

TfW Rail Ltd Board minutes

12 November 2021

09:00 – 1230

Attendees

James Price (Chair); Peter Strachan; Heather Clash; Jan Chaudhry; James Price; Alexia Course and Marie Daly.

In attendance: David O’Leary; Alun Bowen; Rachel Davies and Jeremy Morgan.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1a. Apologies for Absence

None

1b. Notice of Quorum

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

1c. Declarations of Interest

None declared.

2a. Safety Moment

An ORR Passenger-Train-Interface improvement notice is coming to an end with a significant number of risk assessments carried out across stations, with planned action and investment across several areas. Conductor briefing packs have been updated to ensure they are correctly briefed on risks and hazards, and the opportunity will be taken to adopt the risk assessment findings during any future enhancement work.

2b. Customer moment

The Board were shown a video introducing the new Passenger Time Lost method.

3. Minutes & Actions of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the TfW Rail Board meeting 14 October 2021 were approved as a true and accurate record.

The actions log was noted with several updates to be included during the meeting. [REDACTED]

4. Managing Director’s report

The team are focused on improving day to day service delivery to passengers, with demand continuing to rise gradually, post pandemic, matched by an increase in the number of trains operated. This has resulted in leaving little

time for looking forward strategically. The timetable uplift has stretched resources, and the operation is fragile at times, especially when unplanned events, such as bad weather, line blockages, or unexpected resource shortages. As well as stabilising the availability of traincrew resources, work is on-going to maximise the number of carriages available for service until new trains start to enter service. The Board were updated on performance across the fleet, where there are particular issues with Class 769s and Class 230s availability (for driver training), issues which are stretching the Class 150 fleet, sometimes resulting in short formations.

With the number of productive drivers and conductors available to work trains a key ingredient to providing more stability and resilience, the Board discussed train crew shortages which are especially prominent on Sundays where the number of committed driver turns in the roster is not sufficient to cover the mileage required for the full service. A traincrew resource planning workshop will take place next week. Covid related sickness has particularly hit the CVL conductor cover in recent days.

Safety performance remains solid, but the Board noted and discussed the occurrence of three Cat A SPADs in the period. The Board were briefed on the background to the SPADs and although the year-to-date position is still better than target, agreed for the Safety sub-committee to undertake a detailed review [Action Peter Strachan]. The Board also requested that the Safety sub-committee undertake a detailed review of overdue mandatory compliance training [Action Marie Daly].

A review of lessons that can be applied from the recent Salisbury accident has been undertaken. It was agreed that this would be circulated to Board members for noting [Action Jeremy Morgan].

The Board were informed that an objection from GB Railfreight Ltd to TfW Rail's proposed paths on the Wrexham-Bidston line is affecting the structure of the timetable and will require ORR intervention as to whether TfW passenger or freight paths are preferred in the periods where conflicts exist. The Board agreed to arrange a senior-level discussion with GB Railfreight Ltd [Action Jan Chaudhry].

[REDACTED]

KPIs relating to Period 7 were noted. The Board agreed that the on-time to three minutes measure would be removed because it is covered in the PTL measure; and that this will be replaced by a 'pre-cancellations' indicator, but that this would not to be published externally for a six-period trial period.

5. Management Accounts

Stephanie Raymond joined the meeting.

The updated revised 2020-21 budget removed various contingencies described in Period 6 reporting, [REDACTED] Capex subsidy increased by £1.1 m based on a reassessment of the value of ROSCO funding received for the period. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Additional capital projects that might be able to be delivered this year are being looked at.

[REDACTED] Ticketless travel has reduced to 11.2%, and on-train scan rates have improved to 32.6%.

Schedule 4 claims were taken to a Network Rail panel in October. Some of the claims were considered with TfW requested to provide some clarification. None of the claims have yet been accepted or rejected. The Board were informed that the claims were checked by the ORR, but the Board asked for the claims to be checked and for clarification over who owns them in TfW **[Action HC and JC]**.

6. Canton

The Board were updated on previously agreed actions relating to the Pullman Rail depot, particularly in relation to finding a solution for Pullman Road 7 to allow Pullman and TfW Rail to use it without compromising either party's ability to effectively operate. An allowance of £4m was included within the Pullman purchase Business Case to complete the necessary modifications to the facilities. The initial budget estimate for all works identified is £6.7m, therefore the works to be completed will be agreed against the prioritisation to remain within the available budget. A separate paper will be submitted to confirm the final anticipated scope of works to improve the efficiency of the PRL operations, with works agreed in accordance with the prioritised schedule, once the budget prices have been received from the contractor. The Board noted the update.

7. Wrexham Bidston

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

The Board also approved progressing the development of a fuel facility at Stadler's Birkenhead North depot where the class 230 fleet is based on indications that the class 230 fuel range is likely to be more limited than originally expected with trains requiring daily fuelling.

9. Pay As You Go Pilot and Expansion into South East Wales Metro

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

Dave William and Helen Mitchell joined the meeting. The Board were asked to comment on a business case for piloting the pay as you go project, which will be tabled at the next TfW Board meeting for approval. The Board agreed on the importance of the pilot providing a strong commercial case and to be clear on operational issues. The Board supported the business case in principle and for it to be tabled at the next TfW Board meeting, subject to the TfW Rail Board approving the operational solution at its next meeting. The Board also recommended that a detailed review is carried out into the operational system **[Action Marie Daly]** and other gate line systems **[Action Marie Daly / Helen Mitchell]**.

10. Cargo lease

The Board approved entering into a lease variation with the existing provider DB Cargo for an additional four Class 67 locomotives between December 2021 and December 2028. The variation will see the additional Class 67s being on lease until at least 2028 based on the existing lease conditions, albeit at a reduced rental owing to efforts by TfW RL to reduce costs with the supplier, resulting in savings of £2.8m.

11. Fleet deployment options

Colin Lea joined the meeting. The Board noted work being undertaken to re-baseline deployment of existing and new fleets from the December 2023/May 2024 timetable change and the continuing work to ensure fleet deployment is agile to meet the timetable and respond to changes in new fleet delivery programmes.

12. Commercial update

The Board noted the content of the Commercial dashboard and were encouraged by continued period-on-period growth delivered in P7, with revenue now up to 74.1% of the pre-COVID average and ticketed journeys up to 64.2%, representing the strongest periodic result achieved since the start of the COVID pandemic. The Board also noted encouraging performance across multiple strategic indicators with Smart Ticketing share continuing to grow and cost of sale continuing to fall. Cash usage has increased slightly period-on-period but remains well below pre-COVID levels.

The Chair closed the meeting and thanked all attendees for their attendance and contributions.