

26 June 2019

Dear Councillor Siencyn,

### **North Wales Growth Deal**

Thank you for your letter dated 28 May 2019, where you raised a number of points regarding the North Wales Growth Deal and the proposed HS2 hub at Crewe.

As you will be aware, the UK and Welsh Governments have made arrangements to stage a private sector challenge session and a joint government challenge session in North Wales tomorrow. I am looking forward to our discussions, and I hope that both sessions will provide a clear way forward towards a Heads of Terms agreement for the North Wales Growth Deal.

You raised some points regarding how HS2 could benefit North Wales. I and the Secretary of State support the vision of a Crewe Hub station which could facilitate an enhanced HS2 train service and improve performance, flexibility and resilience at the station. Decisions regarding a timetable for HS2 services will be made at a future date when the West Coast Partnership is in place. In the meantime, in our indicative service plans (which are used for modelling to inform the business case and capacity assessments) we assume that the hourly direct London to Chester/North Wales service will continue operating with a similar journey time, frequency and stopping pattern as today.

In May 2019, the DfT allocated £9.5m to Network Rail to continue detailed design work for a station layout which would enable all passenger services calling at Crewe Station to stop at platforms housed within the main station building. These proposals include the reinstatement of platform 13 as an alternative to a platform on the Manchester Independent Lines, which was originally proposed in the HS2 Phase 2a hybrid Bill. This would improve passenger experience and reduce interchange times at Crewe Station. Subject to a Full Business Case and affordability, the DfT expects to make a decision in favour of this new layout in summer 2020.



**Kevin Foster MP/AS**

UK Government Minister for Wales  
Gweinidog Llywodraeth y DU dros Gymru