

Ieuan Wyn Jones AC/AM
Dirprwy Brif Weinidog /Deputy First Minister



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

Eich cyf/Your ref PET-03-148
Ein cyf/Our ref DFM/01750/08

RECEIVED
29 SEP 2008

APSD

Alun Davidson
Deputy Clerk to the Petitions Committee
National Assembly For Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

25 September 2008

Dear Mr. Davidson

I have received a letter from Stefan Sanchez, Clerk to the Petitions Committee, dated 12 September 2008 regarding the petition received by the Petitions Committee that calls upon the Welsh Assembly Government to introduce a direct train service between Ebbw Vale and Newport, calling at all intermediate stations. I have been requested to respond to you outlining the Assembly Government's position.

I announced on 10 September 2008 that the Welsh Assembly Government is to make an investment of up to £2.6m to install a connection at Gaer Junction west of Newport and to provide signalling improvements between Gaer Junction and Park Junction on the Ebbw Valley Line. These improvements are an essential prerequisite to any future regular passenger service between Ebbw Vale and Newport, and will further improve the transport infrastructure of South East Wales in line with our One Wales commitments. These improvements will be completed by summer 2010.

I enclose a copy of the Ebbw Valley Gaer Junction report, which identifies a number of possible service options in timetable and train performance terms. Work will now proceed to appraise these options. The service provision needs to be reviewed by Arriva Trains Wales and Network Rail, and in conjunction with South East Wales Transport Alliance, to find the best way to provide a service into Newport. The process will include consultation with rail users on the service provision and timetable options. As with all service extension proposals, the outcome will be subject to value for money and affordability considerations.

*Yours sincerely
Ieuan Wyn Jones*

Ieuan Wyn Jones
Gweinidog dros yr Economi a Thrafnidiaeth
Minister for the Economy and Transport

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