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 Dirprwy Brif Weinidog /Deputy First Minister



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
 Welsh Assembly Government

Eich cyf/Your ref
 Ein cyf/Our ref: MB/DFM/0262/10

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During the National Transport Plan debate in Plenary on 27 April, I promised to write to you about some of the issues you raised.

Over the past three years we have migrated the concessionary fares scheme to an ITSO standard smartcard scheme. This included a back office system and smart card management system capable of supporting a scheme similar to the "oyster" card in London. This year we are developing two pilot schemes, to trial e-purse functionality and expansion to rail, before a phased rollout of the multi-operator integrated ticketing smart card scheme across Wales.

As public transport operators improve and upgrade their vehicles we are increasingly seeing better facilities for those with sensory impairment, such as audio-visual announcements. However, I recognise that there is still more to do. We are working with the Department for Transport to investigate the costs and benefits of audio-visual systems on buses. We expect the work to be completed this year and will subsequently issue guidance. Some of our TrawsCambria longer-distance bus services offer audio-visual announcements, which we will extend as part of the wider work to develop the TrawsCambria network.

Whilst there is no specific commitment by the Department for Transport to electrify the Valley Lines, we are making a strong case for it to be one of Network Rail's key priorities in Control Period 5 (2014-19), so that Wales can continue to benefit from the programme of electrification.

Ieuan Wyn Jones
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