



# TRAFNIDIAETH CYMRU TRANSPORT FOR WALES

## TfW Rail Ltd Board Minutes

10 October 2025

0900 – 1400

Venue: Llys Cadwyn

### Attendees

James Price (Chair), Peter Strachan, Heather Clash, Alexia Course, Marie Daly, Jan Chaudry, Julian Edwards

### In attendance

Sam Hadley, Nick Millington, Stephen Morgan (Minutes), Gareth Evans (Welsh Government Observer)

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### 1a. Notice of Quorum

A quorum being present, the Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and declared it open.

### 1b. Declarations of Interest

Members confirmed that their published declarations of interests were up to date and there were no additional interests to declare.

### 2. Safety moment

The Board discussed onboard cleanliness improvements and ongoing efforts in general waste management, with procurement of bin suppliers to be reviewed. Pest management was discussed, and mitigation measures such as bridge netting. The Board discussed increased fly tipping and the lack of a formal waste policy, highlighting implications under the Future Generations Act and the impact of removing station bins.

### 3. Customer moment

The Board discussed expanding fraud detection, with new data identifying ticketless travel a principal issue, especially misuse of PAYG. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The Board discussed broader fraud concerns and the marketing campaigns to provide clear communications. Operational barriers on the PAYG system including validator placement and unclear signage were discussed. The Board noted a signage issue at Cogan Street, and NM will follow up with MD to rectify [Action MD/NM]

### 4. Minutes and Actions

The Board approved the minutes of 10 October 2025 as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

## 5. Chief Operations Officer report

MD – Update brings to life convos on meetings prior to Board

- [REDACTED]
- Incident dashboard now integrated with British Transport Police (BTP), with a firm commitment to investigate all staff assaults and identify root causes.
- ODSG now merged with Voice of the Customer, noting Penarth & Coryton cancellations linked to axle counter fault and possible first indicator of cable theft. Heart of Wales Line impacted by vegetation and fleet issues; extra unit deployed to boost reliability.
- Cancellations on Ebbw Vale to Newport prompting a review of cancellation rationale and Performance managers taking deep dive into Maesteg to Ebbw Vale service issues. MD to review cancellation approach for Ebbw Vale to Newport **[Action]**
- Shared system model introduced for track delays and cancellations, the Board noted data over aggregation can mask root causes. Actions being undertaken include a deep dive by NM and reintroducing functional breakdowns at RDSG.
- [REDACTED]
- Golden Assets on CVL to be reset and contingency plans reviewed and to be brought to Rail Board, external advice sought, and forward engineering plan to undergo material changes.
- NR objectives reset for autumn with shift to real-time autumn meetings with non-critical meetings cleared to streamline focus.
- The Board were advised of strong CAF performance from Chester, noting Period 7 has been impacted by leaf fall. Instant Learning Reviews (ILRs) showing encouraging performance trends.
- Strong performance noted across network with CVL achieving 94% PTL and WCB at 84%PTL
- LB to develop a dedicated customer-facing website to alert customers to operational issues on the first class services **[Action]**

## 6. Class 398s

*Dan Tipper and Colin Lea joined the meeting*

The Board discussed accelerating the Class 398 EIS critical path to March 2026 by streamlining sign offs and isolating the Treherbert diagram to reduce training needs, with rest day working potentially enabling readiness by mid-February. Software delays and testing risks were acknowledged, particularly around multi-unit testing, brake tests, and pilot course assurance scheduled for 18 November. Parallel deployment of Class 756s to Cardiff Bay was discussed as a route to achieving performance targets, pending professional head sign offs and resource checks. Toilet access compliance and timetable implications were raised, with shuttle services and interspersed diagrams considered. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Strategic direction leaned toward accelerating rollout, removing Class 150s, and cascading Class 231s, requiring ELT support and stakeholder engagement. Financial implications of recommended options were noted, with a [REDACTED] acceleration cost advised. Actions were assigned to CL and MD to explore shuttle feasibility and 756 deployment to the Bay [Action MD/CL]

## 7. Commercial Update

*Chirs Williams joined the meeting*

The Board discussed Period [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Operational issues such as Mk IV availability and service reliability, notably on the Cardiff–Manchester route, require urgent attention. Experiential marketing and direct customer engagement was discussed to improve awareness and uptake of PAYG products. The Board requested LB define clear marketing objectives, with a broader call for ownership, tactical response, and improved customer insight across the network [Action]

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

## 9. Finance Review

*Stephanie Reymond joined the meeting*

The Board discussed financial performance [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

#### **10. CAF Commercial**

The Board discussed maintenance strategy for new units, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

#### **11. Rolling Stock (Future Fleet)**

*Rob Hale and Chris Pearce Joined*

The Board discussed strategic fleet planning to support service expansion in North Wales and Bristol, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The Mk IV fleet replacement, [REDACTED], will be deferred by extending asset life and exploring new locomotives. Hybridisation of Class 231s was confirmed, aligning with rolling stock strategy and the cost benefit analysis previously outlined in the business case in 2021. A cascade plan is critical to clarify transitions, and communication materials including a fleet video, printed rolling stock sheet, and updated slides (depots, Mk IVs) were proposed. The board will need to trigger option orders at the right time, with clear scenarios to support decision-making.

#### **12. Class 197es**

The Board noted Class 197e entry into service will be taken to TfW Board. MD confirmed they would speak to the paper provided.

#### **13. Marketing**

The Board reviewed current brand awareness efforts, noting strong consideration scores with 28% ad recall from the Wales omnibus survey, approaching major brand benchmarks. A six-week challenge is underway to enhance targeting using digital techniques, price points, and rush-hour timing. Seventeen campaigns are active through March, [REDACTED]. [REDACTED]. PAYG remains an “always on” campaign, noting new family product launches in November. Business to Business opportunities were discussed, including a white-label portal for corporate rail bookings. Manual bus discounts and booking system limitations were noted. Christmas scratch cards will be distributed to colleagues, and real-time pricing access is improving campaign agility. [REDACTED]. [REDACTED]. [REDACTED].

**14. A.O.B**

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**There being no Further Business, the Chair declared the meeting closed.**

