



North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum Fforwm Trafnidiaeth Gogledd Penfro

News Briefing – March 2017

Buses

Pembrokeshire County Council (PCC) Bus Survey. Launched in November 2016, a questionnaire sought the views of bus passengers, and 436 questionnaires were completed and returned.

On 16th March a Council press release reported that eight out of ten users surveyed said they were 'very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied' with the reliability and punctuality of Pembrokeshire's bus services. The two areas that scored lowest were the frequency of bus services and the provision of information about transport services and timetables.

The most common requests were for: bus services on Sundays and evenings, more frequent buses, and more bus shelters. The Council has met with operators to identify which suggestions were feasible. 14 routes will be changed, with new timetables starting from the 1st April.

Welsh Government (WG) Bus Quality Standards are being implemented on all bus services in Wales from 1st April: Including all drivers to wear a uniform and information about the operator's complaints procedure to be clearly displayed on the vehicle.

New Bwcabus area in Pembrokeshire. Timetables for the new services (642, 643, 644 and 645) can be downloaded from the operator's website at www.richardsbros.co.uk/local-bus-services/.

WG consultation: Bus Services Policy Discussion – Improving local bus services in Wales. The purpose of the consultation is to begin a discussion with bus operators, local authorities in Wales and passengers about how local bus services can be organised in the longer term. The document is available on the internet at <http://gov.wales/consultations/?lang=en>. Responses are due by 31st May 2017.

Respond by: (1) Completing the online form at Annex A or (2) Emailing or posting your response to: PolisiTrafnidiaethGyhoeddus.PublicTransportPolicy@wales.gsi.gov.uk or to Public Transport Policy Team, Transport – Policy, Planning & Partnerships, Welsh Government, Cathays Park, Cardiff CF10 3NQ.

Trains

Arriva Trains Wales Accessibility Initiative. The *County Echo* reported on 31st March that Arriva is looking to work with disabled people in the Fishguard/north Pembrokeshire area - to increase awareness of rail assistance and how to book it, facilities at stations and on trains, and the benefits of a Disabled Persons' Railcard. For more information, and to arrange an awareness visit, co-ordinators of local support groups should contact Arriva's community relations team by email at community@arrivatw.co.uk.

National Assembly Economy, Infrastructure & Skills Committee's Rail Franchise & the Metro Inquiry. The consultation has been completed, and the 50 consultation responses can be downloaded by visiting <http://senedd.assembly.wales/mgConsultationDisplay.aspx?id=250&RPID=1508587432&cp=yes>.

So far the Committee has held evidence sessions with representatives from (1) the Cardiff Capital Region, Academics, Rail user organisations and the Rail Delivery Group on 23rd March and (2) the Porterbrook Leasing Company, the National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers, the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen, and Transport for Wales on 29th March. Transcripts are available at <http://senedd.assembly.wales/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IIid=15158>.

Some Points of Interest

Transport Focus

- **Sharon Hedges:** New rolling stock, service changes and culture change all take a long time to deliver...be fairly cautious about the number of commitments that can ever be delivered on day one...engage with passengers through processes of consultation, be clear about what feedback has been given and the decisions that have been made on the basis of that, and be clear where things can't be delivered, why.
- **Mike Hewitson:** Get the operators having some requirement to look at the user voice...whereby the complaints that come through are not just answered, but are fed back into the decision-making process...whereby the voice feeds back and leads to improvements.
- **David Beer:** The rail network only has a certain reach and, beyond that, you've got to bring people to the rail network as a core spine, and I think you've got to talk to the bus network, make sure that that integration is happening, make sure there's that willingness and ability for the bus service

providers to build that into their timetables and services. And that's the commercial network, as well as the TrawsCymru services.

Railfuture

- Rowland Pittard: [re the new Great Western franchise] I think that's tremendously important to ensure that we've got integrated transport and a transport system that's going to serve the south Wales area...[re types of tickets] There should be a good range of rover area tickets to attract tourism to Wales, and possibly leisure travel...rover tickets, tickets for off-peak travel and tickets for commuters who only go to work three days a week are things that are important ingredients to put into the mix.

Porterbrook Leasing Company

- Olivier Andre: [re diesel trains] There has been no manufacturer really building diesel trains in the last five or six years...we've been trying very hard with both Arriva Trains Wales and Transport for Wales to find a solution...converting an electric train to something called 'bi-mode'...diesel and electric...Northern decided to sign up for it, so we've committed to that, and have extra rolling stock to provide a solution for Arriva Trains Wales, and we should be able to do that within the franchise.
- Stephen McGurk: [re the disability requirements by 1 January 2020] There needs to be action now...If you start doing any work when the franchise starts, it is too late...Part of the discussion we are having with Arriva Trains Wales is to enable that PRM conversion...for the 150s specifically...to take place in time...All the trains that we have, and will offer, will be compliant by December 2019... the work that will be carried out to the 150 stock...will span beyond the end of the current franchise...we would expect that to carry on into the next franchise and for several years beyond the start of it.
- Olivier Andre: [re the aging of rolling stock during the course of the franchise] What we could do to our trains to keep them running for 15 years...we could offer a seven-year refresh on the trains, or refurbishment, that we can plan from today, to have it done so that the trains are kept in good condition...It's got to be planned at the outset...for the bidders to see, and for Transport for Wales to assess the quality of the bids, because there will be a cost going with it.

Transport for Wales

- James Price (Chair): [re TfW's structure and governance] We have set up Transport for Wales...to mimic Transport for London, with the powers that the Welsh Government has, and Transport for Wales as a subsidiary company...advising the Welsh Government...We're ultimately accountable to Welsh Ministers and hence to committees such as yourself...and the Public Accounts Committee.
- Geoff Ogden (Managing Director): We've got 10 projects that make up the programme...the procurement itself through to engineering matters. Each has a project executive...and a project manager...I'm supported by a programme management office as well. We meet with the Welsh Government formally...at the moment, because we are in the middle of the competitive dialogue, we are meeting weekly.
- James Price: It will be the Welsh Government who signs the contract with the bidder and it will be a Welsh Government contract, not a Transport for Wales contract.
- Geoff Ogden: back in July of last year...we actually put out a prequalification document. We had the responses back in September...evaluated those, and went into the invitation to participate in dialogue...we set out the requirements...for...their outlined solutions...They came back in November. We assessed them...took everybody forward...The real...face-to-face dialogue, started on 30 January, and that's what we're going through now.

TfW consultation: Design of Wales and Borders Rail Service including Metro. Responses due by 23rd May. The document and information about responding is available at <https://consultations/transport-wales-design-wales-and-borders-rail-service-including-metro>. As part of the consultation process a series of workshops are being held throughout Wales to gather views on the new services. The will be reported on in the April News Briefing.

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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