25, our targeted recruitment campaigns and engagement with women through meaningful partnerships with key organisations has been at the heart of our strategy to increase the diversity of our workforce. As a result, we have seen a number of positive outcomes including the recruitment of our first woman Operational Director and our first 50/50 gender split Driver cohort. We will continue this effort to engage and recruit women at TfW, and will provide you with an update on our progress in September 2025.

**Recommendation 2: TfW should accelerate efforts to improve workforce diversity by expanding targeted recruitment campaigns beyond Cardiff Bay and Butetown to other parts of Wales. In addition, TfW should strengthen partnerships with organisations that support minority groups to enhance inclusivity across the workforce. An update on progress, including details of specific interventions, should be provided within six months.**

**Response:** Accept

This year we will be focusing on the strengthening of our existing diverse community partnerships and exploring new partnerships in order to target diverse candidates when job opportunities become available.

For example, we've recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Oasis and the Welsh Refugee Council to build a toolkit that will enable us to become a Refugee confident employer. We have also been building on our relationship with the Muslim Council for Wales, partnering with them to promote our vacancies with their endorsement. Our goal is to develop multiple campaigns, including within our Early Talent schemes, to ensure that we promote our opportunities and become an inclusive multi-faith organisation.

We believe these partnerships are key to enable us to deepen our understanding of diverse applicants from minority groups, target our recruitment to people across Wales and continuously improve skills for inclusive communication and equitable hiring practices. We will provide you with a more comprehensive update on our progress in this area in September 2025.

**Recommendation 3: TfW should provide further information on the operation of the performance board, including specific details on how it has delivered measurable improvements in outcomes and value for money.**

**Response:** Accept



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The purpose of the Performance Board is to hold TfW to account and ensure that there is alignment between TfW and Welsh Government regarding TfW's priorities, direction of travel and Business Plan activities. As part of the board, we review KPIs, particularly those in areas where there is lower performance and this allows TfW and Welsh Government to identify solutions where such problems arise. It also allows us to more efficiently manage the alignment of these activities, provides advice to the Steering Board and is a route for escalation.

A major benefit we've seen since introducing this level of governance is that collaboration at all levels of the organisations has improved which has resulted in better business planning and budgeting. The alignment of the annual budget-setting processes has meant our forecasting has improved and has supported the wider organisation in allocating budgets.

We've also seen progress in the ongoing monitoring of financial and operational performance. This has enabled the Welsh Government to maximise its expenditure this year in regard to new rolling stock, using around £37m of ring-fenced funding that may not have been available next year.

**Recommendation 4: TfW should provide an update on the review of its KPIs, including any planned changes, within the next 6 months.**

**Response:** Accept in principle

Since the start of this Financial Year, we've been taking the opportunity to review our KPIs so that they remain fit for purpose, to ensure transparency and facilitate appropriate levels of challenge. This review is a staged process and will extend beyond the six-month period following the publication of the report. We will provide an update to the Committee once this exercise has concluded.

**Recommendation 5: TfW should consider how it presents its KPIs, with the aim of ensuring that users are able to gain a full understanding of its performance. This could include a section in the annual report which explains its progress compared to previous years.**

**Response:** Accept

We currently publish our KPIs for the quarter alongside the KPI for the same period in the previous year which provides a comparison to demonstrate change in performance and ensure transparency ([Key performance indicators | Transport for Wales](#)).

As we become truly multi-model, we will develop an easier way for users to see and understand our performance, with the process continuing to evolve as we move through this journey. We intend to use these KPIs to describe our progress from year to year within our annual report.



**Recommendations 6: Tfw should work with the Welsh Government to identify key factors contributing to the slower recovery of bus passenger numbers in Wales compared to England and Scotland. Based on this analysis, Tfw should develop and implement measures to address these issues in preparation for bus franchising.**

**Response:** Accept

Whilst recovery of passenger numbers from the pandemic has been slower in Wales, the recently published DfT Annual Bus Statistics show a promising indication that people are continuing to return to bus services in Wales. However, as the Cabinet Secretary has previously stated, recovery in passenger numbers is not uniform across Wales, with concessionary patronage remaining below pre-pandemic levels.

As we prepare for bus franchising, we will be undertaking joint research and analysis with the Welsh Government which will help us further understand the factors contributing to a slower recovery of bus passenger numbers in Wales. In particular, we are undertaking public engagement in relation to bus network design which will support this. We will closely monitor participation rates to ensure the voices of concessionary passengers and non-users who are eligible for concessionary cards are heard and considered.

**Recommendation 7: Tfw should ensure that rural and long-distance bus services are given specific consideration in the development of integrated ticketing to ensure equality of access across all parts of Wales. Within six months of the publication of this Report, Tfw should provide an update on the progress of introducing tap-in, tap-out payment options for concessionary fares.**

**Response:** Accept

In order to ensure rural and long-distance bus services are given specific consideration, we have developed a range of integrated ticketing options for our TrawsCymru customers. For example, passengers using the T1 and T2 services are able to buy tickets and journey plan from national rail planning and retail platforms directly to destinations as a simple add on fare. We intend to roll this out across the wider TrawsCymru network as we take over operation of these contracts. Further to this, we have developed a new and consistent approach to fares on the TrawsCymru network with single leg pricing and distance-based structure, which has reduced the cost of single journeys for most passengers.

In North Wales, Tfw has facilitated the development of the 1Bws multi-operator ticketing scheme, with new digital ticketing initiatives and the implementation of a Tap On Tap Off (TOTO) scheme. This offers passengers capped daily or weekly travel across the network based on the best value ticket available to them.

However, we are not planning to introduce TOTO for concessionary travel for several reasons. Firstly, drivers are required to verify concessionary travel cards using an electronic ticket machine. They must also carry out additional verification checks using the photograph on the card of the card holder to ensure that the fare is valid.



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Further to this, a number of the concessionary discounts support free travel and so fare capping isn't necessary. This is the main purpose of TOTO, so there isn't a requirement for these concessionary discounts to be compatible with the scheme. Please see the below table for a breakdown of the different types of concessionary discount for buses in Wales:

Concessionary Type	Discount
Under 5	Free
Ages 5-15	33% discount
Ages 16-21	33% with MyTravel Pass (Welsh residents only, includes students)
Ages 16-21 (Pilot)	£1.00 single/£3.00 day
Age 60+	Free travel with Welsh Government concessionary bus pass (Welsh residents only)
Disabled (eligible)	Free travel with Welsh Government concessionary bus pass (Welsh residents only)
War Pensioner (medical discharge on full pension)	Free travel with Welsh Government concessionary bus pass (Welsh residents only)

**Recommendation 8: TfW should provide an update on the implementation of its climate resilience plan, detailing progress on specific actions taken to address the increasing risks posed by severe weather events.**

**Response:** Accept

We will be providing a full annual update on our Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan (CARP) in Autumn 2025.

The update will include an assessment of the scale of future climate risk to TfW assets; details on the results of our Climate Change Risk Assessment site surveys; an update on our management and response plans for extreme weather events; our contributions to cross-discipline Climate Change Adaptation Working Groups for UK and Welsh Infrastructure Owners; our partnership work with Network Rail to implement resilience standards and develop adaptation pathways; and more.

**Recommendation 9: TfW should continue working with CJs to integrate climate resilience into Regional Transport Plans (RTPs) and provide an update on progress in due course.**

**Response:** Accept

We are continuing to work closely with CJs to share our expertise and offer support in the development of their Regional Transport Plans (RTPs). Climate resilience is one of the key areas, and our teams are actively engaged with local authorities, emergency services, and local government on this. For example, TfW is a member of the Cardiff Climate Emergency Board, through which we contribute to a range of consultations. Most recently, we provided feedback on the Cardiff Capital Region's Regional Transport Plan consultation.



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**Recommendation 10: TfW should work with landowners and Network Rail to develop and implement improved mitigation strategies for rail routes that are vulnerable to flooding, particularly on the North Wales Mainline and Hereford routes.**

**Response:** Accept

We have been, and will continue to, collaborate with Network Rail to develop adaptation & resilience strategies for the Wales & Western Region. NR have hosted a number of workshops on climate change adaptation planning, which look at the climate risks to the railway in specific areas and co-develop resilience strategies to mitigate these risks. A range of weather hazards have been considered including heat, storms, earthworks failures, pluvial and fluvial flooding and how this is going to impact us over the next 100 years.

Opportunities for climate risk mitigation have been considered for Holyhead to Bangor, Marches Line, Shrewsbury to Gobowen and Shrewsbury to Nantwich.

The decisions made in these workshops will help shape the future of these sections of railway, informing both business and asset management planning. Opportunities are assessed for feasibility, and the appropriate resilience action categorised based on local context. The incident response actions in Weather resilience guidance are defined as: resist, rapid recovery, bounce back, repair or close (in decreasing order of preference). We are continuing to explore opportunities to deliver these outcomes with Network Rail.

In tandem, TfW is also in the process of developing both a Weather Resilience & Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (WRCCA) and developing quantifiable metrics for resilience and adaptation in order to measure progress against our over-arching Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan.

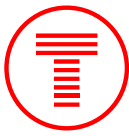
**Recommendation 11: TfW should provide an update on its work with local authorities to develop new monitoring guidance and improve data collection methods for active travel initiatives.**

**Response:** Accept

On Thursday 15 May, TfW shared a version of its Active Travel Monitoring and Evaluation Toolkit with Local Authority Officers. This toolkit builds on the publication of the [Active Travel Monitoring Framework \(ATMF\)](#), which establishes a baseline to track and monitor progress in achieving the Welsh Government's ambitions for active travel.

The toolkit was developed in collaboration with Sustrans' Research and Monitoring Unit, with feedback from Local Authorities and the Active Travel Board, to provide practical guidance for Local Authorities when undertaking monitoring and evaluation of walking, wheeling and cycling schemes in Wales. The toolkit builds on information contained in the [Active Travel Act Guidance \(ATAG\)](#) and the material accompanying Welsh Government transport grants. It provides a single source of detailed and practical guidance to help local authorities plan and conduct monitoring, evaluation and reporting activities that fulfil the requirements of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 and Welsh Government grant funding.





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The toolkit supplements the existing support offered by TfW to Local Authority officers, and includes guidance on the different aspects of monitoring and evaluating active travel routes (such as the development of strategic and scheme-specific monitoring and evaluation plans or setting SMART objectives). The toolkit will help improve the quality and consistency of data collection for active travel schemes, following previous requests from local authorities for guidance on scheme-level data collection, and delivers one of the actions set out in the Welsh Government's Active Travel Delivery Plan.

**Recommendation 12: TfW should provide an update on the safeguards in place to ensure that Sustrans' dual role in supporting and assessing funding applications does not lead to any perception of inappropriate influence.**

**Response:** Accept

In order to minimise conflict of interest where possible, Sustrans officers that support the appraisal process for Active Travel Fund applications are required to complete a Conflict of Interest form ahead of the evaluation process. This is intended to identify any potential biases that may influence appraisals.

Additionally, if a Sustrans officer is working on a scheme on behalf of Sustrans via a commission to the Local Authority, they cannot take part in the funding assessment for the scheme. Further to this, it has been agreed with Sustrans that regular updates will be provided to both Welsh Government and Transport for Wales on any work that they are carrying out on behalf of local authorities so that we can monitor their involvement.

We will review safeguards on an ongoing basis to ensure they are robust and effective.

**Recommendation 13: TfW should explore all options available to it to ensure the prompt delivery of outstanding trains. Given the impact on the public purse if necessary, the Cabinet Secretary for Transport should intervene.**

**Response:** Accept

TfW are committed to exploring all available options to ensure the prompt delivery of outstanding trains. As evidenced during the scrutiny session, we are using every possible resource in our arsenal, both contractually and by applying societal and political pressure, to ensure that our manufacturers are held accountable for the delivery of our new trains.

**Recommendation 14: TfW should provide regular updates on the rollout of new trains, including progress against agreed deadlines and measures taken to mitigate delays, given the impact on public investment and service reliability.**

**Response:** Accept

We currently publish updates regarding the percentage of journeys taken on new trains on an ad hoc basis in order to align with entry into service milestones. We will explore options to standardise these updates to keep the Committee and our customers informed on our progress.



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TfW are committed to exploring all available options to ensure the prompt delivery of outstanding trains. As evidenced during the scrutiny session, we are using every possible resource in our arsenal, both contractually and through societal and political pressure, to ensure that our manufacturers are held accountable for the delivery of our new trains.

**Recommendation 15: TfW should develop and implement tailored performance measures to better reflect the different types of rail services in Wales.**

**Response:** Accept

We are currently developing a tailored way of measuring performance on the Valleys lines, which we intend to introduce when the South Wales Metro transformation project is completed.

**Recommendation 16: TfW should regularly publish route-level performance data for its services in a way that is accessible to passengers.**

**Response:** Accept

TfW's performance data is published periodically (4-weekly) and is accessible to customers on the [ORR's website](#), which is linked on our [Train Performance webpage](#).

The ORR's website allows customers to search by station for statistics on the percentage of trains, during a given period, that were cancelled and those that arrived at the station within three minutes of the scheduled time.

**Recommendation 17: TfW should continue its efforts to improve decision-making around service terminations and their effects, and provide an update on further planned improvements and how these will be applied across the network.**

**Response:** Accept

Continually improving our service performance and reliability is at the core of our decision-making at TfW. We are absolutely committed to ensuring that our customers experience the best possible service and disruption to journeys is minimised to the fullest extent.

Last year, we saw the launch of significant timetable changes across the Valleys Lines and Wales and Cross Border (WCB) network and we've also been working extremely hard to introduce new rolling stock into service. As with any major changes to the railway, these factors have had an impact on the percentage of cancellations and delays to services. We recognise this, and our focus for performance improvement in 2025/26 covers several key objectives.

We will be working to reduce the number of cancellations as a result of unit issues by improving the reliability of our fleet. By this summer, we expect to have all our tri-mode Class 756 units in operation on the Valleys lines which will enable us to retire some of our older, legacy diesel trains. Additionally, the improving reliability of the Class 197 units on the WCB network will reduce the rate of occurrence of set swap requirements (where a train has to be taken out of service for maintenance requirements, often at short notice).





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We will also be focusing on reducing the number of cancellations where trains ‘run fast’ and are classed as ‘part cancelled’. This disproportionately affects some routes such as the Coryton line, Wrexham-Bidston and the south end of the Valleys lines. These decisions are generally made at late notice due to interventions made in order to reduce overall network delay. However, we are committed to minimising the occurrence of this. For example, since April 2025 we have been trialling an alternate timetable solution on the Coryton line to reduce the likelihood of these intervention, and we expect the improved acceleration of the Class 756s will help reduce the need to recover time in the timetable when introduced.

It is also key that we continue to work closely with Network Rail and Amey Infrastructure Wales, our asset manager, when large scale, multi-day disruption occurs due to incidents on the network. Where TfW are unable to access full infrastructure as a result of these events, we will collaborate with these stakeholders and try our best to give certainty to passengers the day before journeys as opposed to on the day of travel. Further to this, we will continue to work towards the speeding up of the response to operational incidents so that passenger inconvenience is minimised.

**Recommendation 18: TfW should ensure that its work on fare simplification, including tap-in and tap-out systems, is accompanied by safeguards to prevent excessive fare increases. Affordability for essential travel, particularly for lower-income passengers, should remain a priority.**

**Response:** Accept

At the core of TfW’s fares simplification strategy, is the commitment to offering customers greater value through unregulated products. As part of a differential fares setting round carried out in March 2025, Advance and Pay-As-You-Go (PAYG) fares were increased at a lower rate than regulated fares which further increases their value.

As I previously mentioned, we’ve recently launched a Digital Subscription and Loyalty partnership scheme that allows all members to benefit from discounts as a reward for travelling with TfW. This unlocks discounts to customers, who may not qualify for any existing railcard, with up to 35% off Advance tickets.

**Recommendations 19: TfW should work with both the Welsh and UK Government to ensure that Welsh rail interests are fully considered in the development and implementation of Great British Railways.**

**Response:** Accept

TfW is a participant of the Wales Rail Board, alongside the Welsh Government and the UK Government’s Department for Transport. The Wales Rail Board is tasked with identifying and developing a prioritised set of proposals for rail infrastructure improvement and investment in Wales. Further to this, we are committed to working with the Welsh and UK governments, Shadow GBR and Network Rail to design a solution based on a partnership model that secures the benefits of rail industry reform for the customers of the Wales and Borders network.



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This collaborative effort will ensure that the unique needs and priorities of Wales are fully integrated into the broader UK rail strategy. We will continue to support the engagement and discussions already taking place between the two governments so that priorities are aligned and Welsh rail interests are fully considered.

**Recommendation 20: TfW should provide regular updates on how the transition to Great British Railways may impact Welsh rail services, including any anticipated challenges and proposed mitigation.**

**Response:** Accept

TfW will provide updates on the transition to Great British Railways and the impact this has on Welsh rail services in alignment with UK Rail Reform milestones. If the Committee has any specific questions on this topic area, then please feel free to contact me.

I trust that the Committee finds the detail provided in this response to be useful and I commit to writing again on **Recommendations 1** and **2** in September 2025 and will provide further updates on **Recommendation 4** once we have completed our internal KPI review. In the meantime, if I can be of further assistance, do not hesitate to get in touch.

Kind regards,

James Price  
Prif Weithredwr / Chief Executive