



North Pembroke Transport Forum Fforwm Trafnidiaeth Gogledd Penfro

News Briefing – January 2013

Buses

Additional Fishguard & Goodwick Station bus-rail connection. As reported in last month's News Briefing Richards Bros is providing an additional bus connection to meet the arrival of the 18.46 service to Fishguard & Goodwick station. The 413 St Davids - Fishguard (via Mathry, Goodwick) calls at Harbour Garage Goodwick (across from the TESCO's Express) at 19.06.

Statement on Bus Services in Wales by Carl Sargeant AM, Minister for Local Government & Communities, 17th January. Key points:

- From 1 April 2013 the four Regional Transport Consortia (RTC) will be responsible for administering a new funding scheme for bus and community transport services – the Regional Transport Services Grant (RTSG). The total budget available to the Consortia in 2013-14 will be £25m. The Consortia will develop Regional Network Strategies (RNS) that will be used to prioritise their expenditure from the Grant according to local circumstances.
- Some of the outcomes that the Minister wishes to see considered include:
 - Driver training in disability equality and awareness.
 - The provision of audible and visual announcements on buses.
 - Standardised information displays at all bus stops.
 - The application of safe and efficient – economical – driving.
 - Networks that take account of the needs of people who wish to use buses to access health, education, training and employment.
 - Multi-operator integrated ticketing schemes so that passengers are able to use their tickets on any service, not just some.
 - Integration of timetables with other transport modes.
- The Public Transport Users' Committee (PTUC) has reported that information across the public transport network is often inconsistent and fragmented and set out a number of recommendations that aim to improve the quality of that information and make it easier to access. The Welsh Government (WG) is working with public transport operators, the RTCs and Bus Users UK in Wales to take forward PTUC's recommendations.
- Traveline Cymru will be provided with funding of around £1m per annum to help support its work as a one-stop shop for the provision of information on public transport services.
- The free concessionary bus travel scheme that also includes seriously-injured service personnel and seriously-injured service veterans will continue to operate at any time of day, and on every day that services run, including weekends and bank holidays.
- A key priority is to develop the TrawsCymru long distance bus network to provide improved services to major towns that are no longer linked by connecting rail services.

Community Transport

The Community Transport Concessionary Fares Initiative (CTCFI). This pilot scheme tested a range of mechanisms for improving accessibility for disabled people and those without access to conventional bus services for more than seven years. Evaluations in 2009 and 2012 found that an all-Wales roll-out of CTCFI is unaffordable. The Minister has therefore decided that the CTCFI scheme in its existing structure will cease after 12th April 2013. WG funding for community transport services in 2013-14 will be £2.5m.

Moreover, ring-fencing of 10% of the new RTSGs presents the existing CTCFI projects and other community transport providers with an opportunity to secure funding for their services. Community transport providers will work with the four RTCs to develop services that meet local requirements consistent with regional strategies.

National Assembly for Wales: Enterprise & Business Committee - Integrated Transport Inquiry

In January the Committee has taken evidence from Network Rail on 10th January, (2) Arriva Trains Wales and the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport Cymru Wales on 16th January, and (3) from representatives from the four Regional Transport Consortia and Carl Sargeant AM, Minister for Local Government and Communities on 24th January.

Key issues/topics raised and discussed during these meetings included:

- Relations between the Welsh Government, local transport consortia, local authorities, transport operators, Network Rail and stakeholders.
- Passenger transport executives; joint transport authorities; city regions.
- Future of the Wales and Borders franchise, devolution of the Wales railway route, bringing back powers over the rail network to Cardiff.
- Bus-rail integration problems in rural areas; long-distance connectivity issues; coordination of cross border transport.
- Funding and regional bus and community transport network strategies; definition of community transport; financial support for rural transport; ascertaining customer needs in order to target reduced funding.
- Rolling stock and staffing on trains; railway electrification; the Loughor viaduct scheme and redoubling the line through Gowerton; track renewals and re-signalling work; development of hubs with high-quality long-distance bus links; access to stations (disability, park and ride, buses, cycles, pedestrians).
- Need for real-time train times updates at all stations, train information at bus stations; diverse quality of bus stations/stops and railway stations.
- Travel/smart cards and integrated ticketing; use of bus passes on trains.
- Quality bus partnerships.

The Minister for Local Government and Communities has agreed to provide the Committee with a note on the following:

- How much money is invested in the bus and rail network.
- An update in March on progress with implementing the "Go Cymru" card for rail.
- The Welsh Government's definition of community transport.
- Clarification on the number of community transport groups that are now self-sufficient, without government funding.
- What stage the Minister is at in terms of making a case for additional powers, as the current legislation on railways doesn't align with the Minister's priorities.

See www.senedd.assemblywales.org/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=4436 for full inquiry details, history and meetings.

See www.senedd.assemblywales.org/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=1307 for Enterprise and Business Committee transcripts.

New North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum Chairman

At the opening of its 16th January meeting, the Forum Executive Committee observed a minute's silence in memory of its late Chairman, Cllr Byron James. In accordance with provisions in the Forum's constitution the Committee elected Stephen Hale to serve as the new Forum Chairman.

Steve is a qualified civil engineer with 10 years experience in the highway construction industry. Since re-training as a Physics teacher in 1995, he has taught physics and science in Tasker Milward School in Haverfordwest, Greenhill School in Tenby and latterly in Ysgol y Preseli, Crymych.

Steve has deep interest in rail transport, its links to other transport modes and its role in economic development and accessibility to employment, education and leisure. As a regular user of rail transport over the last 30 years, across most of the UK, he has built up a working knowledge of the intricacies of timetables, and the structure and workings of the industry. As a member of the Executive Committee he has been deeply involved in our endeavours to bring additional trains to North Pembrokeshire and to reopen Fishguard and Goodwick Station.

As well as his work with the Forum, Steve is also one of the 12 members of the Public Transport Users Committee for Wales (PTUC) which acts as a link between public transport users and policy makers in the Welsh Government in Cardiff Bay.

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The North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum is an independent voluntary group that works for the provision of an effective integrated transport system in the North Pembrokeshire area, promotes the benefits of public transport and works towards the greater use of public transport systems.

The Forum is a member of Bus Users UK Cymru, the Environmental Network for Pembrokeshire and the Pembrokeshire Rail Travellers Association.

The Forum's work is supported by:

Individual Members (£5 p.a.), Family Members (£8 p.a.) & Corporate Members (£12 p.a.)

(Corporate members include town and community councils, transport operators, and groups, organisations and associations with a transport interest)

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