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Russell George AM
Chair
Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee,
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff, CF99 1NA

15 January 2019

Dear Mr George,

At the Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee on 9th January 2019, I promised I would write to you with additional information in response to the following issues raised by the Committee Members, which I will respond to point by point:

- **Question raised by Hefin David AM** - An update on additional rolling stock – James has promised to send to the committee some figures about bringing in an additional 116 carriages to the fleet

We are investing £40 million in our current fleet, including fitting Wheel Slide Protection to make our trains more resilient to extreme weather conditions. We will also be introducing 84 carriages over the coming year, including 5 additional Class 153 units, 5 Class 769 units and 5 Class 230 units, which are all due to enter service in April/May, as well as 12 Class 170 units and 12 Mark IV carriages which will enter service with TfW by the end of the year.

Many operators across the country are currently waiting for newly built trains and are therefore hesitant to release their existing units in case of delays. However, to further bolster availability before our new fleet arrives, we have done all we can in the current environment and we're currently negotiating commercial arrangements for up to 32 additional carriages (on top of the 84) and hope to announce something soon.

- **Question raised by David Rowlands AM** – What structures and shared targets have been established between TfW and Network Rail in the new franchise and how will these benefit passengers?

We are committed to working with our partners at Network Rail to provide the best possible service for passengers and are developing a programme of enhanced joint working initiatives to improve performance, capacity and reliability.

We have established a wide-ranging set of joint tasks as part of the ongoing development of a joint partnership agreement, including access planning, safety, security and new rolling stock. We aim to establish joint boards to bring track and train closer together with a focus on a number of strategies, structures and targets such as seasonal preparedness, improving service recovery from incidents and performance management. We aim to have in place an Executed Alliance Agreement between Network Rail and Transport for Wales Rail Services by this coming spring which will set out the detail behind the partnership, specifically including shared targets.

Network Rail is also working to meet our requirements for information and data about the Core Valley Lines, which are due to transfer to Transport for Wales later this year. There is still a lot of work to be done to agree the terms of the transfer and all interaction has been positive with Network Rail, which is supportive of our plans.

We have created an integrated rolling stock introduction team to help ensure the introduction of rolling stock is as smooth as possible in the context of safety, operations and infrastructure.

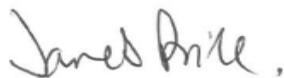
- **Question raised by Chair of the Committee, Russell George AM** - Relating to rolling stock with regards Arriva had shared a number of options/ solutions to TfW what was the outcome of this?

As detailed above, we will be introducing 5 Class 769 units and 5 Class 230 units to the network this year. The procurement of the Class 230s was an option presented by Arriva Trains Wales to bring in additional stock early in the new franchise, on top of the 2017 joint investment between the Welsh Government and Arriva Trains Wales for the class 769s (previously known as the 319 flex). The 769s were due to enter service in 2018 but were delayed in manufacturing and are now expected in April/May.

In Spring 2018, Arriva Trains Wales offered to look at alternative rolling stock options for the provision of the Chester-Liverpool services from December 2018. Discounting those that were not suitable for our infrastructure, the remaining options would have likely resulted in reduced capacity on the Valley Lines. After careful consideration and discussion with relevant parties, a decision was taken not to proceed with these options and instead delay introduction of new Chester-Liverpool services.

Peak time Valley Lines services were strengthened by Arriva Trains Wales in a timetable enhancement in May 2017 with all additional stock available to Arriva Trains Wales procured for this. This resulted in an additional 600 seats, which we know is still not meeting the capacity challenge, but was all Arriva Trains Wales was able to source at the time. For Transport for Wales to procure anymore stock before taking up the reigns in October 2018 we would have had to take a decision as to whether we should have had light rail, heavy rail or tram/train on the Valleys lines. The wisdom at that time would have been light rail, which evidence now shows would have been the wrong decision to take because we have now got the benefit of heavy rail and light rail technologies running together.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'James Price'.

James Price
Prif Weithredwr / Chief Executive