

February News Briefing, 2020

➤ Annual General Meeting Reminder ◀

The meeting will now feature an Update on a new
Community Rail Partnership for South West Wales
from Geraint Morgan, TfW Community Rail Manager
Fishguard Bay Hotel - 11th March, at 7.00pm
- Refreshments from 6:30pm -

Information received during the month

1. Busses

1.1 *From Pembrokeshire County Council – With regard to town centre bus services.*

During the latter part of 2019 the County Council was made aware of bus services that were at risk: the 408 and 410 Cardigan and Fishguard Town Services, operated by Richards Bros with some support from Pembrokeshire for the Fishguard Service and from Ceredigion for the Cardigan Town Service which also serves St Dogmaels.

Whilst the services are relatively busy the operator was concerned that they were unsustainable. That is, fuel, vehicle and driver costs were not being sufficiently generated from the fares, and that these services would not be operated in 2020.

In order to assess and consult with customers about the existing services, officers from the Council Transport Section applied for a grant from Welsh Government (WG) to support both bus services up to April 2020. This was granted. The routes are therefore being assessed now with the operator and the Council trying to find a more sustainable option to continue the services.

1.2 *From Transport for Wales (TfW) – With regard to bus replacement services.*

A commercial exercise is currently underway for a new road replacement transport supplier for TfW, with a contract due to be awarded in 2020. As part of this tender exercise, TfW has clearly stated its requirements for an improved service for passengers, to be provided by any supplier. A key action plan has been put together, with interim actions to ensure short term improvement and long term actions to be delivered with a new supplier.

Ultimately, we are looking to achieve the following:

- Successful procurement of a new supplier for road replacement transport.
- Better customer information at stations regarding road replacement transport.
- Ensure we deliver the best possible customer experience at times of disruption.
- Better information sharing internally to ensure our people are informed and able to help customers as much as possible and ensure any inconvenience is mitigated.

We look forward to building in stakeholder feedback to this procurement exercise and keeping stakeholders up to date with progress.

2. Community Transport

From Pembrokeshire County Council – With regard to the Pembrokeshire Integrated Responsive Transport (IRT) Trial.

Two 16 seat EVM low floor service buses have been purchased. These have leather seats and USB chargers, and will be fitted with Wifi for passengers to use. A considerable amount of community

engagement has been undertaken to identify the transport needs within the pilot area. The service is due to start on 1st April 2020, with one bus operating from 8am until 7pm, Monday to Saturday. The second bus will be added later in the year. The booking and scheduling arrangements are currently being finalised with WG and TfW.

Karel Mujica has been employed by Pembrokeshire Voluntary Transport (PVT) to co-ordinate the IRT pilot, particularly the community engagement. Email: pvtprojectcoordinator@gmail.com and Mobile: 07946 828298.

National Assembly - Economy, Infrastructure & Transport Committee Scrutiny on Wales & Borders Rail Services, 29th January

Participants: James Price (TfW Chief Executive), Chris Pearce (Network Rail in Wales Head of Operations Delivery) and Lee Jones (KeolisAmey Wales Cymru Chair).

1. Extracts from the transcript (<https://record.assembly.wales/Committee/5953>):

1.1 *Preparations for this autumn compared to the 2018 situation.*

- Much improved in terms of the impact of autumn conditions on the trains.
- Much better planning, much more joined-up working between all parties involved.
- Investing in wheel-slip protection.
- Also investing in vegetation clearance and different ways of track treating.

1.2 *Trains taken out of commission as a result of autumn disruption in 2019 compared to 2018.*

- 57 per cent reduction in the number of trains taken out of service as a result of wheel flats.
- 170 last year, 76 this year.

1.3 *Ability to deliver services differently this year.*

- An average fleet of 108 trains out during autumn rather than under 199, delay minutes less than half of what they were last autumn.
- Now have more rolling stock than we need, more drivers and guards than before.
- Since the beginning of January, performance on all metrics has improved, particularly on time within three minutes, passenger time lost and cancellations.
- Short formations continues to be a struggle, albeit that has improved marginally.

1.4 *Rolling stock.*

- Anything that is in the new revised plan as four car will be run as a four car.
- We've had some additional trains, which will allow us to cascade more of the other units onto the Valleys lines in particular.
- More class 769s, mark 4s that go on the north-to-south route, fleet refurbishment started and continues in 2020, D230 stock to come on the Wrexham-Bidston line.

1.5 *Sunday services.*

- Not a formal part of the working week, it is partly voluntary. Moving towards a seven-day service, that provides the opportunity for difficulties.
- A need to quickly resolve these issues so that we have a reliable workforce alongside a reliable fleet position.

2. The North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum has observed that, as noted in the transcript of the Committee's 9th January meeting, scrutiny in this meeting regarding service provision also focused almost exclusively on services provided for the Valley Lines.

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
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County bucks the trend as railway station usage falls

THE number of passengers using railway stations in Pembrokeshire in 2018/19 has decreased despite a growth in the number of passengers for the whole of Wales.

In 2017/18, 585,088 people entered or exited a train station in the county compared to 568,374 for 2018/19, a drop of nearly 17,000.

The figures for the whole of Wales show that more than 57.4m people used stations in 2018/19, the largest rise since 2007/08.

However, despite being one of Pembrokeshire's most used stations, Haverfordwest saw the biggest drop in numbers with nearly 9,000 less passengers entering or exiting the station.

A total of 124,190 passengers entered or exited the station, compared to 133,164 the previous year.

Millford Haven also saw a big drop (-3,496) in numbers as did stations at Fishguard Harbour (-3,012), Whitland (-2,936) and Clunderwen

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(-2,368).

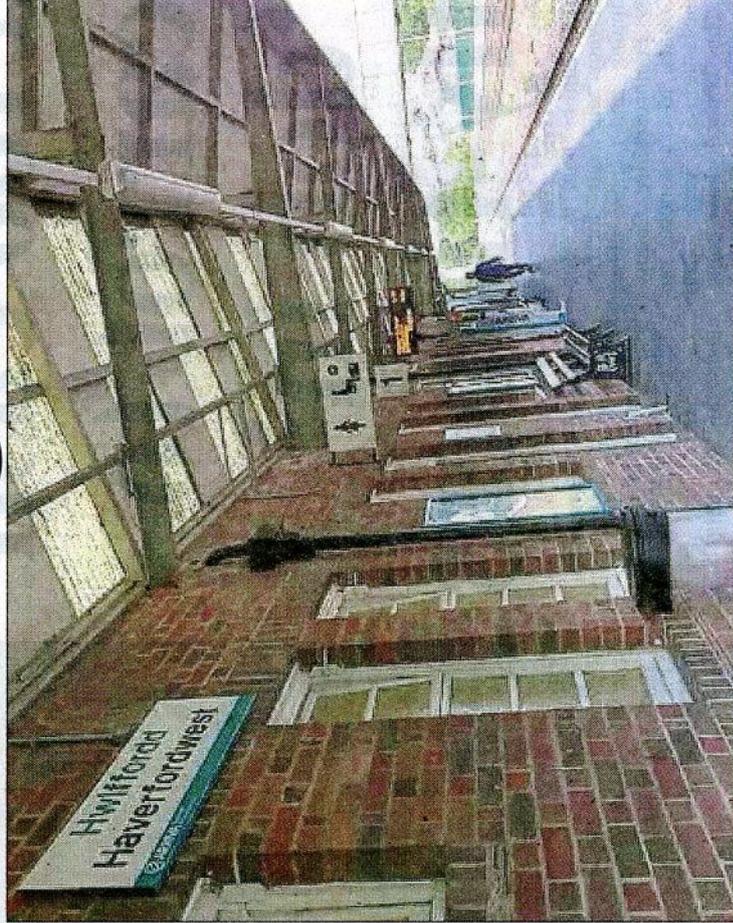
Johnston, Clarbeston Road and Fishguard and Goodwick stations were also down from the previous year.

Tenby was the busiest station in Pembrokeshire as it saw 125,540 passengers enter and exit at its stop, a rise of 2,866.

It was one of only six stations that saw a rise in numbers with Pembroke Dock (+1,692) and Pembroke (+1,550) the next biggest rises. Saundersfoot and Lamphey also saw an increase in the number of passengers.

The statistics were released by the Office for Rail and Road, an independent safety regulator for Britain's railways.

Transport for Wales said that more trains would be arriving late this year to allow for more seats for passengers.



Haverfordwest train station saw the biggest drop in numbers