



North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum Fforwm Trafnidiaeth Gogledd Penfro

News Briefing – February 2013

North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum AGM

The Forum's 13th Annual General Meeting will be held on 20th March in Llwyngwair Manor, Newport at 7.30pm. Coffee/tea will be provided before the meeting from 7.00pm. The meeting will feature a presentation from Sue Mackie, General Manager of POINT, Fishguard and Goodwick's young persons trust, about the work they will be doing as Station Adopters at Fishguard and Goodwick Station. The Forum warmly welcomes this opportunity to involve our young people, with the support of the train company, in such a positive improvement to our transport network. The meeting is open to members of the public.

Buses

Coastal Bus Services - Consultation. As a consequence of the reduction in its funding from the UK Government, the Welsh Government has reduced the amount of local transport service grant funding that it provides to each Local Authority by 27% for the next financial year. Due to this Pembrokeshire County Council (PCC) has to reconfigure bus services, including the Coastal Bus Services. In January the Council circulated a consultation questionnaire regarding proposed changes to its coastal bus services.

Respondents to the consultation have been informed that their feedback has been used, along with the analysis of service patronage, to influence the decision regarding reconfiguration of the services. The following has now been agreed:

- The following services will continue to operate 7 days a week during the summer, but from 30th September 2013 will only run on Thursdays and Saturdays during the winter (a reduction of one day).
 - Poppit Rocket (serving between Cardigan and Fishguard).
 - Strumble Shuttle (serving between Fishguard and St David's).
 - Puffin Shuttle (North) (serving between St David's and Marloes).
 - Coastal Cruiser (serving the Angle peninsula).
- The Celtic Coaster, serving the St David's peninsula (providing a coastal bus service and park and ride), will continue to run 7 days a week, but with a slightly reduced period of operation and frequency.
- The consultation results show that the Puffin Shuttle (South) (serving Marloes to Milford Haven to Haverfordwest) is mainly a commuter route and so will be treated as per the other subsidised services. Therefore, this service will no longer operate on Sundays and will run 6 days a week throughout the year. This will take effect from 5th May 2013.

The Coastal Bus Timetable Booklet will be printed and distributed in April.

Community Transport

Clydau Car Club. The Club's well attended launch, held on 1st February at the Bwlchygroes Community Hall, was a great success. After the 'welcoming' speech by Betsan Caldwell (Co-Director of the Community Transport Association Wales), the ribbon was cut by Emyr Phillips (vintage car enthusiast and former head of Tegryn School). The event concluded with refreshments in the Hall and the cutting of an extremely distinctive cake made by Green Dragon Bus staff member Caroline Wilson.

Two important meetings are being held next month to provide an update on future funding of community transport services in our area.

South West Wales CT Forum. This meeting will be held on 7th March in Carmarthen. Attendees will be provided with information on the new Regional Transport Services Grant (RTSG), which will supersede some of the current funding measures that support the Community Transport and Shopmobility sector in the region. The fund will be administered by SWWITCH (the Regional Transport Consortia for South West Wales), and Sue Miles, SWWITCH Coordinator, will attend the meeting to provide information on the new scheme.

Pembrokeshire Town Rider Services. The Pembrokeshire Association of Community Organisations (PACTO) is holding a meeting in Fishguard on 8th March to discuss the future of these services. The Welsh Government has finally made its decision about the funding of the Town Rider services, and this will

inevitably mean changes to all the services. PACTO and PCC are working together to ensure that the Town Rider services will continue to provide vital transport for its users.

Trains - Fishguard Services

Responding to the number of complaints received about problems with fares from London to Fishguard and Goodwick Station, the Forum took the matter up with the train operators and found that First Great Western (FGW) had the responsibility to set these fares. Following considerable correspondence with FGW about the matter, we were informed that when Fishguard and Goodwick Station was reopened, the 'Any Fares Permitted' walk-up fare flow was created, but the station was not added to the pricing clusters that enable these fares to be generated. FGW has now applied for this, which they expect to be granted. This will be reflected from the May fares changes which will come into effect on Sunday 19th May.

Walking and Cycling - Active Transport (Wales) Bill

On 18th February the Welsh Government's Active Transport (Wales) Bill was laid. The purpose of the Bill is to require local authorities to continuously improve facilities and routes for pedestrians and cyclists and to prepare maps identifying current and potential future routes for their use. The Bill will also require new road schemes (including road improvement schemes) to consider the needs of pedestrians and cyclists at the design stage. The objective is to reinforce the idea of active travel as a viable mode of transport and a suitable alternative to motorised transport for shorter journeys; as well as to create an environment where it is safer and more practical to walk and cycle than it is at present. The Enterprise and Business Committee will consider the bill between 20th February and 22nd May.

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

On 7th February, at its final evidence session, the Committee took evidence from Jonathan Bray, Director of the Passenger Transport Executive Group Support Unit.

Key issues/topics raised and discussed during the meeting included:

- How passenger transport executives (PTEs) deliver transport.
- How PTE functions such as (1) preparing and brokering transport plans, (2) administering bus, rail and community transport network developments, public transport information, concessionary travel administration funding, as well as (3) cross-sector co-ordination with health, education and social welfare transport might (or might not) work in both urban and rural areas in Wales.
- Is local government control of public transport funding through our system of regional transport consortia - operating on a voluntary basis and without the executive powers - enough to create an effective, regionally integrated public transport network?
- The pros and cons of franchising bus services.
- The provision of national and local public transport information.
- The need to think about the outcomes that people want and the amount of connections that people make in using transport systems. There must be the ability to plan bus and rail services together, with the add-ons of community transport and demand-responsive services in the most rural areas.
- Connectivity and real-time information are vitally important, particularly in rural areas. Passengers need to know if they have missed a bus, especially if it runs on a two-hour frequency.
- The danger of the rail franchise being looked at in isolation. Passengers want to know that their local bus will connect with the train. Preferably, they would like a ticketing system that had a degree of integration.

See the full transcript of the 7th February meeting on *Enterprise & Business Committee - Transcripts* at www.senedd.assemblywales.org/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=1307.

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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