



All Local Authority Leaders

22 October 2020

Dear Leader,

We would like to update Local Authorities on the arrangements for public transport during the 'firebreak' lockdown that the First Minister recently announced.

From 18:00 on Friday, 23 October until 00:00 Monday, 9 November we are asking people to stay at home. For the lockdown period we expect service levels will be similar to those in August.

We will make every effort to ensure that buses and trains continue to operate in peak hours to enable key workers to get to work and pupils to get to school (and throughout the day in for services which run into England, where the Covid restrictions are different), but outside of the main commuting times we have asked Transport for Wales and bus operators where possible to reduce services for the lockdown period. This is not straightforward due to varying the registrations of bus routes with the Traffic Commissioners office, rostering staff, and interlinking services. Each operator and region will need to consider their own circumstances, such as those exceptional cases where the August service level does not meet certain essential shopping and medical needs.

Late cancellations and changes to timetabled services are likely, often with limited notice; therefore, those who must use public transport should check directly with operators before travelling. Neither local authorities nor Traveline Cymru are likely to be able to offer the latest timetable information to the public.

Our joint letter at the start of the last national lockdown on the 20 March, sent to all local authority chief executives recommended that local authorities continue to pay a minimum of 75% of the contract value for Home to School and other contracted local passenger services where schools or further education establishments are closed due to Coronavirus. It is recommended that this should continue as we enter the next phase with actual amounts to continue reflecting local circumstances and requirements – which we recognise will be difficult because of the different mix of pupils in schools this time around.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

We are also recommending that local authorities pay the ramp up funding for scheduled services under the Bus Emergency Scheme at 100% rather than 80% for November to operators to help with their continued cash-flow while revenues from ticket sales will be significantly reduced during this period. These payments will be reconciled in future months through the current process.

The Traffic Commissioner for Wales already recognises the challenges faced by operators in meeting the statutory bus registration requirements during the pandemic. This firebreak lockdown will obviously have an immediate impact on bus service provision for the limited two week period. The Traffic Commissioner has made it clear that she will continue to adopt a proportionate and flexible approach in response to the developing situation and in the exercise of her regulatory functions. At the very least, the Traffic Commissioner expects operators to ensure that service information is easily available to the people who rely upon those services.

Again, we would like to put on record our gratitude to officials and operators who have worked so hard to plan for and deliver these vital services during these unprecedented times

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lee Waters', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

**Lee Waters AS/MS**

Dirprwy Weinidog yr Economi a Thrafnidiaeth  
Deputy Minister for Economy and Transport

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Morgan', written in a cursive style.

**Councillor Andrew Morgan**

**WLGA Leader and Spokesperson for Transport, Environment and Sustainability**