

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Love, Karl [redacted]
Date: Wed, 28 Feb 2024 at 12:46
Subject: Red Funnel Cros Solent Transport - Continued service failures.
To: [redacted]
Cc: [redacted]

Dear Secretary of State for Transport, Mr Harper MP and Mr Seely MP

The situation with Red Funnel - Cross Solent transportation operators, and its cancellations and service disruptions to the Isle of Wight, after many months of negative service impacts, is intolerable and could be putting peoples health and well-being at risk from life threatening illness after residents are missing appointments and treatments, because of cancelled services.

Red Funnel Service Cancellations are worsening and our whole Island economy, our investability and potential tourist offer is being diminished. Red funnel must deliver a good reliable service in these difficult economic conditions or our islands reputational and viability will be impacted. This affects every person living on our Island. One expects severe weather impacts but the current situation is appalling.

Yet again this week, following months of service cancellations, Red funnel report further cancellations because of Staffing issues. This is totally unacceptable. Red Funnel have only had, since its service introduction in 1861, time to develop a sustainable workforce staffing strategy and with other vessels not operational at this time, why do they not have sufficient Staff to operate a good reliable service? . What picture does all this disruption paint for outside investors as we battle to keep our Island nationally important industries and services viable? It is hard for our Island to remain viable as it is but, when another important part of our economic jigsaw (Red Funnel) fails, it puts our whole island economy and stability at risk.

We must get the Cross Solent Ferry operators regulated, it seems the only control we can now have to enforce a good reliable service, ensuring our Islands well-being and economy

Imagine you travel to Southampton looking to get on a ferry to visit Osborne House and find the service cancelled? Imagine you're an investor flying into the UK to visit Wight Shipyard or GKN on our Island and then find you cannot cross the Solent to the Island in a timely way. Would that inspire confidence to invest into our Island economy?

Red funnel must be held accountable and they are not even explaining the delays, providing proper compensation or inspiring any confidence that positive service changes can be achieved.

Please intervene and do something to help resolve this situation. All I can do is bang a drum and recommend that that this Private PLC company is either regulated or nationalised. It seems this is the only way to get Red Funnel to improve and be held accountable, ensuring essential and life enabling services are provided

I look forward to hearing your response soon

Best wishes

Karl Lowe

Vice Chairman of the Isle of Wight Council

Member for East Cowes

Important Information - Disclosure, Confidentiality and Monitoring of this email

This email communication may be monitored by the Isle of Wight Council for regulatory, quality control, or crime detection purposes. If you are not the Intended Recipient please contact the sender as soon as possible. It is intended only for the personal attention of the named person, firm or company to whom it is addressed. It may contain information that is privileged and confidential in law. Accordingly any unauthorised dissemination, distribution, copying or other use of this message or any of its content by any other person may constitute a breach of civil or criminal law and is strictly prohibited. No mistake in transmission is intended to waive or compromise any such privilege. Any views expressed in this message are those of the individual sender and may not necessarily reflect the views of the Isle of Wight Council.

The information contained in this e-mail may be subject to disclosure to third parties under either data protection legislation or the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to the extent the law allows and in accordance with the Isle of Wight Council's policies on information management. (If you wish the disclosure of the information in any reply to be restricted please make this clear in your response).