

FW: Train line to Hirwaun

Howells, Vikki (Aelod Cynulliad | Assembly Member) <Vikki.Howells@assembly.wales>

Mon 17/12/2018 14:47

To: Emma Nelmes. Clerk Hirwaun & Penderyn Community Council. <hpcc01@btconnect.com>;

Cc: Lewis, Robin (Staff Cymorth Aelod Cynulliad | Assembly Member Support Staff) <Robin.Lewis@assembly.wales>;

Dear Emma,

Thank you for your email.

I'm afraid it's not brilliant news at the moment. On 5 December, the Welsh Assembly's Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee took evidence from the Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Transport on the Rail Franchise and South Wales Metro. I raised the possibility of passenger train services between Aberdare and Hirwaun with the Cabinet Secretary and his officials. The exchange is as follows:-



Vikki Howells AM12:16:13

[Video](#)

Okay. I also wanted to ask you in particular about the plans for Hirwaun in my constituency. You may be familiar with the fact that there have been many promises over the years to look at reopening Hirwaun station. It's on the metro map, but there's still nothing concrete about whether that is a bus or rail link, and the community are really hungry for some news on that.324



Ken Skates AM12:16:36

[Video](#)

Simon, do you want to give the update?325

Simon Jones12:16:38

[Video](#)

So, there are, as you can imagine, a number of areas of metro that we're looking at. What we've bought, if you like, is the foundations that will allow us to be able to develop future extensions to metro, and there have been quite a number of these talked about. Some of them will be easier than others because there are existing tracks there. So,

the Hirwaun example is a good one where there's an existing track in place. There are others where the Cabinet Secretary frequently lobbied about other extensions, which are not in the current plan. So, what we're doing is creating some—. We're looking at how we might both evaluate and prioritise those future opportunities. We've got the building blocks, we've got the kit of parts, if you like, to be able to allow us to be able to extend that. It's then going to come down to spending priorities in future about which ones of these extensions get built in which order. But if you think about the Manchester metro for example, that wasn't built in one go. They've been extending that for the last 20, 30 years, and I think the same is going to be true of the south Wales metro—that it will be incrementally improved over time as we are able to build business cases and as funding becomes available for us to be able to build these extensions.³²⁶



[Ken Skates AM12:17:54](#)

[Video](#)

Of course, longer term, that'll apply elsewhere in Wales as well—for example, in north-east Wales and in the Swansea bay area. I think it's an indication of the very visible ambition that we have for public transport in Wales that we are now getting calls from across Wales for stations to be reopened, for new stations to be created, for extensions to be constructed. Just in the last two weeks alone, I've had calls for three new stations just in two constituencies in the north of Wales, and that's to add to all of the calls that we've had for new stations, new services, new extended services within the south-east Wales metro.³²⁷

So, there is a huge amount of ambition, but I think there is also a job to be done in just containing expectations in terms of what we can do in the very short term, because there is a huge demand for improved services, new infrastructure. We've got £5 billion at our disposal, but, even then, if we were to agree to all the calls out there, we wouldn't be able to pay for it at the moment.

The full transcript is available at <http://record.assembly.wales/Committee/5150>.

I realise that the timescale mentioned by Mr Jones, director of economic infrastructure in the Welsh Government, will be a deeply disappointing one. However, I have spoken to RCT Council Leader Cllr Andrew Morgan and we will be seeking to press the case for returning passenger rail services to Hirwaun, especially as there is currently perfectly workable track in place. I will keep you informed of these discussions, and would also be keen to receive any support the Community Council is able to provide.

Kind regards,

Vikki

From: Emma Nelmes. Clerk Hirwaun & Penderyn Community Council. [<mailto:hpcc01@btconnect.com>]

Sent: 17 December 2018 14:26

To: Howells, Vikki (Aelod Cynulliad | Assembly Member) <Vikki.Howells@assembly.wales>

Subject: Train line to Hirwaun

Dear Vikki

Do you have an update in relation to the proposed new train line to Hirwaun? We have had no recent update and our residents would like to know the current position.

Kind regards

Emma Nelmes
Executive Officer to Hirwaun & Penderyn Community Council

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(My office hours are Monday to Thursday)

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