

# £119m EU funding secured to progress South Wales Metro

Work is underway to transform the current Core Valley Lines rail network as part of the South Wales Metro Phase 2 programme, which will provide a faster and more frequent service for the heads of the valleys stations and a direct connection to Cardiff Bay.

The investment will go towards improving infrastructure to accommodate the doubling of the number of trains to the heads of the valleys stations from two per hour to four. It will also be used to modernise stations to further improve rail users' journeys.

The First Minister said:

“The South Wales Metro is an important part of our ambition as a government to improve public transport and better connect our Valleys communities and people to employment opportunities.

“Today's confirmation of £119million EU funding means we can proceed with investment in infrastructure work on the valleys lines to make faster and more efficient journeys a reality for the thousands of rail users who use these routes daily.”

Today's funding announcement includes:

- £21.1million for the Merthyr line for track doubling between Merthyr Tydfil and Pentrebach, and between Merthyr Vale and Quakers Yard. New platforms will be constructed to accommodate the track doubling, with an improved interchange at Merthyr Tydfil station, new ramped access at Pentrebach and a new platform and footbridge at Quakers Yard.
- £27.4million for the Treherbert line to allow sufficient infrastructure works along the full length of the line, including track doubling from north of Ynyswen to the south of Treorchy and north of Llwynypia to south of Dinas. The scheme also includes new platforms.
- £23.7million for the Aberdare line for track doubling, new platform construction and other infrastructure work to allow the service to be increased to four trains per hour along the full length of the line from Abercynon to Aberdare. Track doubling will take place between Aberdare and Cwmbach, Fernhill and Penrhiwceiber, and north of Abercynon. The scheme includes a new platform, new step-free access and new waiting rooms at Aberdare, and an enhanced interchange at Abercynon.
- £19.5million for the Rhymney line to undertake track doubling south of Rhymney, north of Tir Phil and around Bargoed. The funding will also be used for other infrastructure work to allow the service to be increased to four trains per hour and provide new platforms, including step-free access and a new waiting room at Rhymney.

- £27.3million will also be allocated to the Taff's Well Depot scheme for land purchase, road build and rail access, providing serviced land for a new high quality depot facility which will improve Metro service reliability and enable the maintenance of the modern vehicles.

Welcoming today's announcement, Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure, Ken Skates, said:

"I'm pleased we are able to confirm this significant amount of EU funding for the South Wales Metro. This, along with the start of the new Wales and Borders rail contract later this month, marks considerable progress towards our plans for a modern, efficient and forward looking rail service."

Ken Skates, who is also a member of the Valleys Taskforce, which was established to improve connectivity and encourage economic growth in the South Wales Valleys, also said,

"We've listened to passengers concerns and put their needs at the centre of our plans around the new rail contract and South Wales Metro. Today's funding will be used to provide faster services, with modern facilities, and provide better connection throughout the Valleys."

The Welsh Government is also applying for a further £40million plus in EU funding to support Metro infrastructure enhancements, which it hopes will be secured by the end of 2018.

Work on South Wales Metro Phase 2 is expected to be completed by 2023.