



North Pembrokehire Transport Forum Fforwm Trafnidiaeth Gogledd Penfro

News Briefing – July 2016

National Assembly Plenary, 12th July 2016

Statement by Ken Skates AM, Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Infrastructure: An Update on the Wales & Borders Franchise & Metro Programmes – Key Points

Introduction. Once agreement with the UK Government to transfer powers to award the next Wales and Borders franchise to Welsh Ministers has been reached and the necessary parliamentary processes enacted, the transfer of functions will be concluded. The next franchise is planned to commence in October 2018. The Cabinet Secretary is hoping to reach a satisfactory agreement with the UK Secretary of State for Transport in the near future with regard to which of the current franchise cross-border services should be operated under the next franchise.

Consultations. The first consultation focused on establishing the quality standards that the public wish to see for the next franchise. Issues that were raised in the 190 responses that were received from a wide range of stakeholders:

- On trains: greater levels of comfort, improved provision for disabled passengers, consistent availability of catering services, reliable ventilation and air conditioning, and adequate space to store luggage and bicycles.
- At stations: improvements to the availability of sheltered seating facilities, enhanced ticket purchasing facilities, better CCTV, expanded secure bicycle storage, improved cleanliness, and developments in catering and retailing outlets.

Visit <http://gov.wales/consultations/transport/160121-rail-franchise/?status=closed&lang=en> to download the Summary of Consultation Responses. The procurement of the next franchise will start shortly and will be guided by what the public has said. A further consultation will be held following the award to the operator and development partner.

Transport for Wales. The company has been established as a not-for-dividend wholly owned subsidiary company of the Welsh Government (WG) to:

- Advise on and support delivery of the south Wales Metro phase 1, and
- Procure and deliver the next Wales and Borders Rail Franchise and the south Wales Metro phase 2.

The development and procurement of the Metro phase 2 is being linked with the procurement of the Wales and Borders franchise. Transport for Wales has been engaging with the market to explore possible options for delivering the next Wales and Borders Franchise and other developments.

The discussions have been guided against a set of high-level outcomes which, among many, include:

- Reduced overall journey times by providing faster and more frequent services and better interchanges between modes, and
- An increase in people using public transport through the provision of new and improved passenger services and having the capacity to meet demand during peak periods and special events.

Those who are part of Transport for Wales offer the expert technical advice to ensure that these high-level outcomes can be achieved.

The Cabinet Secretary's Concluding Remarks. 'I think in terms of Beeching, the axe of Beeching was wielded wide and far, but it is my hope that we could see, as part of the long-term delivery of improved services and new services, the reintroduction of rail services that were affected by Beeching's plans. We'll build into the franchise contract several demands, including, as I have outlined, the need for improved frequency of services, improved capacity, utilisation of new technologies, better stations and facilities and cleaner, higher quality rolling stock'.

To view the Plenary transcript visit: www.assembly.wales/en/bus-home/Pages/cofnod.aspx.

National Assembly Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee

Meetings. The Committee held brief meetings on the 7th and 13th of July. Ken Skates AM (Cabinet Secretary, Economy & Infrastructure), James Price (WG Deputy Permanent Secretary – Economy, Skills & Natural Resources), Tracey Burke (WG Director, Strategy) and Simon Jones (WG Director, Transport) held discussions with the Committee at the second meeting. To view the transcripts *visit*: www.senedd.assembly.wales/mqCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=446.

Consultation. The Committee has launched a consultation asking stakeholders to give their views on priority areas for the Committee's work in the Fifth Assembly, including any work done by previous Assembly committees that the Committee should review or follow up. For details *visit*: <http://senedd.assembly.wales/mqConsultationDisplay.aspx?id=217&RPID=1007607451&cp=yes>. All suggestions should reach the Committee by 1st September 2016.

South West Wales Regional Transport Forum

The June News Briefing noted that the Forum considered reports on the Active Travel Act and the Voluntary Bus Quality Standard at its 24th June meeting in Port Talbot. A detailed report about the Welsh Government (WG) 2016-2017 Funding Grant Award was also presented.

WG grants are awarded to local authorities (LAs) through four different funds. Each LA bids for money to support its projects. All schemes must be completed and funding spent within the 2016-2017 financial year.

1 Local Transport Fund. £17.6 million has been allocated throughout Wales. Proposed projects, to be assessed by WG must:

- Support government economic priorities for jobs and growth, for example by providing access to City Regions, Enterprise Zones, Local Growth Zones and regeneration areas.
- Provide safe and affordable access to employment sites.
- Provide safe and easy to use transport to key facilities and services.
- Connect communities.
- Encourage healthier and sustainable travel.
- Support delivery of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013.
- Consider the safeguarding of vulnerable groups.

2 Safe Routes in Communities. This grant aims to improve how easy it is for people to travel around their communities. £5.02 million has been allocated to schemes for walking and cycling routes that include: Crossings, Traffic calming measures, Cycle paths, Footpaths, and Secure cycle facilities (including stands and CCTV), and Lockers and changing facilities.

3 & 4 Road Safety Capital and Road Safety Revenue. The aims are to improve road safety and to reduce the number of casualties on Welsh roads. Schemes are prioritised that aim to reduce the numbers of motorcyclists, young people and vulnerable road users being killed or seriously injured. Schemes include:

- Engineering projects targeted at sites, routes or areas where people have been killed or seriously injured.
- Education and training schemes that support casualty reduction amongst high risk and vulnerable groups, such as: Pass Plus Cymru, Motorcyclist safety initiatives, Child pedestrian training, and Cycle training.

Nearly £3.94million was allocated to Road Safety Capital. £1,936,741 was allocated to Road Safety Revenue for road safety training programmes such as Kerbcraft, PassPlus Cymru, National Standard Cycle Training and motorcyclist training.

During the subsequent discussions issues surrounding European funding were raised in view of the referendum vote to leave the EU.

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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