

**TB12****Subject:** FW: Draft Transport (Wales) Bill**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up**Flag Status:** Flagged

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**From:** WoakesM@aol.com [mailto:WoakesM@aol.com]**Sent:** 15 June 2004 09:16**To:** welshcom@parliament.uk; economic.comm@wales.gsi.gov.uk**Subject:** Draft Transport (Wales) Bill

The North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum would like to make the following comments on the draft Bill:

1. The Forum is in broad support of the transport related powers that the Bill proposes to provide the National Assembly for Wales.
2. The Forum sees a particular need for the transfer of powers of direction over Welsh rail services to the Assembly. A number of rail surveys conducted by the Forum over the past 4 years provide ample evidence of the need for significant improvement to rail services to West Wales and in particular to Fishguard and Pembrokeshire. We believe that the Assembly has a much greater understanding of this situation than those involved in the rail industry in London and would therefore be in a better position to target resources and support the development of the necessary long term programmes for rail enhancements to our area.
3. The Forum therefore offers full support for the proposal that the Assembly be given powers of directions, guidance and advice to the Strategic Rail Authority, as well as a power to enter into binding agreements where it has given financial assistance in respect of particular services or facilities. The Forum is a strong supporter of the Community Rail Development strategy that is being directed by the Strategic Rail Authority and endorses the recent commitment to introduce a Community Rail Partnership for West Wales, focused on improving services to Pembrokeshire. Although this is outside of the scope of this consideration of the draft Bill, in view of the potentially negative effect on proposed enhancement to our rail services, we wish to express our deep concern over recent reports that the Strategic Rail Authority is to be abolished as part of the rail revue that is being carried out by the Secretary of State for Transport.
4. The Forum endorses the proposal that the National Assembly would become responsible for appointing the Chair of the Rail Passengers Committee for Wales. The Forum has attended nearly all of the Committee's quarterly meetings over the past 4 years and has unreserved praise for the professionalism and in-depth work carried out by the Committee, as well as by its individual members who represent all parts of Wales. The Committee's quarterly meetings have provided us with a valued opportunity to present our views to representatives of the Strategic Rail Authority and senior officers of transport operating companies; an opportunity that would not otherwise have been available. Again, although this is outside of the scope of consideration of the draft Bill, we wish to express our dismay at recent reports that regional passenger committees are also to be abolished as part of the rail review.

Submitted by:

Hatti Woakes

Cllr Hatti Woakes

Secretary

North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum

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The North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum is an independent body that (1) works for the provision of an effective integrated transport system in North Pembrokeshire, (2) promotes the benefits of public transport, and (3) works towards greater use of public transport systems. The Forum works closely with elected representatives, government at all levels, transport operators and groups with a transport interest. Forum members include individuals, families and corporate bodies (town and community councils, transport operators, business and tourism groups and other civic/service groups). The work of the Forum is financed by membership subscriptions and a grant from the Welsh Assembly Government's Sustainable Development Fund, administered through the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority.