

Lee Waters AS/MS
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Newid Hinsawdd
Deputy Minister for Climate Change



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref LW/02389/22

Councillor Elwyn Jones
eirianroberts3@gwynedd.llyw.cymru

20 January 2023

Dear Councillor Elwyn Jones,

Thank you for your letter dated 14 December regarding the Council's decision to support the re-opening of railways in Wales. Within the collaboration agreement between Welsh Government and Plaid Cymru we have committed to examining the development of transport links between North and South Wales, and also how to protect potential travel corridors along the West coast of Wales.

Transport for Wales has just completed a viability study to examine that commitment in more detail, including the transport corridor between Amlwch and Bangor. The report recommended more in-depth consideration of the viability of developing a railway corridor between Bangor and Pwllheli / Porthmadog through Caernarfon because, from the travel routes that were considered, this was the corridor with the highest level of anticipated demand. The study also noted that if developed, this route would create a link between the current North Wales Main Line in Bangor and the Cambrian Railway, thereby contributing to improving overall connectivity between North and South Wales by allowing people to travel onwards along the coast in the direction of Machynlleth.

Unfortunately, work to develop railways, in addition to undertaking the work itself, is extremely expensive, and this work is not currently possible in light of our current exceptionally challenging budgetary position. As the railway infrastructure has not been appropriately devolved, and as the funding settlement is not equitable, the UK Government needs to shoulder its responsibilities to improve the railway network in Wales. However, despite the clear advantages that would derive from this regarding the provision of an integrated public transport network and in relation to encouraging people to change their modes of transport, the UK Government has refused our request on numerous occasions and has consistently failed to invest in Wales.

In the short-term, we are working with Transport for Wales and the Designated Members under the Collaboration Agreement to develop a work programme to examine how we can improve public transport connectivity in these transport corridors by using electric buses, and at the same time we will try to safeguard our travel corridors from further development work, and encourage the UK Government to invest in railway networks in Wales.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lee', written in a cursive style.

Lee Waters AS/MS

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Deputy Minister for Climate Change