Transport for Wales Board

Minutes of the meeting 18 June 2026

Held at Civic Centre, Pontypool

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
Jeremy Morgan	Head of Corporate Governance and Compliance
Ceri Taylor	Corporate Services Lead
Rob Holmes	Chief of Staff
Jon Travis	Observer (Welsh Government)
Alan McCarthy	Observer (trade unions) (items 1-6a)
Lorenzo Visentin	Safety & Risk Director (items 1-4)
Zoe Smith-Doe	Head of Business Planning and Reporting (item 7)
Ben George	Head of Regional Transport (Items 10 & 11)
Lee Robinson	Executive Director for Regional Transport & Integration (Items 10 & 11)
Cllr Anthony Hunt	Leader, Torfaen County Borough Council (Item 11)

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

The Chair welcomed members and attendees to the meeting. Apologies were received from Ian Lucas.

The Chair noted that the meeting was quorate and declared it open.

The Board noted that Peter Strachan had been appointed as Chair of the Rail Delivery Group's Remuneration Committee and had, consequently, become a director of the Association of Train Operating Companies. This interest was noted and has been added to the Board's published Register of Interests. No further declarations of interest were made.

The minutes of the previous meeting held in May 2026 were approved as an accurate record. The Board reviewed the actions log and noted the status of outstanding actions.

2. Safety and customer moment

The Board discussed observations from Abergavenny bus station and the importance of ensuring that future bus and rail responsibilities were considered in an integrated way from a customer perspective. Members noted the need for clear wayfinding, consistent branding and accessible customer information across modes.

The Board noted the different customer demographics using bus services and emphasised the need to retain analogue options alongside digital ticketing and information channels. Members also noted practical safety considerations at bus stations, including adequate customer shelters and the risk of customers rushing for buses.

Members discussed the importance of understanding lived customer experience and ensuring that colleagues were able to view services through the eyes of customers when making operational and strategic decisions. The Board noted that digital channels needed to remain adaptable and capable of continued innovation.

A member reflected on her experience supporting the recent Take That concert in the Principality Stadium, Cardiff, noting the significant planning, volunteer support and one-team approach that had underpinned the customer operation. The Board discussed how front-line experience could be embedded more consistently into colleague development and promotion processes, and how learning from major events could be brought back into day-to-day roles.

The Board also discussed wider implications for late-night travel, including the experience of hospitality workers who may need to use taxis when rail services are not available. Members noted that future bus franchising could provide opportunities to address some of these issues.

3. Talerddig

The Board considered the recently published Rail Accident Investigation Branch report into the Talerddig collision. The Board discussed the tragic impact of the loss of Tudor Evans and expressed its sympathy to his family and friends. The Board also discussed the impact on all others affected by the collision. The Board also emphasised the continuing need to care for everyone involved and their families.

The Chief Executive reflected on the seriousness of the collision and its wide-ranging impact, both externally and internally. The Board received an update on TfW's response to the issues identified in the report.

The Board noted the report's three recommendations addressed to TfW, including the need to work closely with Network Rail to understand the interaction between track and train, strengthen driver training, and consider the safety awareness required of non-critical safety staff.

The Board noted that further processes, including the coroner's report, would follow.

In addition to the specific recommendations for TfW, the Board discussed how colleagues could be empowered to challenge long-standing industry wide practices where potential risks existed at the interface between track and train. The Board noted that some issues were industry-wide and long-standing, while recognising the opportunity presented by the creation of Great British Railways and the future transfer of the Core Valley Lines infrastructure management. **Action:** Lorenzo Visentin to facilitate an Executive Leadership Team discussion on empowerment and safety.

The Board agreed that there should be clarity on the single guiding mind for issues arising from the collision and noted that the Rail Board would undertake a further discussion. **Action:** James Price to take the matter back to the Rail Board.

4. Safety performance

The Board considered the safety performance report and discussed key incidents and trends. Members noted two Signals Passed at Danger incidents on the mainline and follow-up action being taken. The Board also noted that reported dispatch irregularities reflected a positive reporting culture.

The Board discussed recent personal safety and security incidents, including the incident at Tenby Station, and noted the trial of the TapSOS reporting application to support urgent reporting. Members recognised that the trial could increase reporting volumes as colleagues became more able to raise concerns quickly.

[redacted]

The Board considered the reporting of physical assaults and noted that several incidents were still subject to verification. Members discussed the impact of hot weather on services and customer behaviour, noting that extreme heat should increasingly be treated as a normal operating risk. The Board asked that further consideration be given to customer-facing mitigations, including signage encouraging customers to carry water, and noted that the climate resilience plan should give sufficient attention to customer impacts as well as infrastructure resilience. **Actions:** (1) Lewis Brencher to review customer communications and mitigations during hot weather; (2) Natalie Rees to include more of a customer focus in the next version of the climate resilience plan.

Members discussed anti-social behaviour and gatherings of young people and asked how intelligence was being gathered to support effective responses. **Action:** Lorenzo Visentin to consider intelligence gathering arrangements with the British Transport Police.

5. British Transport Police deep dive

The Board discussed the service provided by British Transport Police (BTP) [redacted] The Board also noted the potential benefit of having an embedded officer within TfW.

[redacted]

The Welsh Government observer noted the grant funding of BTP in addition to the core funds via NR and TfW and the need to ensure value for money. Members agreed that the concern related to value for money, accountability and strategic deployment rather than the commitment and dedication of local officers.

[redacted]

The Board also noted that the relationship with the Urban Transport Group should be considered as part of the wider approach in terms of sharing experience.

Lorenzo Visentin left the meeting.

6a. Chief Executive's report

The Chief Executive presented his report and highlighted key operational, financial and strategic matters.

The Board noted that energisation to Cardiff Bay had been completed and that entry into service for Class 398 units on the Bay link was planned for 23 June, initially using a limited number of units as part of the testing and introduction process.

The Chief Executive updated the Board on Burns stations, noting that a delivery model had been proposed to Network Rail.

The Board noted that engagement with new Ministers was ongoing and positive.

[redacted]

The Board noted that the North Wales timetable change had resulted in double-digit percentage growth

Members discussed the north-south coach service [redacted]

The Chief Executive advised of changes to the Welsh Government's Transport & Connectivity team.

Alan McCarthy left the meeting.

6b. Finance

The Board noted highlights of TfW's financial activities and results for the year to date up to and including May 2026. [redacted]

The Board noted that the Audit Wales review of the Core Valley Lines programme continues.

The Board noted the potential financial impact of the current geopolitical situation and updates on [redacted] and CVL transformation costs.

7. Corporate Strategy

Zoe Smith-Doe joined the meeting.

The Board expressed broad support for the draft outline of the Corporate Strategy. Members emphasised that the strategy needed to add value to the organisation and be capable of guiding decisions.

The Chief Executive confirmed that simplicity remained a key objective and the Board requested that the narrative around the Corporate Strategy therefore be stripped back to a very clear simple storyboard.

The Board agreed that the proposed strategic priorities were broadly the right areas of focus. Members asked that the KPI set include an additional measure relating to passenger safety under the safe and resilient theme and requested that the strategy be brought back once more to the Board before finalisation (**Action** Zoe Smith-Doe).

Zoe Smith-Doe left the meeting.

8. Governance and committee updates

The Board received updates from recent governance forums. The Steering Board had considered engagement with new Ministers, key messages arising from early engagement and regular agenda items including pay.

The Rail Board had undertaken deep dives on safety, operational performance and revenue.

[redacted]

The People Committee had considered the People Strategy and delivery plan, alongside the planned Gartner review of the People function. The Customer Committee had supported the development of the customer strategy, which was expected to be tabled at July's Board meeting.

The Remuneration Committee had considered the pay award, which had been accepted by the unions, and matters relating to executive pay, including retention, market data and succession considerations.

The Board noted a report tabled by the Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee and accepted the following recommendations, that:

(1) based on the work undertaken during 2025/26, the Board has reasonable assurance that TfW's framework of governance, risk management and internal control is effective and supports the achievement of TfW's objectives; and

(2) subject to the conclusion of the external audit, the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2026 and Letter of Representation are approved and that James Price can sign the financial statements of Transport for Wales and sign the representation letter to the auditors;

(3) the Chief Operations Officer can be delegated to sign the financial statements of Transport for Wales Rail Limited and to sign the representation letter to the auditors;

(4) James Price can sign the financial statements of Wales Infrastructure Manager of Last Resort Limited (dormant so no audit required); and

(5) the Annual Report, taken as a whole, is fair, balanced and understandable and so is as relevant as possible to readers and based on its work and oversight, the Board can approve the Annual Report for publication.

The Board thanked Heather Clash and the team for their work in producing the annual report and financial statements for 2025/26.

10. Preparation for stakeholder session

Ben George and Lee Robsinson joined the meeting to brief members on the Torfaen area and current transport issues.

11. Stakeholder session

Councillor Anthony Hunt joined the meeting for a stakeholder discussion focused on transport priorities in Torfaen.

The Board discussed rail connectivity, noting recent improvements including tap-on tap-off, a new station car park at Pontypool & New Inn and refurbishment at Cwmbran. Members also noted that service frequency remained lower than in some other valleys, the need for more stopping service, and that station location and road infrastructure at Pontypool & New Inn could create barriers to access. The potential for demand-responsive transport links to stations was discussed, alongside the need to continue making the case to the UK Government for additional mainline services.

The Board noted concerns regarding road infrastructure to the upper valley and the wider implications for economic access and social inclusion.

The Board discussed the local bus network. Members noted support for franchising as a means of enabling cross-subsidisation of routes and improving the overall network offer.

Members also discussed the role of transport in supporting heritage, tourism and the local economy. Poor public transport connectivity to town centres and employment sites such as Mamhilad estate were discussed.

The Board noted comments that community transport is currently not optimally aligned with demand and this is potentially an area for data-led improvement.

The following **actions** were agreed. TfW [Lee Robinsson / Ben George] to:

- Explore Marches Line service improvements (frequency/stopping)
- Engage on fare interventions and affordability options
- Share data to support community transport planning
- Develop proposals for:
    - Pontypool station connectivity improvements
    - DRT / feeder solutions to employment sites
- Engage in further discussion on targeted concessions and employer-linked schemes
- Engagement with Torfaen Cabinet Member (Place/Economy)
- Ongoing dialogue linking transport and economic development

Anthony Hunt, Ben George and Lee Robinson left the meeting.

9. Confidential session

Heather Clash, Ceri Taylor, Jon Travis, Sam Hadley and Rob Holmes left the meeting. The Board discussed Executive performance management reviews.

11. Close

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