

## **Planning and Development Committee - Monday 24 July 2023**

Dear Salisbury City Council,

### **South Western Railway announces public consultation on station change proposals**

South Western Railway has today launched a public consultation on potential changes to modernise and update stations across our network. This included proposing changes to the way tickets are sold and customer service is provided. The press release which has been issued this morning is provided below for your reference.

These proposals seek to modernise the railway and bring it more in line with current consumer expectations. They reflect significantly reduced usage of ticket offices over the past decade as customers move to alternative, more convenient ways of buying tickets.

The changes would mean the closure of all ticket offices, but more face-to-face support for customers, greater visibility of colleagues throughout stations, and a higher proportion of colleagues trained to support customers with their retail choices.

Customers will still be able to access the same products and services as they do today through South Western Railway's website, our mobile app, contactless payment, pay as you go, and at our customer contact centre, or at the station.

We will continue to meet all our commitments on providing accessibility for passengers, including passengers with reduced mobility and people requiring in-person assistance.

More information about our proposals can be found on our website at [www.southwesternrailway.com/stationchange](http://www.southwesternrailway.com/stationchange) . Physical copies of this information can also be obtained on request at this station.

Independent passenger watchdogs [Transport Focus](#) and [London Travel Watch](#) will facilitate the consultation. If you would like to comment on these proposals please contact the relevant organisation to the station you are commenting on by **Wednesday 26 July 2023**.

Kind regards,

Matt

## **South Western Railway announces public consultation on station change proposals**

Wednesday 5 July 2023

- Alongside train operating companies nationwide, SWR is launching a public consultation on plans to modernise and update stations across its network
- Changes to customer service operations at 153 stations (out of 190 on the network) will be consulted on
- Proposed changes include training more colleagues to become multi-skilled, with a clear focus on helping customers

South Western Railway (SWR) is launching a consultation on a station change proposal, with new arrangements at 153 of SWR's 190 stations to be consulted on.

The proposed changes include creating a single team of colleagues at each station, who will work together to help customers with different aspects of their train travel from journey planning to ticket purchasing.

The proposals would mean the closure of all ticket offices, but more face-to-face support for customers, greater visibility of colleagues throughout stations, and a higher proportion of colleagues trained to support customers with their retail choices.

The proposed changes would help modernise station retailing, for the first time since the rules on how to sell tickets were set well before the invention of the smartphone. These changes come as a result of the generational shift in customer behaviour and digital capability that has resulted in many other industries taking similar steps to modernise their customer experience.

The proposals would deliver a large-scale change in the operation of stations across the network and SWR are committed to working with customers, stakeholders and colleagues to ensure a smooth transition.

**Claire Mann, Managing Director, South Western Railway, said:**

“In developing our proposal to modernise and update our stations, we've focused on delivering improvements for our customers, while also recognising that our people are the key to doing so.

“Our station colleagues play a vital role in delivering a positive customer experience. This proposal recognises their talent and dedication by opening up opportunities for career progression and comprehensive re-skilling.

“By multi-skilling our colleagues, we can offer a customer service that aligns with what customers actually want and need, in line with their expectations from modern retailing.

“Technology has already enabled significant change at our stations, with 75 per cent of passenger journeys made using smart media today. Our proposal simply seeks to build on these existing trends.

“We are consulting widely on our proposals and welcome feedback to help ensure a smooth transition to a more modern, customer focussed experience at our stations.”

Full details of SWR’s station change proposals can be found at [southwesternrailway.com/stationchange](https://southwesternrailway.com/stationchange) and customers have until 26 July to comment on the proposals via Transport Focus or London TravelWatch.

### **Notes**

Customers can read our full consultation document at [southwesternrailway.com/stationchange](https://southwesternrailway.com/stationchange)

Independent passenger watchdogs Transport Focus and London TravelWatch will facilitate the three-week consultation.

The consultation will close on 26 July and customers can respond via the websites of Transport Focus [transportfocus.org.uk](https://transportfocus.org.uk) or London TravelWatch [londontravelwatch.org.uk](https://londontravelwatch.org.uk)