

Talks to further support bus industry in Wales

Welsh Government, local authorities, bus service providers and users will meet in Swansea today to discuss how to further develop an improved, more sustainable bus industry for Wales.

At Wales' second Bus Summit, Transport Secretary Ken Skates will also announce £3.5m for local authorities to improve audio-visual equipment on board buses and real-time technology at bus stops.

The summit, to be held in the Liberty Stadium, will build on the successes of last year's. Bringing all interested parties together, it will revisit the purpose of the first bus summit, provide an overview of the activities that have now taken place in support of the industry and provide a clear direction for the bus industry in Wales.

Speaking ahead of the summit, the Economy and Infrastructure Secretary Ken Skates said:

"I called the first summit last year because 2016 saw mixed fortunes for the bus industry in Wales. A five point plan in 2017 I introduced sought to stabilise and support the industry in the short term.

"This summit will be looking at longer term solutions we need to deliver a quality service in which our passengers can have confidence.

"This is an opportunity for us to share ideas and look to the future of the industry, define what we want our bus services to deliver and understand how we can better work together in order to deliver the quality, sustainable services communities across Wales expect and deserve.

"The money I am announcing today will help provide tangible results for passengers to enjoy. It will speed up the implementation of on-bus audio-visual equipment, including technology to bring on-board 'next stop' announcements. It will also make possible improvements to related infrastructure, such as stops, shelters, signs and flags, timetable displays and accessible kerbs.

"The funding demonstrates Welsh Government's continuing strong commitment to the bus network throughout Wales. It is a reflection of the support we give to our buses and to delivering an effective network for communities as part of an integrated, multi-modal system of public transport right across Wales.

"Local scheduled bus services are, and will continue to be, the

foundation of our public transport system, allowing people across Wales to get to work, hospital appointments, education and leisure activities.

“They are vital to Welsh life and actually account for around 100m passenger journeys each year, which is why this summit is so important for the healthy future of our bus industry.”