



North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum Fforwm Trafnidiaeth Gogledd Penfro

March News Briefing, 2022

Bus Services - Welsh Government Cabinet Written Statement Lee Waters MS, Deputy Minister for Climate Change, 31st March 2022

Opening remarks from the Deputy Minister: 'I am pleased to announce we are today publishing the white paper One Network, One Timetable, One Ticket: Planning Buses as a Public Service for Wales. The white paper proposes changes to the way bus services are delivered in Wales to design and deliver a bus network fit for the climate emergency, fit for the future and fit for the people of Wales'.

Selected Points in the Document

- 'We currently can't plan and design bus networks to meet people's needs, either in our cities and towns or for our rural communities. We must change this and provide a better service if we want to break our reliance on the private car'.
- 'People need a well-planned, easy to understand network; buses that are timetabled to connect with each other and with trains; and a single, simple, easy to use ticketing system'.
- 'The white paper proposes a franchising model to deliver this, and build a network of buses that can tie in with the wider transport system'.
- 'This model will enable coordinated network planning between the 22 local authorities and through the 4 regional Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs), focusing on providing the services people need. The Welsh Ministers will hold ultimate responsibility for ensuring a national network plan is produced and delivered for bus services across Wales.'
- The proposal is 'to create a centralised franchising team within Transport for Wales, acting on behalf of Ministers. The proposed franchising team will both support local authorities and CJCs with network planning and let and manage franchise contracts, on behalf of the Welsh Ministers, making sure the whole of Wales has access to the same procurement power and resource.'
- 'We have to make more progress over the next 10 years than we have in the last 30. Franchising will help us design an attractive network that gets people where they want to go easily and reliably, and drive vehicle decarbonisation standards. This is key to supporting the scale of modal shift we need to see to hit our climate targets. It will also support our ambitions to cut emissions from our bus fleet, moving people around as sustainably as possible'.
- The draft Regulatory Impact Assessment, which will shortly be published analyses the cost implications of different bus operating models. This highlights both the benefits franchising has to offer over alternatives, and the scale of what we could be achieving with the hundreds of millions of pounds we already invest in buses in Wales if we were able to better design networks to meet people's needs.
- 'We want to work in partnership with the industry between now and the proposed introduction of franchising, so it is an easy path for all stakeholders. We will also continue to work with stakeholders during the roll out and bedding-in process of this proposal'.
- 'We are already in consultation with operator representatives and Local Authorities as this proposed legislation needs to be done once and done right. Transitional arrangements will

be made, in consultation with the industry, to work together to go as far as possible in the meantime'.

- Re the attached consultation document: 'We want to hear the voices of people across Wales and across the industry, to help us take this opportunity to re-design our delivery model for bus services as effectively as possible and implement a world-class bus system for Wales. The consultation will remain open for responses until 24 June'.
- 'We recognise that this new model for running buses in Wales will take a number of years to achieve. Therefore, I am also today publishing Bus Cymru, which sets out a detailed routemap for how we want to work collaboratively going forward to improve all aspects of bus service provision for passengers'. For details visit <https://gov.wales/bws-cymru-connecting-peoples-places> .
- 'We have also committed to look at School Transport and will take forward this year a wider programme of work that encompasses consideration of a complete revision of the Learner Travel Measure. I am therefore publishing today the findings from the Learner Travel Measure Review undertaken in 2021. (Visit <https://gov.wales/learner-travel-wales-measure-2008-review-2021-html>) This has identified that the main issues for further information are:
 - Distance eligibility and child welfare
 - Lack of dedicated school transport for post-16 learners
 - Young people with additional learning needs
 - Residency criteria
 - Socio-economic impact of parents paying for transport
 - Welsh medium and faith school education
 - Nursery School provision
 - School Transport Infrastructure
- In taking forward this work we will be engaging with stakeholders to develop the evidence base to support any proposed changes to ensure that they are fair, proportionate, and affordable. We will be consulting on this work later this year.
- School travel is an intrinsic part of the way we support local bus provision and we want to make sure we take forward reform in tandem with our wider bus work, and not deal with it in isolation.

Senedd Climate Change, Environment & Infrastructure Committee

During March the Committee held public stakeholder engagement events to hear the views of passenger representative groups and others about bus and rail services in Wales. These discussions will inform the Committee's scrutiny of Transport for Wales and its scrutiny of public transport policies, and the Bus Bill in due course. Alongside this, the Committee will be undertaking further public engagement work to explore the experiences and views of public transport users across Wales.

On 17th March the Committee held its first annual scrutiny sessions with Transport for Wales and were joined by James Price, Chief Executive of Transport for Wales, and Geoff Ogden, Director of Planning, Development and Advisory services for Transport for Wales. The first part of the meeting focused on general scrutiny on governance and the development of Transport for Wales. The second session took evidence as part of the Committee's work on restoring public transport post COVID. For the full report visit <https://record.assembly.wales/Committee/12630>.

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. Email: hattiwoakes@gmail.com