



North Pembroke Transport Forum Fforwm Trafnidiaeth Gogledd Penfro

News Briefing – September 2017

Network Rail – New Wales Route Supervisory Board

(Press release, 11th September 2017)

'Network Rail and Arriva Trains Wales have joined forces with Welsh Government and passenger representatives to create a new board bringing track and train closer together and ensuring there is one voice to represent customers in Wales and the borders. The board will work together to drive improvements and hold the rail industry to account.

The Wales Route Supervisory Board builds on the work that has already taken place between Network Rail and Arriva Trains Wales to improve services for passengers in Wales and the borders.

The board will be independently chaired by Margaret Llewellyn OBE, who has a broad range of experience in tourism, the rail industry and shipping and is a non-executive director at Cardiff Airport...The first board meeting will take place in September'.

The Next Wales and Borders Rail Franchise

1 Transport for Wales

Transport for Wales (TfW) has published 'Rail Services for the Future', its update on the procurement of the next Wales and Borders Rail Franchise and the South Wales Metro. The process now moves forward towards the invitation to tender, the submission of bids, and eventually to the announcement of the winning Operator of the next franchise. To consult/download the document, *visit* <http://gov.wales/topics/transport/transport-for-wales/procurement/rail-services-for-the-future/?lang=en>.

Key Messages to Passengers in the Forward

- TfW is a not-for-profit company wholly-owned by the Welsh Government. Our initial focus is developing and delivering the next Wales and Borders Rail Service and Metro services that meet passenger needs. In July 2016, we launched the procurement exercise worth £5bn and have successfully attracted four high quality bidders.
- In February 2017, we launched an extensive consultation process to ensure we understood passenger needs. We've listened to your views and we intend to create a rail service that benefits the whole of Wales, communities along the border and in England.
- Your views have been vital during the extensive competitive dialogue process where TfW and bidders have worked together towards a solution that will be Made in Wales.
- We're now only a few months away from announcing the winning 'Operator and Development Partner' for the Wales and Borders rail service who will support us in developing and subsequently operating the South Wales Metro as well as improving services across the rest of Wales.
- This document provides an update on the procurement and how your views have informed the procurement so far. This is an ongoing process and your views continue to be instrumental as we discuss individual solutions with bidders. This will allow us to select the solution that gives us the best overall rail service, one that people are confident to use and of which we can all be proud.

2 National Assembly. Economy, Infrastructure & Skills Committee, in the morning of 27th September. General Scrutiny of Ken Skates AM, Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure

Some Key Points made by Mr Skates:

- I agree with the committee's 10 priorities for the procurement of the new Wales and Borders rail service. These are reflected in our requirements for the next rail franchise and are included in the procurement specification and across the evaluation criteria.
- Our proposals will incentivise service enhancements, but there will also be a cap on profits so that we can reinvest excess profits back into public transport.
- Some good progress that we have made against the committee's priorities: We've recently procured 20 additional train units. The 20 units will be commissioned for use from June 2018, providing

additional resilience to the existing fleet of trains, but they will also open up the opportunity for us to enhance the existing fleet for persons of reduced mobility.

- By undertaking wide-ranging engagement, by gathering public views on the policy priorities for the next franchise, we have been able to incorporate views expressed by public transport users as a fundamental part of our thinking throughout the procurement process, and we fully intend to deliver on the public's expectations. I am pleased to announce that, following the process of competitive dialogue, we will be issuing final tenders tomorrow, with the intent to find a preferred partner early next year.

Visit <http://senedd.assembly.wales/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IIId=15158> to view the transcript.

Visit <http://www.assembly.wales/laid%20documents/gen-ld11194/gen-ld11194-e.pdf> to view the Welsh Government's Written Response to the Recommendations in the Committee's Rail Franchise and Metro Inquiry Report, 'On the Right Track? The Rail Franchise and South Wales Metro'.

3 National Assembly Plenary Debate on the EIS Committee's report, in the afternoon of 27th September.

Visit <http://www.assembly.wales/en/bus-home/Pages/Plenary.aspx?assembly=5&category=Record%20of%20Proceedings> to view the transcript.

During the debate the Cabinet Secretary reiterated remarks that he had made to the EIS Committee in the morning. With regard to points made during the Plenary debate about the proposed not-for-profit model, the Cabinet Secretary responded:

'Should we be successful, in particular in seeing the repeal of section 25 of the Railways Act, as has been the case in Scotland, we would take steps to ensure that future franchises are developed on a not-for-profit model...While reflecting back on the hard work that has been done to date, there is more work to be undertaken...This is the largest procurement exercise the Welsh Government has undertaken, and I realise the challenges this brings, including the complex negotiations that remain, but I hope that I can rely on your continued support in delivering a vastly improved transport system that will benefit every citizen in Wales'.

In his closing remarks EIS Committee Chair Russell George noted that he was disappointed, along with others, that the devolution of powers has been delayed and hoped that those issues would be resolved. He added that he has also written as Chair of the committee to the Secretary of State, Chris Grayling, and asked him to appear before the committee.

Mr George also noted that he was pleased that, since that public correspondence between Chris Grayling and Ken Skates over the summer, it seems that there has been a positive move forward in recent weeks. And the fact that during the debate the Cabinet Secretary announced that the tenders would be issued the next day demonstrates in itself that there's been a lot of working, and a goodwill gesture, between both Governments in recent days and weeks.

In conclusion, the motion to note the committee's report was agreed unanimously.

Welsh Affairs Committee - Rail Electrification Inquiry

An inquiry into the cancellation of plans to electrify rail between Cardiff and Swansea was launched on 21st September. Committee Chair David TC Davies commented 'We have launched this inquiry to examine the reasoning behind this decision... What impact will this decision have on the economy of south Wales? Does this strategy reflect the transport priorities for Wales and should we be devolving further powers on rail to the Welsh Assembly'.

Visit <http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/welsh-affairs-committee/news-parliament-2017/future-welsh-rail-launch-17-19/> for further information and the terms of reference.

The deadline for written submissions will be Monday 6th November 2017.

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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'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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