

Pembrokeshire Local Authority Bus Strategy – Information Strategy Addendum

1. Background

- 1.1 This addendum to the Pembrokeshire Local Authority Bus Strategy (LABS) was prepared following a belated consultation with the Traffic Commissioner for Wales. Halcrow Consulting was appointed by SWWITCH to help in the development of the both the Regional Public Transport Strategy (RPTS) for South West Wales and the Local Authority Bus Strategies for the four SWWITCH constituent authorities – Carmarthenshire, the City and County of Swansea, Neath Port Talbot and Pembrokeshire Councils. The Traffic Commissioner is a statutory consultee for the development of the four LABS. Each LABS forms an important adjunct to the SWWITCH RPTS. The Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) advised that publication of both the RPTS and the four LABS should be postponed until the Traffic Commissioner had been consulted and a response to the issues raised had been considered.

2. Consultation with the Traffic Commissioner

- 2.1 For SWWITCH the Traffic Commissioner's comments related to two key issues:

- The inconsistencies across the region in the way that information was generated and made available to potential and existing users, and the balance of responsibilities associated with that provision between operators and local authorities.
- The lack of a clear plan of focused action over a two-year period to address the deficiencies of the current information provision.

- 2.2 WAG has subsequently suggested that the Information Strategies should also include a proposal to ensure that operators meet the costs due to PTI Cymru as a result of information given out about their services. This would entail authorities paying PTI Cymru and then recovering the debt from operators as provided for in Section 140 of the Transport Act 2000.

3. Response to Comments

- 3.1 SWWITCH acknowledges that there is inconsistency across the region in the way that public transport information is developed and made available. This is due in large part to the different nature of the bus service network across the region. In Swansea and Neath Port Talbot the vast majority (>90%) of services are provided commercially by the operators and in Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire the opposite is true and most services are procured and funded by the local authorities.

- 3.2 As a result the bus service network in Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire is more stable and the investment in information provision by the local authorities is better value, as it remains valid for longer periods. Additionally there is more incentive for local authorities to invest in information provision to encourage passenger growth and a potential reduction in contract prices. Furthermore the larger number of smaller rural operators do not always have the necessary resources to develop and distribute information effectively.

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3.3 SWWITCH and its constituent authorities also acknowledge that neither the RPTS nor the LABS address in detail how and over what period information needs will be met. The SWWITCH approach is to establish strategic principles on information provision, which can then be applied locally by each local authority. Funding for this activity is dependent on the success of subsequent Transport Grant bids to WAG, supplemented by expenditure from local authority budgets and WAG Local Services Grants.

4. Proposals

4.1 SWWITCH considers that improved public transport information and the introduction of branding and targeted marketing are of primary importance in achieving its vision for public transport. This objective is set out in its RPTS and was also seen as the number one priority by consultees who helped to develop and strengthen the strategy.

4.2 Consequently in this regard the priority and focus of the RPTS and current Transport Grant bids is on developing urban and rural bus corridors that form part of defined Strategic Regional and Local Bus networks and interchanges as set out in the RPTS and individual LABS documents. Their development comprises a package of proposals to improve bus priority (in urban areas), passenger waiting, boarding, roadside information and branding facilities (in all areas) with the objective of promoting a growth in public transport use.

4.3 The RPTS therefore establishes the key areas where SWWITCH will take action to deliver improved information as follows:

- At bus stops
- At medium and large interchanges
- Through the development of branding
- By producing a bus/rail service map for the region
- Through the development of a SWWITCH website
- Through the development of a travel awareness campaign
- By working with operators to reduce and harmonise service changes
- By developing one stop call centres in Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire to promote integration between modes and with unconventional transport.
- The establishment of Public Access Terminals in appropriate locations to provide instant access to information.
- The development and extension of real time passenger information

4.4 SWWITCH intends to develop a programme for ensuring that progress is made in delivering these improvements. However it is inevitable that progress will be dictated by the availability of funding, internally within each local authority; from working in partnership with operators; and, through grants received.

4.5 Some improvements are already underway through the development of ongoing transport grant bids on urban bus corridors and rural accessibility, where every opportunity to improve information provision is taken as part of the wider project.

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- 4.6 The paragraphs below set out Pembrokeshire’s proposals to improve information provision as part of a number of public transport schemes. This year there is a major project to improve bus service information facilities and interchange at Haverfordwest Bus Station, using existing Transport Grant funds.
- 4.7 Pembrokeshire County Council and SWWITCH consider this important not only as part of encouraging improved confidence in public transport and thus promoting modal shift, but also as a mechanism of raising the profile of public transport and SWWITCH with the travelling public.
- 4.8 Transport Grant Bids submitted to WAG this Summer for 2004/05 indicate how seriously Pembrokeshire County Council intends to address these information needs. The list of Pembrokeshire bids set out below relates directly to delivering the County Council’s and SWWITCH’s Information Strategy over the next 3 years and should be read in conjunction with the projects being promoted by the other three SWWITCH member authorities. Details of all these bids are set out in the Addendum to the Regional Public Transport Strategy. The Pembrokeshire bids are:
- P-14-2004 – will involve improving and updating the quality and range of bus stop information on the Haverfordwest, Pembroke and Tenby corridor.
 - P-15-2004 – As for above this project seeks to improve and enhance bus stop information on the Haverfordwest, Narberth to Tenby corridor.
 - P-16-2004 – As for above for the Haverfordwest, St. David’s and Fishguard corridor.
 - P-17-2004 – As for above for the Fishguard and Cardigan corridor
 - P-18-2004 – As for above for the Pembroke to Milford Haven corridor.
 - P-26-2004 – This project will create a focal point in Fishguard that will provide information on the range of public transport opportunities and linkages with walking/cycling and community transport.
 - P-27-2004 – As for above but in Pembroke.
 - P-28-2004 – As for above but in Tenby
 - P-29-2004 – seeks to provide up to date and easy to use information for passengers at Milford Haven Station and bus focal point.
- 4.9 The success of these bids and those in future years will determine the speed with which the County Council and SWWITCH can develop a coherent and aggressive information programme.
- 4.10 In addition to grant funding, internal SWWITCH resources will be used to pursue the SWWITCH website and bus/rail map proposals.
5. Timetable for Information Strategy
- 5.1 The attached sheet sets out Pembrokeshire County Council’s proposals for the timely delivery of information strategy elements. This is submitted with the clear caveat that much will rely on external funding, the willingness of operators to co-operate and the need to be adaptable to changes in legislation and the public transport “market”.

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- 5.2 The Council and SWWITCH will seek to deliver significant improvements in the availability and quality of information provided to existing and potential customers over the next three years. They will continue to work in partnership with providers/users and WAG to ensure that best value for all concerned is an integral part of that delivery.
6. Pursuit of Operators for Debt Recovery
- 6.1 SWWITCH has also agreed in principle to the WAG suggestion that the long term future of PTI Cymru is aided by local authorities/consortia acting to pursue operators who do not pay for the services provided by PTI Cymru and from which these operators benefit.
- 6.2 In the future, when Pembrokeshire County Council and the other SWWITCH authorities next seek tenders and award new contracts for their supported bus services, the hope is that debt recovery will be restricted to the operators of commercial bus services. This will be achieved by inserting an appropriate clause in the local authority Terms and Conditions of Contract for the Councils' supported bus services to require those contractors to make appropriate payments to PTI Cymru.

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Delivering the Information Strategy in Pembrokeshire

Information Strategy Element	Ongoing	04/05	05/06	Future years
Bus stop information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Haverfordwest to Milford Haven and Fishguard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Haverfordwest – Pembroke Dock – Tenby Haverfordwest – Narberth – Tenby Haverfordwest – St David’s – Fishguard Fishguard – Cardigan Pembroke – Milford Haven 	Continue to expand into further corridors in rural areas. Work with local communities, operators, tourism and schools to provide a wider range of information at bus stops close to local facilities.	Continual process of improvement and development
Interchanges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bus focal points in Pembroke Dock & Milford Haven; Improvements to Haverfordwest Bus Station; Improvements at all Pembrokeshire Railway stations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focal points in Fishguard, Pembroke and Tenby. 	Continue to improve information to facilitate interchange and look more closely at linkages with unconventional transport, and to provide information for pedestrian and cyclists wishing to connect with public transport.	Continual process of improvement and development
Branding of information	None	Carry out a feasibility study into SWWITCH Branding	Implement SWWITCH Branding at bus stops on timetables/maps	Carry out surveys to assess impact and adapt strategy accordingly
Bus /rail maps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publication of Bus Timetables and Bus Services Map for Pembrokeshire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to publish Bus timetables and a Bus Service Map for Pembrokeshire Develop and produce a bus /rail map for SWWITCH 	Examine potential to add to maps more information/linkages on sustainable travel.	Continue to update and develop and Market the maps.
Website development	None	Develop a website for SWWITCH	Continue to develop	Continue to develop
Travel awareness campaign	In early stages through work of Travel Plan Co-ordinator and SWWITCH attendance at “events”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue travel planning work 		

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Information Strategy Element	Ongoing	04/05	05/06	Future years
Travel awareness (continued)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a programme of personalised travel planning events • Hold SWWITCH conference to promote information sharing 	Continue to develop and expand the role of SWWITCH in raising awareness on public transport and all sustainable transport forms. Monitor awareness amongst users and non users	Continue to develop
Harmonising service changes	Discussions with Operators	Discussions with Operators	Discussions with Operators	Discussions with Operators
One stop call centre development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access project in Pembrokeshire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand in rural areas to link with improved demand responsive services 	Examine practical application of SWWITCH wide scheme.	
Public Access Terminals	None	None	Look to expand across SWWITCH in appropriate locations	Continue to develop

Date: 27 January 2004