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Jan Chaudhry-van der Velde
Chief Operations Officer
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20 April 2023

Dear Jan

Transport for Wales Performance

I am writing to raise concerns about the passenger experience as a result of on-going fleet issues.

We recognise the challenges facing Transport for Wales in recent months from issues with cascaded rolling stock, exacerbated by taking class 175 trains out of service for essential maintenance and safety checks. This has resulted in multiple short-notice cancellations and overcrowding, causing frustration and inconvenience for passengers.

At our Board meeting in Cardiff in November, we pressed you on key points of performance with the need for services to improve both in the long and short term; and cultural change being driven by the customer's voice.

It is striking that despite promises then and again in March that the position will improve each week, months further on we see little improvement, with passengers unable to rely on timetabled services or making journeys in comfort. Most recently, crowding resulted in the decision to terminate Marches line services short, causing broken journeys that is taking a real toll on passenger confidence.

It is also concerning to see the growing negative comments on Twitter referencing unclear information in planners, poor experience of replacement services and frustration with complaint handling.

I should be grateful if you would provide us with an action plan with timescales for restoring service performance and reliability for passengers, covering the following points:

- addressing the provision of information, giving more notice of timetable changes and ensuring consistency across journey planners; ensuring website and social media channels have clear information that is updated regularly, telling passengers what's happening and being honest about the issues; and that staff onboard and at stations are keeping passengers informed and supported, particularly when their journeys are disrupted

- monitoring and improving the experience of replacement services, with clear information in planners and at stations on timings and where buses stop; support to hold passengers' hands, especially those with particular needs and better communication of ticket acceptance, easements and signposting of alternative services
- giving greater focus to complaint handling quality, improving response times and being pragmatic about one-off claims for additional costs.

Rail users responding to [our recent survey](#) put Transport for Wales in joint bottom place for overall satisfaction, alongside TransPennine Express; and in the bottom few for all other categories, including punctuality, reliability, crowding and information during the journey.

At this difficult time for passengers, I would expect to see clear empathy and support from Transport for Wales for your customers. For example, could you provide some form of reparation to compensate passengers for the detriment and incentive to welcome them back once services are restored?

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely



David Sidebottom
Director