



North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum Fforwm Trafnidiaeth Gogledd Penfro

News Briefing – August 2010

Community Transport

Fishguard Minibus. Pembrokeshire Voluntary Transport (PVT) has agreed to base an old minibus ('Millie') in Fishguard at the Leisure Centre on a trial basis, with a view to keeping her there if the trial is successful. Millie has now moved to Fishguard and is available for group use by any community groups in the area who wish to make any trips. Bookings are being handled by Eleri and Barrie Duggan on 01348 891295. Bookings will be monitored closely, as it will be necessary to show that the bus will have more use in Fishguard than it enjoyed last year in Haverfordwest.

Bws y Bobol. Bws y Bobol's 3 year Big Lottery grant ends next May. The Bws y Bobol steering group is working on proposals to ensure that the scheme can be self-supporting once the funding ceases. Bws y Bobol carries passengers all over the St David's peninsula, as well as providing travel into Fishguard for podiatry clinics and the Friendship Circle. Usage needs to grow over the coming year to a level which will make the bus viable without lottery funding. To get involved with the project email mary.smith@pembrokeshiretransport.com.

Preseli Green Dragon. Green Dragon co-ordinator Caroline Wilson reports that the summer services have been well received, especially the new Gwaun Valley service which runs from Fishguard to Bwlchgwynt. The organising body, Preseli Rural Transport Association, has moved into its new office at Yr Hen Ysgol, Bwlchygroes.

Passenger Transport Users Committee

The Public Transport Users' Committee will play a key advisory role in providing the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) with a passengers' perspective and assist in the development of national transport strategies and their implementation.

The Committee will meet quarterly, on a rotational basis, throughout the four transport regions of Wales (South East, South West, Mid and North Wales). The Chairperson will be a frequent user of public transport in Wales with a significant understanding of public transport issues and ideas on how public transport can be further improved in Wales. During its first year the Committee will be taking evidence from a range of stakeholders, including young people, on the issues relating to public transport in their region.

WAG has received applications to the Committee and is working towards appointment of the Chairperson in November. Members will be appointed by 1st March next year, and the first meeting of the Committee will take place in March/April 2011.

Safe Routes in Communities

Pembrokeshire County Council's bid to the National Assembly for a Safe Routes in the Communities grant will go in next month. The bid includes a proposal for Fishguard. Schemes included in the plan should make it easier to get around the town without a car, especially for children, parents with prams and anyone with mobility problems. Grant announcements will be made next March.

Trains - Update on the Proposal to Close Rosslare-Waterford Rail Services

As reported in the April News Briefing Iarnród Éireann-Irish Rail has announced its intention to terminate passenger services on the Rosslare-Waterford line. The proposal is of serious concern to foot passengers travelling to and from Fishguard, as closure of the service would significantly weaken the already poor Rosslare rail-ferry connections, ending rail access between Rosslare Harbour and mid and south-west Ireland.

An energetic local group is carrying out a highly effective campaign to save services on the line, and organisers have come across to Fishguard on two occasions to discuss transport matters with Forum representatives and other interested individuals.

As the proposal is subject to approval by the National Transport Authority (NTA), the Authority invited a submission from the South-East Regional Authority to inform its decision. The subsequent Socio-Economic and Business Case Study for the Maintenance of the Rosslare-Waterford-Limerick Rail Corridor informed the NTA that both the South-East and Mid-West Regional Authorities (and their respective constituent local authorities) strenuously oppose any proposals by Iarnród Éireann to cease passenger rail services on the Rosslare to Waterford rail lines and to downgrade any part of the South-East and Mid-West Region's rail network particularly on the Rosslare-Waterford-Limerick rail corridor.

The study is of considerable interest to the North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum as it includes a consideration of the socio-economic and business case for an alternative community rail partnership strategy.

Key recommendations:

- The NTA should not approve the proposal to terminate passenger services on the Rosslare-Waterford line. The value of the infrastructure would be maximised under an alternative strategy of providing a sustainable, frequent service that is capable of attracting passenger traffic from the key markets for public transport in the region.
- The passenger services on the Rosslare-Waterford rail line should incorporate the urban centre of Wexford. It would link a designated Gateway and a designated Hub and a major passenger ferry gateway at Rosslare with further rail links across southern Ireland and to the Western Rail Corridor.
- To optimise the economics of the line, passenger services between Wexford/Rosslare and Waterford should be substantially more frequent. Increasing frequency is the principal factor that makes rail services more attractive for passengers and, because of the relevance of fixed costs, more economic for operators. It has been the experience of rail lines in Ireland, the UK and elsewhere that increasing service frequency can increase patronage very significantly, thereby securing the strategic value of the line.
- The relevant regional and local authorities and Iarnród Éireann should be directed or encouraged strongly to develop a Community Rail Partnership (CRP) approach, initially for Wexford/Rosslare-Waterford services. The prospects for the Rosslare-Waterford-Limerick Junction line are highly positive for the region, for the nation and for the rail network, but they are dependent on a local focus for marketing and service development. Drawing in particular from the experience in the UK of its community rail development strategy, a CRP approach would have major advantages for the region and for Iarnród Éireann. The main focus of CRPs is local, small scale and changing the way people think about the railway, but with a big cumulative impact on the relationship between the railway and the communities it serves.
- As part of CRP-led market development, there should be a refocused approach to service development, both for rail services and interconnecting transport services such as local bus services. A locally focused approach to service development would be directed to meeting the needs of local people and visitors to the region, making sure that public transport as a whole provides integrated services that people want to use and that local businesses can benefit from.

News Briefing Archive

The Forum's News Briefings are now archived in the Materials section of its website at www.nptf.co.uk/materials/cat_view/7-news-briefings.html.

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)

For further information, contact the Secretary, 2 Hill Terrace, Fishguard SA65 9LU
Tel: (01348) 874217. E-mail: info@nptf.co.uk. Website: www.nptf.co.uk.