

NORTH & MID WALES ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS



NORTH WALES & CAMBRIAN TRANSPORT LIAISON COMMITTEE

MINUTES

of a meeting of the North Wales Coast and Cambrian Lines Committee's

held on **Friday 12th July 2024 at 10.30am**

Present were:

Cllr Ian Hodge (Chair)	Chair of the Association
Gail Jones	Transport for Wales
James	Transport for Wales
Cllr Vivienne Blondek	Buckley Town Council
Cllr Michael Davies	Beaumaris Town Council
Cllr Ian Lifford	Prestatyn Town Council
Cllr Philip Gillam	
Cllr Dr Ben Gwalchmai	Welshpool Town Council
Ken Law	Welshpool Rail Facebook group
Cllr Anne Lloyd Jones	Gwynedd Council
Cllr Peter Morton	City of St Asaph Council
Richard	
Cllr Trevor Roberts	Chair Cambrian Lines Committee
Jeff Smith	Aberystwyth Town Council
Cllr Alun Williams	Ceredigion County Council
Michael Williams	Machynlleth Town and Powys County Council
Cllr Dylan Wilson Lewis	Rail Future
Cllr Andrew Wood	Prestatyn Town Council
Robert Robinson (Secretary)	Llanfair Caereinion Town Council

Apologies received from:

Cllr Norma Davies (Vice Chair)	Flint Town Council
Cllr John Ellison	Carno Community Council
Nick Smith	Avanti Trains
Cllr Andrew Wallbank	Caersws Community Council

1. Welcome from the Chair

The meeting received a welcome from the Chair.

2. Record of attendance

A record of attendance was recorded.

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3. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting were approved subject to minor alterations to names and an addition of some wording with regard to the Welshpool Station footbridge.

Note: These have been adjusted and are posted on the website.

4. Actions from the last meeting

The meeting was updated on the actions taken since the last meeting.

5. Transport for Wales

A presentation was given by Transport for Wales with the following of note:

i) Footbridge at Welshpool

The issues of maintenance, cleaning and gritting the footbridge is ongoing and taking far too long to resolve. A meeting with TFW and the other parties is being set up to 'get the job done'. The reason for the urgency is that the footbridge has steep ramps and an important entry to the town from the railway. The current situation is not acceptable.

ii) Call points at Welshpool

The need for call points at stations was accepted. Funding is in place. Following the meeting it was confirmed that installation is due to take place in 2025.

iii) Car parking at Welshpool

A report on TFW proposals for car parking at Welshpool will be issued soon. This may include re-lining and possibly charging. The idea of car park charges was not accepted as right by the meeting.

iv) Car parking improvements at Welshpool

There was in the past a feasibility study for car parking and bus interchange at Welshpool. This has not moved forward but is kept under review.

v) New lifts at Newtown

The meeting noted that new lifts are being installed at Newtown to provide better access.

vi) Prestatyn

The station at Prestatyn still has two issues which are of concern:

- a) Passengers not being able to access trains in busy times with security guards stopping people boarding is not acceptable.
- b) Toilets not being located either on the station or close to the station is still an issue – particularly due to the town being a holiday destination.

vii) Station audit meeting

A meeting has been requested (urgently) with TFW and the responsible parties regarding the issues with the footbridge at Welshpool to ensure the documents are signed and in place asap.

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viii) Pocket timetables for Cambrian Lines

The pocket timetables for the Cambrian Lines have been produced and are being distributed to outlets.

ix) Performance details

The meeting was informed by TFW that reliability had improved greatly and that 93% of services now arrive within 3 minutes of timetable. (it was noted that on the morning of the meeting out of 44 trains leaving Shrewsbury 12 were more than 4 minutes late and 1 was cancelled – a 75% level – this is not unusual). Clarity on the calculation of the 93% is to be gained. A figure for the North Coast and the Cambrian Lines separate from the whole of Wales would be good.

x) Revenue improvement

It was noted that revenue from the services has improved over the last 12 months.

xi) Closure of Cambrian Line for works

The meeting noted the closure of the Cambrian main line for works during the period of 16 days in March 2025.

xii) Number of 2 car units being in service

The number of 2 car units being used on all services is being kept to a minimum following information on overcrowding. Work to remove almost all (if not all) two car units within the service is ongoing.

xiii) Delivery and introduction of class 197 trains

The delivery of the new 197 units is now progressing well. No mention was made of any units being returned for works – details of this are to be sought.

xiv) Introduction of class 197 trains on the Cambrian Line

The introduction of class 197 units to the Cambrian Lines is likely to be done in 4 stages over the next two years.

xv) The 197 units

Members were still not convinced of the suitability of class 197 units for long distance journeys. In particular the rough ride was highlighted. It has been accepted that the 197 units are not the right ones and if the decision was made today they would not have been the first choice. However we all accept 'we are where we are'.

The point of space being taken up with a catering unit (built in) was raised. These units are not used and if they are not going to be so used should be removed to provide more passenger space.

xvi) Services Shrewsbury via Chester to Holyhead

The services from Birmingham to the North Coast and from Cardiff to the North Coast/Manchester Piccadilly are to be 3 or 4 car units at all times.

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xvii) Request stops (trial at Tygroes and Llanfair PG)

A trial of push button request stop units at two stations on Anglesey. This is where the passengers on the platform can press a button which communicates to the driver that he/she needs to stop at the station.

xviii) Travel champions

The introduction of travel champions (staff on platforms) has been welcomed and the reports from members is that this is working well in almost all cases.

xix) Orange wallet scheme

The orange wallet scheme is still in place. Any members not sure what this is should contact the secretary who will explain.

xx) Cambrian Line Partnership

A new chair of the partnership has been appointed. A new officer should be appointed by the end of July.

xxi) Deganwy crossing

An update on the Deganwy crossing is to be provided after the meeting.

xxii) Train intercommunication

The issue train intercommunication is still evident. Some train the audibility is good, others not so good. It is clear from trains that change guards during their journey that this is a staff training issue and not an issue with the train onboard systems.

xxiii) Meeting with Welsh Government and Transport for Wales

A meeting with the CEO of TFW along with Welsh Government is to be scheduled soon to over items which have been outstanding for some time.

6. Dates of future meetings

The meeting noted the dates for meetings of both the North Coast, Cambrian and Joint Transport Committees as follows:

Cambrian Lines Hybrid	North Coast Lines By Zoom	Joint Meetings By Zoom
Friday 4 th October 2024	Friday 11 th October 2024	Friday 10 th January 2025
Friday 14 th March 2025	Friday 7 th March 2025	Friday 4 th July 2025

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7. Actions from the meeting

The following actions are to be taken forward:

Ref	Action	By
1	Minutes to be prepared, sent out in draft and then published on the web site at www.northwalesassociation.org.uk	Robert
2	TFW to report back to the secretary on all items listed in minute no 5.	Gail
3	Meeting to be arranged with parties involved with footbridge at Welshpool.	Gail
4	Meeting with station audit manager.	Gail
5	Meeting with Welsh Government and TFW senior staff	Robert