

Rt Hon Nick Herbert CBE MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

05 Oct 2017

29 September 2017

Dear Mr Herbert,

Thank you for your letter to Nick Brown, following the APPG, about the ticket office and ticket machines at Hassocks station. I have been in contact with the local manager who has updated me on this.

Please pass on our apologies to passengers who have been affected by ticket buying issues at the station. Typically there are two members of staff at the ticket office but one has been away on sick leave, and there was a short gap when we recruited another member of staff to work there permanently after someone left. The new member of staff is now in place and is supported by relief staff where possible, as well as by gateline staff more generally.

In terms of the ticket machines, we are investing nearly £8m in 471 new ticket machines across our network. The new machines will ultimately be more helpful for users with improved on-screen information, larger ticket stocks, improved cash (change) mechanisms and the option to use contactless payment for example.

However, there have been several issues affecting the reliability of these machines and we understand the inconvenience caused to passengers as a result. Because of this, we took the decision to pause the roll-out to stations while an improvement plan was developed with the machines' supplier.

We are working very closely with them on this plan which includes: developing an update to the software, a strengthened reporting process for problems that arise, and additional engineers to help manage issues promptly. These actions have led to improvements in reliability. At Hassocks specifically, one of the machines at Hassocks has improved, however, this has not been the case for the other therefore our supplier has just confirmed that the whole machine will be replaced in the next week.

Please pass on our apologies for any inconvenience caused and please be assured that where there is no facility to buy a ticket at the station, passengers would be able to join a train and buy at the earliest opportunity.

I can keep you updated on this in future.

Regards



Yvonne Leslie
Senior Stakeholder Manager