Transport for Wales Board

Minutes of the meeting 16 April 2026

Held at Llys Cadwyn, Pontypridd

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
Peter Strachan	Non-Executive member
In attendance:	
Sam Hadley	Policy Director
Peter McDonald	Observer (Welsh Government)
Jeremy Morgan	Head of Corporate Governance and Compliance
Ceri Taylor	Corporate Services Manager
Lorenzo Visentin	Safety & Risk Director (items 1-3)
Elle Elliott	Executive Director of People & Culture (item 6)
Paul Chase	Strategic Transport Analysis Manager (item 9)
Ben George	Head of Regional Transport (item 9)
Geoff Ogden	Chief Transport Planning & Development Officer (items 7-9)
Lee Robinson	Executive Director for Regional Transport & Integration (Item 9)

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

Vernon Everitt joined the meeting virtually as he was unable to travel for health reasons. He asked Rhian Langham to chair the meeting in his place. The Chair opened the meeting, welcomed all attendees and wished Vernon Everitt a speedy recovery. Apologies were received from Ian Lucas.

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 12 March 2026 were approved as an accurate record. The Board noted the actions log and were updated on progress on two open actions.

2. Safety and customer moment

The Board reflected on a recent Board member experience on an airline and the need to ensure that when customers pay for a First-Class ticket, that they receive a first-class service.

The Board also discussed the need to use data to understand the root causes of customer complaints cancellations to some premium paid services operated by TfW **[Action Lewis Brencher]**, and to move from data to insight and action.

3. Safety performance

Lorenzo Visentin joined the meeting and presented the safety performance report. The Board noted overall positive performance and thanked the team. The Board noted that:

- Workforce and non-workforce incidents have reduced from the previous period and against predicted levels. There were no Signals Passed at Danger, but there was an increase in Train Protection Warning System brake demands. After the close of the reporting window for the Board there was a recent Signal Passed at Danger near Newport, which was the first since mid-February.
- There were 16 assaults, four of which included spitting. Good and effective support has been provided by British Transport Police. The Board noted that multi-agency patrols on the Treherbert line are underway, and a five-month Cambridge University/RDG/TfW research programme on higher incidence anti-social behaviour starts on 20 April at 18 stations across TfW's network. The Board requested an update when available **[Action Lorenzo Visentin]**.
- Six arrests have been made regarding the recent incident at Tenby station which involved around 100 youths. Effective support was provided by Dyfed Powys Police and British Transport Police.
- Traws telematics scores remain 'green' and within the national benchmark. The Board welcomed the additional data provided and encouraged its use across the network under bus franchising.
- Work continues to implement TfW's five-year Safeguarding Blueprint which includes a range of activities across the organisation. The Board welcomed the immediate priority of an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service periodic re-check regime for relevant colleagues and the supply chain.
- The final Talerddig report will likely be published later this year. Work continues to determine to understand all possible causes of the incident.

4. Strategic risk register

Five new risks have been added to the strategic level risks: the Middle East conflict; fuel supply; Class 398 fleet introduction; delivery of Burns stations, and the transition of infrastructure management responsibilities to TfW. An action plan for the direction of travel around format and process of risk reporting will be tabled at June's Audit and Risk Committee meeting.

Lorenzo Visentin left the meeting.

5. CEO report

Overall, rail performance over the preceding period shows a continued good level of service on the Core Valley Lines and a continued gradual improvement on the Wales and Cross Borders (WCB) section. For period 1 to date, performance is on target for CVL and marginally off target for WCB which has been impacted by several issues around infrastructure, fleet shortages, livestock on the line and the incident at Tenby.

Activity on bus franchising has become an increasing focus across the organisation and is becoming more specific and targeted as the operational phases are approached. Work continues to ensure the Welsh Government is kept fully informed of the programme's progress. The Board noted that a RAG status has been also been applied to bus franchising programme areas outside of TfW's direct control.

A new issue arose with Intersection bridge between Cardiff Central and Queen Street. As a contingency, testing confirms that operations can proceed temporarily without powered OLE on the Bay Line by extending Class 398 battery usage.

Class 398 entry into service has progressed significantly. The Board were reminded that Class 398 introduction enables fleet cascade, with the Class 756s moving to the Rhymney line.

Engagement with Network Rail/ GBR is ongoing, including through arguing for the accelerate of projects at the Wales Rail Board focussing. Work has begun on business cases for the next funding round in collaboration with Network Rail. The Board noted the challenges and opportunities, supported the Executive’s approach, and emphasised the need for efficient delivery of the Burns stations.

The Board also noted:

- A successful end of the financial year, with thanks expressed to Heather Clash and the Finance Team.
- The process and timetable for the forthcoming Senedd elections.
- Work to close the 2026/27 funding gap.
- Class 197 issues around unit availability.
- The Welsh Government’s request for further detail on the Rolling Stock Strategy.
- The recent Gender Pay Gap report which shows mixed progress.
- Making better use of transport modelling to have a greater impact on the TfW system and wider environment in which TfW operates.
- Risks of the impact from hitting stray animals which will be considered by the Rail Board [**Action Jeremy Morgan**].

The Chief Finance Officer reported successful implementation of the new Operations finance system. Passenger revenue performance was discussed noting a small shortfall against stretch targets.

The Board received assurance that the year-end position was secure, letters of comfort have bene received and were noted, and that external audit activity was commencing.

Members commended the finance team for maintaining control and resilience through a turbulent period globally. .

6. People strategy

Elle Elliott joined the meeting.

The Board undertook an in-depth discussion on the People Strategy. Members welcomed the clarity and conciseness of the strategic framing.

There was strong consensus that organisational culture must be assessed not only on outcomes but also on behaviours. The role of middle management in translating values into day-to-day practice was emphasised as critical.

The Board agreed that the People Strategy must operate as a foundational lens for all other strategies, rather than as a standalone HR document. Explicit articulation of acceptable and unacceptable behaviours, alongside recognition of positive behaviours, was seen as essential.

Future challenges were noted, including:

- Applying TfW’s cultural expectations within bus franchising arrangements.

- Integrating infrastructure and engineering teams with legacy industry cultures into TfW ways of working.

Elle Elliott left the meeting.

7. Briefing on meeting with the Urban Transport Group board

Geoff Ogden joined the meeting.

The Board discussed TfW's relationship with the Urban Transport Group (UTG). Members noted the value of UTG as a forum for shared learning, thought leadership and coordinated sector influence, while recognising TfW's distinct position as a Welsh Government owned company.

It was agreed that UTG engagement provides value by shaping national thinking, consultation responses and policy debates which TfW alone could not easily lead.

8. Meeting with the Board of the Urban Transport Group

Members of the Urban Transport Group met with the TfW Board for a focussed discussion on Rail Reform and sustainable funding.

Members recognised that while governance and constitutional arrangements vary, there are shared interests in:

- Local accountability for service outcomes
- Integration across modes
- Clarity of decision-making
- Alignment of transport services with wider economic and social objectives

The discussion emphasised that waiting for national solutions is unlikely to deliver timely progress, and that regions should instead define and present practical operating models for government consideration.

The Chair welcomed the opportunity to engage with the UTG Board members and thanked them for their attendance.

9. Regional transport

Paul Chase, Ben George and Lee Robinson joined the meeting.

The Board received a broad overview of the current regional transport environment in Wales noting that the passenger focussed transport system in Wales is moving from fragmentation to a more strategic approach; the increasing use of evidence-led advice; more networked-based proactive thinking; and moving from mode specific to whole system planning.

The Board considered TfW's evolving role beyond that of a pure transport operator, including its increasing capability in data, insight and system-wide planning. Particular examples discussed included:

- Bus data and patronage insight
- Integration of rail and bus planning
- Use of transport intelligence to inform employment access and land use considerations

These skills and capabilities would be used to work alongside CJCs to help develop their regional transport plans.

Paul Chase, Ben George and Lee Robinson and Geoff Ogden left the meeting.

10. Governance

The Board was updated on recent meeting of the TfW Steering Board which focussed on Ministerial Approvals, rail reform, bus franchising, finance and the TfW CEOs board report.

The Board received updates from recent board meetings of TfW Ffeibr, TfW Rail Ltd and Pullman Rail Ltd.

The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) reported on a reset of committee focus, strengthening challenge, follow up and assurance. The Board:

- Approved updated ARC Terms of Reference.
- Approved the protocol governing subsidiary participation in internal TfW procurement, including strengthened conflict of interest and ethical wall arrangements.

The Board received an update from the ARC Chair on recent internal audits and the levels of assurance provided. The Board discussed the need for clear escalation of systemic issues, strong visibility at the Executive level, and robust follow through where recommendations recur. It was agreed that amber and red rated reports will be tabled at Executive Leadership Team meetings **[Action Heather Clash]**.

The Health, Safety & Sustainability Committee Chair reported on the need to balance leading and lagging indicators, the importance of safeguarding remaining clearly defined, and contextual sensitivity around ongoing external investigations. The Board emphasised the importance of candour, preparedness for scrutiny, and alignment with statutory duties.

The recent Customer Experience and Growth Committee discussed the development of a refreshed Customer Experience Strategy with committee members welcoming progress. The Board challenged management to elevate the strategy beyond traditional customer service metrics, ensuring it supports operational and commercial decision making, uses insight to identify root causes and influences service design across all modes. The importance of integrated data from contact centres, digital channels and social media was noted.

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