



TRAFNIDIAETH CYMRU TRANSPORT FOR WALES

TfW Board minutes

17 April 2025

09:00 – 16:00

Venue – Llys Cadwyn and Teams

Attendees: Scott Waddington (Chair), Alun Bowen, Heather Clash, and James Price, Louise Cheeseman, Vernon Everitt, Rhian Langham and Vinay Parmar.

In attendance: Ian Lucas (Associate NED), Sam Hadley (TfW), Peter McDonald (Welsh Government) and Stephen Morgan.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1a. Apologies for Absence

No Apologies were noted.

1b. Notice of Quorum

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

1c. Declarations of Interest

None.

1d. Minutes & Actions of Previous Meeting

The Board Approved the minutes of 20 March 2025

1e. Safety moment

The Board discussed a recent incident near Willingham in which two busses and a fire engine were involved in a road traffic accident resulting in three people being taken to hospital, one with serious injuries. The Board agreed this serves as a reminder that incidents can happen in any situation and it is incumbent of TfW to remain vigilant and to mitigate risk where possible.

1f. Customer moment

The Board discussed digital exclusion and a family members' initial difficulty in engaging with their television provider following receipt of chaser emails threatening debt recovery. Having called the customer services department, they were initially directed through an automated system which became frustrating. However, once connected to an agent the process became reassuring with excellent customer service received. The Board noted that while automation can serve as a useful tool, having a person in the loop is important to delivering a personal experience and design principles should keep people at its centre.

2. Safety Performance

Seamus Scallion Joined the meeting.

The Board were updated on a recent visit to TfL to understand risks around the use of hydrogen busses and adoption by TfW.

The Board also discussed the Safety plan, noting initiatives have been built in with owners and their teams identified to take responsibility for actions. The Board noted non workforce accidents have improved since the last period and non-workforce assaults had reduced by 30% since the last period. The Board requested a year-on-year comparison and requested that statistics be normalised to take into account anomalous events to identify if there are any trends driving incidents beyond event days **[Action Seamus Scallion]**. The Board were advised that while workforce accidents have reduced, there is still improvement needed to reduce cases of assault, noting most reported assaults are verbal and anti-social behaviour related.

The Board were advised that travel safety plans have been introduced on the CVL with particular focus on weekends with additional security staff provided. The Board discussed senior management engagement, including safety tours and initiatives to get out onto the network and engage with colleagues to better understand safety concerns. The Board queried if there was available data to demonstrate colleague perception of safety and how they feel, noting a comparison to how colleagues and customers perceive safety in comparison to traditional reporting would provide valuable insight and requested data be packaged into the safety update presented to the Board **[Action Seamus Scallion]**. The Board discussed colleagues propensity to report incidents and what is defined as an accident or assault, noting reporting can vary and be influenced by media and other external factors.

The Board discussed whistleblowing and key data flagged on health and safety, querying if whistleblowing is providing a lens on safety with a view across a wide range of data points that could build a wider narrative beyond simply blowing the whistle. The Board were advised that safety data is separated from other whistleblowing reporting but agreed it does not currently contribute to wider data points. The Board considered reviewing whistleblowing data to identify cultural themes that could provide valuable insights into safety, noting work is needed on whistleblowing communications to assure colleagues there are no penalties for whistleblowing **[Action Seamus Scallion]**.

The Board received an update on Pullman Rail and were advised that while nothing has been reported in the Board report, there have been challenges in establishing an improved safety regime and a secondment from TfW has been put in place to sure up safety practices.

[REDACTED]

Seamus Scallion left the meeting.

3. Risk register

Josh Hopkins joined the meeting.

The Board discussed and noted the strategic risk report for April and were advised that a risk appetite statement will be brought for discussion in June.

Josh Hopkins left the meeting.

4. CEO report and update

The Board received an overview of the Chief Executive Officers Report:

- The board noted the cultural challenge of moving to T Network with team members lived experience historically been driven by single mode operation, but development work continues.
- Challenges to increasing services in North Wales due to level crossing limitations and engagement with Network Rail to resolve restrictions.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

- The Board requested a customer impact assessment for pre and post rail reform be developed [**Action James Price**] and the ‘pitch pack’ for what TfW wants out of GBR be circulated to Board members [**Action James Price**].
- Network North Wales proposals and developing a clear picture of what one timetable, one ticket means for customers to demonstrate the benefits of the T Network.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

- The Board discussed frontline decision making and how to encourage empowerment while maintaining strong safety controls, noting this will be brought back to TfW Board for further discussion.

- The Board noted a previous discussion on working with a culture agency and requested an update. The Board were advised that the consultancy previously engaged has now concluded its work and work is now continuing in house.

- [REDACTED]

- JP recently attended the People Committee and highlighted the data set presented in the pack, advising data will evolve and become more useful as it develops.

- [REDACTED]

- The Board were advised that rail performance continues to perform well, in particular on the CVL which is being driven by evolved timetables and a performance culture which allows focus on less visible parts of the network that could be damaging income and brand.

- A six week blockade is now in place on the Rhymney line while electrification work takes place, noting no CEO complaints have been received in relation to this.

- [REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]

- The Board were updated on strategic Board priorities.

5. Finance

The Board were advised that external auditors are now assessing CVL valuations and financial statements will be completed by the end of June for inclusion in the 2024/25 financial statements. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Following discussion regarding CDEL with the Welsh Government , it was agreed to manage the final year end movements between BELs and utilise to reduce against rail to assist to manage risk and future funding gaps. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

5.2 Letters of Comfort

The Board approved TfW Innovation Services Ltd and Pullman Rail Ltd letters of comfort.

6. Subsidiary Company Update

6.1 TfW Rail Board. The Board were advised of discussions regarding CAF, agreed forecasts and performance targets for the next 12 months, commercial and marketing discussions.

6.2 TfW Fibre.

7. Update on Sub Committees

7.1 Health Safety and Sustainability. The Board were advised that discussions were held regarding slow speed derailments at Canton and RSSB have been assured that contributing factors have been assessed with a set of actions established to mitigate future instances. The Board were advised that bus telematics to manage high-speed limit breaches. The Committee also discussed the use of body worn cameras and promoting the benefits of wearing the equipment with frontline staff. The Board noted a positive safety quarter for Pullman Rail.

7.2 Major Projects. The Board were advised that bus, hydrogen, Cardiff Central and Crossrail were discussed.

7.3 People Committee. Data requirements and analysis were reviewed. The Board were advised that the committee is moving towards insights and actions, noting consequences need to be established. The Committee reviewed menopause policy, strategic equality planning, gender pay gap and how it is reported, noting reporting is required by 5 April.

7.4 Commercial & Customer Experience. The Board received an update and discussed reshaping the Commercial and Customer Experience sub-committee. The Board were advised that conversations are evolving to a more strategic approach. The recent meeting focussed on brand perception, sales, commercial partnerships and delivery. Future agendas will focus on performance and KPIs.

7.5 Steering Board update. The Board were advised that discussion was held regarding GBR and noted the new Bus Reform Board which will report into the Steering Board. Updates were provided on year-end, funding letters and National Insurance increases.

8. Operational Update Session

8.1 CVL Update

Dan Tipper Joined the meeting.

The Board received an update and discussed:

- The energisation programme noting first Class 756 runs have completed six out of eight nights of testing with EMT and beacon reading all performing as expected.
- New electrical cables underneath bridges being tripped has been resolved, being tripped noting this caused approximately eight trips of the system.

- The first Class 398 unit has been testing on the TAM network during the daytime. Testing also ran through several evenings, noting some small teething problems. A total of 5,000 miles of testing has been completed.
- 120 overhead line foundations placed on the Rhymney line, ahead of programme timelines.
- Finalising Caerphilly energisation by August 2025.
- Remaining on budget for 2025/26.
- New rolling stock achieving 92.3% on time record, surpassing existing rolling stock.

The Board congratulated Dan Tipper and the team on the successes and achievements made to date.

Dan Tipper left the meeting.

8.2 Hydrogen Bus Programme

Lee Robinson joined the meeting.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

9. AOB

The Board noted ticket sales for May's transport summit and discussed engagement and promotion of the event. Board members were requested to promote the transport Summit via their LinkedIn accounts. The Board agreed to encourage a diverse audience to attend.

10. Paper to note

10.1 The Board noted the Wellbeing Objectives Paper

11. Confidential Session

The Board entered a confidential session [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

There being no further business, the Chair thanked members for their contributions and declared the meeting closed.