



Ein cyf/Our ref LW/01270/23

Sarah Atherton MP
Sarah.atherton.mp@parliament.uk

17 July 2023

Dear Sarah,

Thank you for your letter of 26 June regarding Transport for Wales (TfW) rail services in north Wales.

I recognise that, regrettably, passengers using the Wrexham to Bidston line have not received the high quality level of service they deserve. Last month I visited the line to see the issues first-hand, including meeting with the Wrexham-Bidston Rail Users Association to hear about the issues they have faced.

TfW have had to contend with a number of challenges on the line, including the difficult but necessary decision to temporarily remove their Class 175 train fleet from service due to a series of thermal events, which meant they were left with fewer trains than required to operate a full service. The full hourly service has now resumed on the line and TfW have also introduced their new Class 230 trains. However, there have been a number of technical issues with these new trains that have affected the reliability of services on the line.

I have asked TfW to focus on turning around performance on the line as a matter of priority, and they have published a five-step improvement plan which sets out how they will go about this. This includes appointing a dedicated route officer to provide a focus and coordination to work involved in delivering a reliable service on the line, and a commitment to keep rail replacement services to a minimum.

I do not think an independent review is required at this stage, and I am confident that the five Point Plan published by TfW will deliver the improvements we all agree are needed. I will, of course, keep all options under review for the future should these improvements not materialise.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

TfW's Chief Executive and his Senior team will visit Westminster on Wednesday 19 July to meet MPs whose constituencies are on the Wrexham-Bidston Line as well as the Liverpool-Chester line. This is part of TfW's commitment to sharing and understanding feedback on its plans and performance, including recent issues with rolling stock affecting services. You may also wish to attend this event to hear directly about their progress.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lee', is centered within a light gray rectangular box.

Lee Waters AS/MS

Y Dirprwy Weinidog Newid Hinsawdd

Deputy Minister for Climate Change