Transport for Wales Board

Minutes of the meeting 12 March 2026

Held at The Tabernacle, Machynlleth

Members:	
Vernon Everitt	Non-Executive member and Chair
Heather Clash	Chief Finance, Governance & Corporate Services Officer
Rhian Langham	Non-Executive member
Vinay Parmar	Non-Executive member
James Price	Chief Executive Officer
Marcia Sinfield	Non-Executive member
In attendance:	
Ian Lucas	Associate Non-Executive Director
Sam Hadley	Policy Director
Jon Travis	Observer (Welsh Government)
Jeremy Morgan	Head of Corporate Governance and Compliance
Ceri Taylor	Corporate Services Manager
Lorenzo Visentin	Safety & Risk Director (item 4)
Ben George	Head of Regional Transport (items 7 & 8)
Victoria Madelin	Strategic Development Programme Manager (Mid Wales) (items 7 & 8)
Rhodri Llwyd	Corporate Lead Officer for Highways and Environmental Services (Ceredigion County Council) (Item 8)

1. Welcome, apologies, quorum, declarations, and previous minutes

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed attendees. Apologies were received from Peter Strachan.

A quorum being present, the Chair declared the meeting open.

No declarations of interest were made.

The minutes of the TfW Board meeting held on 19 February 2026 were approved as an accurate record. The Board noted the actions log.

2. Safety and customer moment

The Board reflected on the recent repatriation of UK citizens from the Middle East and the importance of ensuring information is quickly disseminated to colleagues who are empowered to support customers to complete their journey.

3. Safety performance

Lorenzo Visentin joined the meeting and presented the safety performance report. The Board noted overall positive performance, while discussing several key matters.

The Board discussed an injury to a Train Manager. A full medical assessment will be undertaken on their return to work, and the circumstances will be reviewed to understand why the incident occurred. The Board passed their best wishes to the individual.

The Board noted two Signals Passed at Danger (SPaDs): one where a signal was overrun by approximately a carriage length due to weather conditions, and one at Birmingham New Street where a driver entered an unfamiliar platform and missed an intermediate signal. While assessed as low risk, the Board emphasised the importance of driver attention and route knowledge. SPaD data since 2022 is being reviewed, including external reports and internal reviews, with a report to be presented to the Executive Leadership Team and a summary to be brought to the Board in May. The Board requested that future reporting contextualise TfW's SPaD performance compared to other operators, including work with Network Rail.

The Board also asked for a clearer 'so what' narrative on bus telematics—headline insights, actions being taken, and factors influencing scores—to be included in future commentary [**Action: Lorenzo Visentin**].

The Board discussed links between safety performance and core training and competence, and how assurance is gained in competence arrangements through People Committee and other oversight at both organisational and local levels. The Board also discussed its ever evolving safety responsibilities, particularly around bus and infrastructure management.

In response to questions on assault indicators, it was noted that the figures relate to the reporting period and that trends can be influenced by a range of factors including body-worn camera usage and the level of reporting from colleagues and customers.

The Board noted that some red indicators reflect binary thresholds (above/below target) with no amber tolerance, and that performance was close to the Moving Annual Average threshold in these areas.

Lorenzo Visentin left the meeting.

4. CEO report

Given the location of the Board meeting, the CEO reflected on transport connectivity in Wales, noting the comparative speed and coverage of journeys by road versus rail in some rural areas, the road network, and the absence of a national coach network. The Board agreed these issues should be revisited in a session on regional transport planning at the next meeting. The CEO also noted preparations to establish a north–south coach service. In discussion, the Board considered where demand responsive transport (DRT) sits within the bus franchising strategy, and the opportunity to drive integration and cultural shift towards public transport by providing better and more frequent services.

The CEO reported a continued focus on customer satisfaction, Trustpilot results, performance and safety. Progress on the Wales and Borders contract was noted as positive, with Network Rail under increased challenge to ensure that infrastructure supports strong service delivery.

On bus franchising, the CEO noted that the new Executive Director of Bus Operations has embedded quickly and is providing constructive challenge and ideas to help TfW deliver the programme effectively.

The CEO updated the Board on the Wales Rail Board, noting efforts to secure delivery of funding commitments to date and to position bids for funding future schemes as part of later spending reviews. The CEO discussed Network Rail and the Department for Transport's engagement on Welsh priorities, noting that the recent meeting provided an open discussion about how we all need to work together differently in the future reflecting the intentions of rail reform under GBR. The CEO confirmed that Network Rail will be invited to be part of the executive's Infrastructure Committee.

On rail reform and the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), the Board were advised that the document has been reviewed line-by-line, amendments have been agreed, and that the MoU is now in a reasonable position. The Board welcomed the completed work as a solid foundation for delivering better rail services to the people and businesses of Wales, including cross-border services.

The CEO updated the Board on new Class 197 units: all have been accepted except one. [redacted]

On Class 398 entry into service, good progress was reported with issues being identified and closed out on a weekly basis.

[redacted]

The CEO updated the Board on work to ensure bus franchising delivers visible improvements to all communities across Wales. In relation to depot purchases in South West Wales, the complexities of undertaking activity not previously done within TfW were noted [redacted] The Board noted TfW's continued growth into new areas and discussed the need to ensure the organisation has the capability and capacity required over the next three to five years. The Board asked for an assessment of required future capabilities, gaps, and plans to address them [**Action: Rhian Langham, James Price and Elle Elliott**].

The CEO updated the Board on the Welsh Government's reply to the Chair's letter of 27 November 2025 on key bus policy assumptions and decisions required, noting the risk that progress could slow in the run-up to the election, while emphasising that some items have already been actioned, and momentum should be maintained through ongoing engagement with the Welsh Government. The Board agreed the need to align TfW's programme with the timetable for secondary legislation and to receive regular updates. The Board also agreed that further discussions are required with Welsh Government regarding TfW's Articles of Association and reserved matters relating to property and land purchases.

On finance, the Board noted close-out of the 2025/26 position and that funding gaps for 2026/27 are being addressed with the Welsh Government, with a revised funding letter to be issued. The Board noted work to procure coaches for a north–south service, supported by an accounting officer assessment. [redacted] The fares freeze for next year has been incorporated into the 2026/27 budget. The Board welcomed revenue growth over the year, including significant service changes, for example, the North Wales timetable recast, improvements to the Rhymney line, and full reinstatement of Cardiff Bay services. The Board noted that growth is measured in passenger numbers and discussed the longer-term ambition to increase market share.

5. Multi-year funding
The Board noted the summary five-year medium-term financial plan aligned to the latest version of the 2026/27 budget. The Board noted that the purpose of the plan is to support more effective long-term planning and provide Welsh Government with a consolidated view to inform affordability, particularly in relation to capital investment.

The Board discussed key sensitivities, including inflationary pressures and supply chain impacts arising from the situation in the Middle East, passenger revenue assumptions, staff costs linked to RPI, and assumptions within the plan relating to bus franchising, future infrastructure schemes and their associated operating costs. These risks were being proactively monitored and managed to the extent possible as some remain outside TfW's direct control.

The Board agreed that the plan should clearly link to strategic objectives, be communicated internally so budget holders can review and own their own risks, opportunities and assumptions, and, where possible, describe implications beyond the five-year horizon. The Board also agreed that a simplified summary should be prepared to support discussions with Welsh Government as a basis for discussion with the new Welsh Government after the May elections.

6. Briefing on public transport in the Mid Wales region
Victoria Madelin and Ben George joined the meeting. The Board received a briefing on public transport in the Ceredigion and Powys local authority areas, including progress with the Regional Transport Plan, the transition to bus franchising, implications for the proposed north–south coach service, and issues relating to Machynlleth station.

7. CJC stakeholder engagement
Rhodri Llwyd joined the meeting and outlined key issues in the region, including the frequency of rail services into Aberystwyth and the impact of disruption, the challenges of providing public transport services, and opportunities arising from bus franchising. The Board noted that Traws services operate many arterial routes and that work is ongoing to maximise coordination with local routes operated by small and medium enterprises. A particular issue highlighted was the lack of evening and weekend local bus services, which franchising may be able to begin to address. The discussion also covered climate resilience, rail service frequency, and the benefits of an integrated transport network to broaden access to services, including the need to improve supporting infrastructure. The Board noted that although Traws tickets are advertised at Machynlleth railway station, tickets can currently only be purchased at the station for the T1 service [**Action Lee Robinson**].

The Board reflected on the importance of coordination to ensure community voices are represented, and on the need for the Board and Executive Leadership Team to understand barriers colleagues encounter that may affect customer service delivery, including customer stories that prevent colleagues from doing the right thing. It was agreed that the Executive will: (1) consider how to listen more effectively and act more quickly to improve services and encourage more colleagues to do so; and (2) develop the mindset to enable faster delivery of minimum viable products, particularly in the IT space to enhance customer experience. The Board also agreed that further conversations are required on investment in the next control period for climate change resilience, particularly in coastal areas [**Action James Price**].

Victoria Madelin and Ben George left the meeting.

8. Governance updates

The Board noted an update from the TfW Steering Board, which focused on the Ministerial Approval tracker, bus trade union negotiations, CAF liquidated damages, the rail reform Memorandum of Understanding, and finance.

The Board noted an update from the Advisory Panel, which recently considered the voice of the customer. The Board reflected on the role and purpose of the panel and requested further clarity [**Action: Lewis Brencher**]. The Board also noted the need for the panel to provide increased challenge and for outputs to feed into the Customer Experience & Growth Committee [**Action: Vinay Parmar / Lewis Brencher**].

The Board noted an update from the TfW Rail Ltd Board, which focused on safety, performance, finance, the T Network 'T cup' challenge, the performance strategy for TfW Rail (including CVL infrastructure performance), operations on Wales & Borders and CVL, driver utilisation rates, and governance of the Network Rail relationship.

The Board discussed the Pullman Turnaround Project and noted that a further decision paper may be brought within the next couple of weeks. [redacted]

The Board noted an update from Ffeibr, including the sales pipeline and general performance.

9. Pre-election period

The Board noted the pre-election guidance that had been circulated. Ian Lucas confirmed that he was not campaigning.

The Chair thanked everyone for the contributions and closed the meeting.