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Planning

Rail Replacement Operators for Routes Covering Wales and Border Routes Operated by Transport for Wales

Transport for Wales Rail Limited (Utility Buyer)

UK2: Preliminary market engagement notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

Notice identifier: 2026/S 000-002064

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocids-h6vhtk-060348

Published 9 January 2026, 5:25pm

Scope

Reference

TfW0993.00

Description

Transport for Wales Rail (TfWRL) are in-housing the co-ordination and management of the Rail Replacement Service (RRS) across Wales and Border routes operated by TfWRL within Wales and between Wales and England. Or any such route operated by TfW as may arise in future

This means that all pre-planned and emergency rail replacement services currently provided by coach and bus operators will be contracted directly by TfWRL.

TfW are currently considering procuring a multi-lot Open Framework to support service provision across Wales.

The indicative time plan is as follows and may change at the Authority's discretion.

Market Engagement early February 26

Issue Tender April 26

Close Tender mid to end of June 26

Contract Award end of July 26

Operator mobilisation and commencement of award of duties between August 26 - October 26.

Commercial tool

Establishes a framework

Total value (estimated)

- £71,576,858 excluding VAT
- £85,892,229 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Contract dates (estimated)

- 20 July 2026 to 19 July 2031
- Possible extension to 19 July 2034
- 8 years

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 60200000 - Railway transport services
- 60112000 - Public road transport services
- 60130000 - Special-purpose road passenger-transport services
- 60140000 - Non-scheduled passenger transport
- 60172000 - Hire of buses and coaches with driver

Contract locations

- UKL - Wales
- UKF - East Midlands (England)
- UKH - East of England
- UKI - London
- UKC - North East (England)
- UKD - North West (England)
- UKJ - South East (England)
- UKK - South West (England)
- UKG - West Midlands (England)
- UKE - Yorkshire and the Humber

Engagement

Engagement deadline

27 February 2026

Engagement process description

This notice is issued solely for the purpose of gathering market intelligence and does not constitute a call for competition or a commitment to a formal procurement process at this stage.

Through this early market engagement exercise, Transport for Wales Rail Limited the Contracting Authority seeks to:

1. Hold a series of Meet the Buyer market engagement events across Wales, to share its future vision with operators for future service provision of the planned change to in-house the co-ordination and management of the Rail Replacement Service.
2. Understand the level of operator market interest in supplying all emergency and pre-planned rail replacement services directly to TfW by participating in any future procurement opportunity.
3. Provide updates of its procurement process, timescales and current strategy.
4. Obtain information to help inform the specification e.g. duty allocation method, setting of appropriate service level KPI's; pricing options and options for geographical zoning etc.
5. Obtain insight from operators of the challenges they face in delivering the service and provide suggestions as to how it may be improved
6. Understand any operator risks, including any associated risks and mitigations when providing this service.
7. Challenges Transport for Wales Rail Limited may not have considered.

TfW currently plan to hold 4 regional events and 1 virtual event as follows: Llandudno, Shrewsbury, Pontypridd and Carmarthen. Please be advised if registration to attend these events is low, then the event may be cancelled and operators encouraged to attend the virtual session.

TfW are being supported by Business Wales, who will manage the operator event registration process. How to register for these events will be posted on the Business Wales website (events page) in the coming days and may be found on the following links <https://wales.business-events.org.uk/> or <https://wales.business-events.org.uk/cy/>

The events will be held between the 4th - 13th February, and subject to capacity, TfW may hold further 121 sessions if operators express an interest. All market engagement events will be concluded by the 27th February.

If there are any specific topics relating to the Rail Replacement Service you would like to see covered during these events, please email TFW.RRSOperators@tfwrail.wales

Please note the target audience for these events is operators of bus, coach and minibus etc. Rail Replacement services supported by Taxi operators is not part of the scope of this particular exercise.

All events will cover the same content, hence only one event need be attended per operator.

Participation

Particular suitability

- Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME)
- Voluntary, community and social enterprises (VCSE)

Submission

Publication date of tender notice (estimated)

6 April 2026

Procedure

Special regime

Utilities

Contracting authority

Transport for Wales Rail Limited (Utility Buyer)

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PVJP-5451-JYWQ

3 Llys Cadwyn

Pontypridd

CF37 4TH

United Kingdom

Contact name: Christine Thorne

Email: TFW.RRSOperators@tfwrail.wales

Website: <http://www.tfwrail.wales>

Region: UKL15 - Central Valleys

Organisation type: Public authority - sub-central government

Devolved regulations that apply: Wales