



All Assembly Members

11 October 2017

Dear Member,

On 28 September the Welsh Government reached a significant milestone on our path to transform rail services across Wales when we issued to bidders the invitation to submit final tenders.

We have firmly grasped this once-in-a-generation opportunity to create a rail service that meets the growing demands and expectations of the people of Wales and its border.

Ours is a different approach to procurement and one that is right for what we have set out to achieve. We have focused on improved outcomes instead of using the usual model for procuring a rail service that involves issuing a detailed specification and asking companies to bid on the basis of lowest cost.

To inform this we have spent the last year speaking with and listening to views of passengers, non-passengers and stakeholders, and have used this to develop the outcomes that we expect from the new service. Bidders are incentivised to develop innovative solutions that meet and potentially exceed the outcomes set.

We have put improving quality at the heart the future rail service. Our requirements include enhanced services, improvements to passenger comfort and quality of service, and transformation of the on-board experience. Better trains, stations and information systems are sought, particularly with regards to access for disabled people.

We have published Transport for Wales - Rail Services for the Future. This provides more detail on our requirements for the services and gives insight into the solutions being sought from bidders. It can be accessed via:

<http://gov.wales/topics/transport/transport-for-wales/procurement/rail-services-for-the-future/?lang=en>

It is our intention to create a rail service that benefits the whole of Wales, as well as communities along the border in England. We want the next rail service to change people's views of public transport in Wales and make it the choice that can be relied on to travel for work, to access services such as education or health services or to enjoy leisure time.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd • Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:  
0300 0604400

[Gohebiaeth.Ken.Skates@llyw.cymru](mailto:Gohebiaeth.Ken.Skates@llyw.cymru)  
[Correspondence.Ken.Skates@gov.wales](mailto:Correspondence.Ken.Skates@gov.wales)

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Safety, reliability and customer service remains at the heart of our ambition. Our ambition for the South Wales Metro is for a vertically integrated railway, where we will concentrate responsibility for providing an integrated track, train and passenger focussed solution into a single supply chain controlled by Welsh Government. The service is being developed with long-term needs and benefits in mind, with sustainable and ethical considerations underpinning the solutions being developed. It is our intention that the expertise we develop in taking forward the South Wales Metro will put us in a good position to roll out the North East Wales Metro and Metro systems elsewhere in Wales.

Bids will be submitted at the end of December and, by Spring next year we will have announced our preferred partner for delivering rail services for the future.

Yours sincerely,

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

**Ken Skates AC/AM**

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi a'r Seilwaith  
Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure