

## E-purse trials are set to go Welsh national

**WALES has started technology trials on the e-purse it hopes to roll out as a Welsh national smartcard.**

The trials are taking place using Newport Transport buses in the south and Arriva, Padarn and Express Motors buses in the north-west in Bangor.

The next phase will be to have 300 Welsh Government, Newport Council and bus operator staff trialling the cards over three months. If this is successful a public rollout will follow with expansion to Cardiff Bus and other Welsh operators later in 2012.

### National

The ultimate aim is for customers to buy and top up cards online, as well as at customer service centres or on bus, with an auto top-up available on bus if a card goes below £5. sQuid will provide the e-money services.

Any Welsh national smartcard scheme will also fit in with the ITSO systems on Newport Transport's Passport and Cardiff Bus's iff cards.

At the same time, the Government will be trialling a new hotlisting scheme with an initial launch in Cardiff and Newport and then national expansion.

The Welsh Government has already paid for 2,500 ticket



• E-purse trials: Newport Transport is taking part. Their MD Scott Pearson (inset)

machines to be installed on the buses of nearly 100 operators by summer 2010, using a range of Almex, Parkeon and Vix machines. It also issued some 600,000 ITSO concessionary smartcards in 2009. ACT provide their HOPS services. MVA is providing project coordination, business process and technical consultancy support to the Welsh Government and all its stakeholders

Because Wales is so far ahead of the game in ITSO smart ticketing terms, the bus operators involved work with a variety of systems, some of which are wifi-enabled and others involve overnight, in-depot system synchronisation, so they face ticket machine upgrade/replacement challenges in the near future.

ACT is also in the process of

upgrading the HOPS to version 2.1.4 of the ITSO Specification. This will take place early this year and will enable new Card Management Scheme (CMS) functionality to be rolled out that will assist the operation of the sQuid scheme.

The Government is already in talks with Arriva Trains Wales and SWSAL to expand commercial smartcard operations between operators within Wales and across regions, particularly in conjunction with Gloucestershire, Bristol and South Gloucestershire where another major ITSO scheme is being developed.

Both schemes have common operators and regular cross-border travel. The aim is to use the full potential of ITSO interoperability to offer

attractive and accessible products that help increase the use of public transport as an alternative to the car both in Wales and in partnership with neighbouring regions.

Wales is also thinking of eventually expanding use to a national entitlement card, like Scotland, where local authorities will be able to load services such as libraries and leisure onto the ITSO smartcards. 2014 is the target date for having all its smartcard ducks in a row.

Viv Collins, Welsh Government Project Manager, said: "Wales is already reaping the benefits of smart ticketing in that we can help reduce fraud and improve the accuracy of operator payments as well as enabling operators to create new, innovative

• Continued on page 3

### Inside

- Transport Ticketing page 3
- Merseytravel page 6
- West Coast rail page 8
- Centro page 10

• **From front page**

products. We are therefore happy to push ahead with the programme and are working closely with transport partners and neighbours to achieve economies of scale and practicalities that benefit our residents in their everyday lives.”

**Newport Transport**

**THE launch of the Unigo card in partnership with Newport University has been a great success, says Newport Transport. In total more than 1,200 cards have been sold to students so far, with sales still strong four months on after the card's launch.**

This in turn has helped to support the continued growth of the company's bus network in terms of patronage. Students are able to top up their cards at the University's SU (Student Union) Shop and many are utilising this quick and easy system to do so.

Scott Pearson, Managing Director of Newport Transport, said: "We have been delighted with the success of the Unigo card. This is the first ITSO-compliant university bus smartcard in Wales and the uptake from students using the card has been extremely encouraging.

"We are now working in partnership with the University ready for the new intake of students which will be joining the campus in September."

**Cardiff Bus**

**SINCE launching its ITSO-compliant iff card in October 2010, Cardiff Bus has seen more than 7,000 customers change over to the free card which can be topped up on bus or at its Customer Service Centre. People can also apply for their iff card online.**

Pleased with its success, Cardiff Bus took the brave step that, from 29 January, all weekly tickets and the Young Persons Freedom Card should now be on smartcards. This currently equates to nearly 3,000 users.

Cardiff Bus had already converted to smartcard annual passes paid for by direct debit in April 2010. So far more than 1,500 people have taken up this offering.

Peter Heath, Cardiff Bus Commercial Director, said: "Smart ticketing just offers us and our customers so much more in the way of improved boarding times, card safety, and customer knowledge.

"We felt the iff card had been so successful that it was time to move our regular ticketing onto a 21st century basis, away from wasteful paper ticketing. It is early days yet but so far our customers seem happy with the change over."

**Welcome from the CEO**

**THIS month's newsletter is packed with news and it is great to see so many people starting to exploit the commercial avenues open to them through ITSO.**

As I mentioned both at our consultation workshops last October and at the Transport Ticketing event in January, we need to make sure that, as a community, we identify, agree and support the development of guidelines and 'how to' kits and instructions to enable us to do even more with ITSO, but more cheaply.

We are in the middle of our business review process which will ultimately form the Business Plan for the next year and beyond.

This will include some changes from the original strategy we had outlined in the past 24 months to take into account the reduced funding from the Department for Transport and the tighter timescales for ITSO to become self-sufficient.

Those who attended the workshops last October will recall that a wealth of great ideas was presented concerning the future of the ITSO Specification and the work of the ITSO team.

However they must also recognise that many of these require funding. We are



now working to ensure the balance is right between the pace of improvement and the ultimate cost to you, our members.

We will continue to update you regularly on progress over the coming months, but please do not hesitate to get in touch with us if there are any issues you wish to raise.

ITSO members can also contact their [sector directors](#) who serve on the ITSO Board and meet regularly.

**Regards, Michael Leach  
CEO ITSO Limited**

**From the Chair**

**AS THE current financial year enters the home straight, one of the objectives we signed up to in ITSO Ltd's 2011-12 Business Plan for the year is coming to fruition.**

**A new finance system will be in place by the start of April 2012, and will give vastly increased reliability and functionality not only to the company's finance team but also to the business managers in each profit or cost centre.**

**This, in turn, will make it easier for us to provide members - our customers - with the right information at the right time and, at the strategic level, the Board will be able to monitor and guide the company's business, and the executive team will be able to make properly informed proposals on key issues such as pricing for core services, membership fees, and opportunities to improve services and revenues.**



**We'll keep you informed of progress, though once the system is in place, the benefits should be visible on a day-to-day basis for you, as our service to you improves.**

**Regards, Mike Fuhr  
Chair, ITSO Board**

## ITSO 'central' says Minister at Transport event

### ONCE again ITSO featured strongly at this year's Transport Ticketing event.

Transport Minister Norman Baker reiterated in his opening speech that the ITSO Specification 'is central to the Government's [smart ticketing] strategy' to which, in turn, the Government is fully committed.

He pointed out that this strategy has led to six major developments:

- 1. Promoting flexible rail commuter ticketing.** The Government has invested an extra £45 million to smart-enable commuter rail networks in London and the South East. Southern Railway will use some of this funding to extend the key smartcard which it launched on a trial basis last year and the Oyster network will also be extended. At the same time, the Government is committed to a review in the first half of this year which will cover both ticketing strategy and fares. Theresa Villiers is leading on this.
- 2. Anywhere working:** The Government is promoting flexible and home working as well as alternatives like video conferencing for the workplace. It is encouraging moving away from 9am to 5pm working and this will require ticketing carnets and discounts which reflect and reward these work pattern changes.
- 3. LSTF.** Mr Baker said that the £560 million Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) involved encouraging and supporting many smart ticketing initiatives, including the South West Smart Applications Ltd (SWSAL) project to spread smart ticketing throughout the South West of the country which received funding in tranche 1. Decisions on tranche 2 bids and larger funding bids will be made in the first half of this year.
- 4. BSOG** The Bus Service Operators Grant. Mr Baker said that the Government was committed to a review of BSOG which also took into account the recent findings of the Competition Commission in relation to the local bus industry. They expect to publish the review outcomes by the end of March this year and it will particularly look at the needs of smaller operators and encouraging them to introduce smart ticketing.
- 5. Rail franchise policy.** Mr Baker said: "ITSO smart ticketing has been and



will be specified in all current and future franchises." (see page 8 on the West Coast franchise). This means initially offering a season ticketing option but working towards rolling out a full ticketing solution by March 2017. Mr Baker said the Government was committed to continuing use of the franchising regime to roll out ticketing policy.

- 6. Future directions:** Mr Baker said ITSO had now developed a good basis but that it needed to keep pace with developments and meet customer expectations. ITSO does offer a solution for the unbanked (1 in 5) who will not be able to take advantage of EMV developments. Mr Baker also pointed out that most current bus infrastructure was not set up to accept payment from contactless bank cards. He added that the Government was keen on the idea of a national e-purse. He pointed out that ITSO had advantages over the Oyster card in that it could also deal with rail rickets. While Oyster had been a great success in London: "It is a video recorder and we are now moving on to DVDs."

### ITSO Chief Executive Officer Michael Leach's presentation followed Mr Baker's.

Michael spoke of how the ITSO environment had gone from fledgling to mature adult in the past 18 months with a

security management system which had moved on from problematic to stable and reliable, with a much increased capacity.

He pointed to the fact that the five major bus operators in the country are now committed to rolling out ITSO-compliant smart ticketing, accounting for up to 80 per cent of public transport outside of London. However, smaller operators will be key to the national interoperability vision held by the Government and ITSO and it was hoped local authorities would help support them in developing the required infrastructure.

Railways too are playing their part in increasing the use of ITSO-compliant smart ticketing.

But Michael emphasised that London upgrading its infrastructure so that it, too, can be fully interoperable and accept other forms of ticketing, including ITSO, is absolutely key to the national vision. He said the right, joined up approach could lead to massive savings in rail infrastructure in future.

As far as technology is concerned Michael told delegates that he agreed with Norman Baker that the Specification needed to keep pace with new developments. He said a number of workstreams were ongoing to deliver NFC in the ITSO environment in the next 24 months.

He also wanted to see more options developed to make smart ticketing more accessible for the traveller and cheaper for the operator. Converting the ITSO smart medium into a front end ID token with back office security capability is definitely an option for the future but will require operators taking the risk and offering that upfront trusting relationship with their customers.

Michael recognised the need for the benefits of any proposition to outweigh the risk to ITSO members but pointed out that recent and current threats resulting in increased oil prices could only be good news for public transport operators as car users increasingly look to cheaper travel alternatives.

He issued a challenge to transport operators, saying: "The ITSO Specification can do technically what it needs to do. The technology is there now and there is no point in wasting money going for something else. It is now up to the operators to share business rules so that suppliers can build the kit that makes plug and play systems and everyone can benefit."



• Key launch: Gillian Merron and Go South Coast's divisional director Ed Wills

## All keyed up on the buses on the south coast

**IT'S ALL go with the Go-Ahead group and ITSO smart ticketing these days.**

### On bus

Go-Ahead further expanded its smartcard the key in January when Bus Users UK Chair Gillian Merron launched the latest rollout at Go South Coast in Bournemouth.

ITSO-compliant smartcard ticket machines have been installed on all Go-Ahead's 2,000 buses outside London and the key is successfully up and running across most of its bus network and on parts of its Southern and London Midland rail franchises.

In all, 140,000 passengers are now actively using the smartcard and 60,000 journeys outside London are made every day using the key.

David Brown, Go-Ahead's Group Chief Executive said: "Smart ticketing through the key means we can introduce new offers such as integrated bus and rail tickets, interoperable tickets, lifestyle offers and pay as you go.

"The key is proving a big success with passengers. In Oxford, only 40 per cent of passengers now pay on the bus, and in less than two years, the key has been

made available at eight of our 11 businesses outside London. Our aim is to see the key being used by half a million passengers by early next year."

**Gillian Merron of Bus Users UK said: "The smartcard is hugely convenient for passengers because it means they can hop on the bus without having to worry about having the correct change. It also reduces boarding times for operators, so services are more punctual."**

Over the next two months, the key will be introduced in Southampton and Salisbury in February, Bournemouth and Poole in March and the Isle of Wight in April. Metrobus will also launch the card next month. The company, which covers routes in Kent, Surrey and Sussex, has installed ITSO-compliant card readers in its 137 buses which run services outside London.

### Multi-modal

Go North East has introduced the Key Lifestyle - a flexible transport package which includes bus, car and bike travel discounts - in January.

Their customers will save over 15 per cent on bus travel and get an optional free membership on car and bike hire with Commonwheels, a short term car hire firm

and Scratch Bikes, Newcastle's self-service bike hire system.

By teaming up with Commonwheels, customers can get access to car rental from Newcastle, Gateshead and Durham. Each Key Lifestyle customer will receive free membership, saving £25, and Go North East will buy each passenger £25 worth of driving credit.

Alternatively, passengers can finish off their journey on two wheels with ScratchBikes. Go North East's partnership with the bike hire firm means users get free membership (normally £25) and a discounted rate on the two-hour rental fee, paying just 20p to complete their journey via bike.

Stephen King, sales manager at Go North East, said: "If you are one of the growing number of people questioning the expense of owning a car or are a customer currently buying a monthly bus ticket with Go North East, it makes sense to sign up to the Key Lifestyle package to get discounted prices and access to bus, car and bike travel.

"We are also in discussions with various retailers to negotiate exclusive offers to our Key Lifestyle holders so everyone who has signed up to the package will benefit from even more savings."

## Guided Busway takes on its millionth passenger

### Survey results

WE invited ITSO and ISL members and suppliers to take part in a consultation exercise regarding the future of the ITSO Specification and the work of the ITSO Limited team.

Thank you to those who responded to our online survey and took part in the workshops we held in London.

We have now taken an in-depth look at your responses which are helping us in our current business planning.

A summary can be found at <http://www.itso.org.uk/default.asp?langid=1&contentid=383>

We will be contacting you again in due course to present our business case for future work in 2012/13 and beyond.



• A Stagecoach bus on the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway

THE Cambridgeshire Guided Busway saw its millionth passenger take a ride on 12 January.

Its 200,000 trips a month since opening in August last year have exceeded expectations.

Cambridgeshire County Councillor Steve Criswell said: "This is a massive milestone for The Busway and is ahead of our business forecasts."

The Busway, built by Cambridgeshire County Council and operated by Stagecoach and Go-Whippet, has its own interoperable, ITSO-compliant smartcard system in The Busway Smartcard. It can be ordered online on a ten-trips basis.

Alternatively, customers can buy a ticket at The Busway stops (using cash or debit/credit card).

### Security management service performing well

**JANUARY** saw 1,043,797 messages processed by the ISMS – more than double that processed in the same period last year (401,161).

Some 1,258 new ISAMs were also connected to the ISMS in the same month, bringing the total connected to 66,638.

In this one month alone, 12 new products were registered on the ISMS.

All queries concerning the ISMS should be directed to the ISMS Service Desk Hotline on 01908 255477 or email [ismdesk@itso.org.uk](mailto:ismdesk@itso.org.uk).

### ISL HOPS UPGRADE

ON 19 January, ACT upgraded the ISL (ITSO Services Limited) HOPS to accommodate systems using version 2.1.4 of the Specification.

### European countries have an understanding on ticketing

SOME five years ago, the European Commission funded ITSO and its German and French equivalents to look at the feasibility of interoperating smartcard schemes between countries.

THE EU-IFM Project as it became known ([www.ifm-project.eu](http://www.ifm-project.eu)) looked at a range of issues from a privacy to the technical specifications a card would need to meet and prepared a roadmap for its potential implementation.

The Specification work for multi-application media has resulted in a new European and International Standard being

prepared (ISO24014-3) which will be published in 2012.

In order for individual countries to work more closely with the European Commission and with bodies such as the European Mobile Network Operators, the International Association for Public Transport Operators (UITP) has drafted a Memorandum of Understanding on the formation of an IFM Alliance across Europe.

It is hoped to sign this in the next few weeks with the launch signatories being ITSO, VdV for Germany, Calypso Network Association and AFIMB for France.

Already other countries such from Italy to the Nordic Countries and the Czech Republic have expressed their desire to join as well as major suppliers of both smartcards and ticket machines.

# Merseytravel's Walrus to go on line this month

## MERSEYTRAVEL's Walrus card portal is expected to go live this month.

This is just one of the many aspects of smart ticketing that the Liverpool-based transport authority is currently working on to go 100 per cent ITSO-compliant both concession and commercial-wise by next summer.

It is a massive undertaking. Merseytravel's population involves around 1.4 million people taking 182 million journeys a year on 678 million passenger miles of public transport which includes bus, rail and ferry.

And, as if that is not enough, there is a European interoperable and multimodal project ticking away in the background.

Add to that the fact that Chief Executive Neil Scales is heading off to the Antipodes in March and the homegrown Beatles song Ticket to Ride takes on many meanings.

The Walrus was launched last September and Merseytravel staff passes are gradually being introduced which hold a TYP22 ticket allowing staff to travel through eight gated rail stations, as well as on ferries and buses already equipped with smart ticket machines. Initial feedback is encouraging, says Merseytravel.

**“ We can feed customer journey mapping into future travel planning to maximise use of the network ”**

**- Jim Barclay  
Interim Chief Executive**

The next step for Walrus cards will be the issuance of all-area annual cards from Merseytravel's travel centres, which is expected to start soon.

The tendering process for a smartcard retail system, paper ticket retail system and smartcard retail services is ongoing but other work to bring equipment and systems up to scratch continues.

### On Bus:

SIX operators are equipped with ticket machines (Parkeon and Almex) and a further two small operators are expected to be equipped this month.

Large operators have committed to being smart-enabled by September this



## • Ferrying across the Mersey will be by ITSO-compliant smartcard by mid 2012

year, completing the implementation for all Merseyside buses. All 325,000 concessionary pass holders will then be able to travel smartly.

Small operator ticketing trials have been ongoing since September 2011.

Merseytravel is also expecting to upgrade its HOPS to version 2.1.4 of the ITSO Specification this month. Bus operators currently operating on 2.1.2 will also upgrade by the end of this month.

The aim is for all season ticket holders to gradually go smart and be able to travel smartly across the entire network by this October.

### On Rail:

EIGHT centrally-gated stations on the Merseyrail network are now ITSO-smart for concessionary products and staff Walrus cards.

Chester mainline station gate line will be upgraded to accept concessions and commercial tickets this year and approval is being sought to smart-enable gates at Liverpool Lime Street.

Almex has been awarded the contract for providing validators at all 88 non-gated rail stations in the region starting this May. This involves working with three Train Operating Companies (TOCs) and Network Rail.

Merseytravel and Merseyrail are working with Cubic to further develop commercial ticketing, focusing on the zonal structure and season products.

### On Ferry:

NEW validators which will accept concessionary and commercial passes will be installed in the three Merseytravel ferry terminals starting the middle of this year.

GIS-enabled handheld devices have been issued to ferry and travel centre staff and revenue protection officers.

And ticket vending machines, currently being staff tested, are to be rolled out this year.

As for Europe, Merseytravel has received around Euros 800,000 EU funding to work with five other Atlantic-facing European cities on an integrated ticketing programme for contactless smartcards and NFC mobile phone applications.

This will involve developing an innovative fare structure for local journeys, but interoperable across the various countries involved.

Newly-appointed Interim Chief Executive Jim Barclay said: "All the necessary groundwork has been done to enable Liverpool to lead the way in smart ticketing in the UK.

"The job now for the very capable team is to drive forward, launching an innovative loyalty programme which will boost take-up of the Walrus card. This, in turn, will mean we can feed customer journey mapping into future travel planning to maximise use of the network and therefore its popularity and economic viability."



## East Midlands expands season ticketing scheme

**STAGECOACH Group has further expanded its smartcard scheme on East Midlands Trains to allow weekly and monthly season ticket holders to store their tickets on a StagecoachSmart travel card instead of a paper ticket.**

The train company has installed ITSO smartcard readers at 26 stations across the network between Sheffield and Nottingham, London St Pancras and Nottingham and Mansfield Woodhouse and Nottingham so that customers on these routes can tap in and tap out of their journeys using their smartcards.

The expansion follows a successful introduction of the StagecoachSmart travel card to around 1,000 season ticket holders last year as part of technical trials to test the technology.

East Midlands Trains customers can get their smartcards by phoning the customer service centre or going online and can

then load future tickets at station ticket machines or by phone.

The expanded scheme was launched on 12 January. East Midlands Trains Managing Director David Horne said: "By embracing new technology and continuing to offer good value, high quality services, we look forward to attracting more people onto our trains. We will continue to expand the scheme to include more tickets for even more passengers in future."

Stagecoach launched the UK's first national rail smartcard pilot on its South West Trains franchise in 2008 and that network now has live ITSO smart ticketing at around 100 stations.

The Group was also the first major UK bus operator to install ITSO smartcard technology on its entire, 7,000-strong, bus fleet outside London allowing them to record national concessionary journeys using smartcard technology in many parts of the country.

Stagecoach is involved in commercial interoperable schemes both in Oxford and on The Busway in Cambridgeshire. It also has commercial smartcard schemes in place in Manchester, East Kent and East Sussex.

More than 200,000 smartcard transactions are already made on Stagecoach's bus and rail service every day.

**By embracing new technology and continuing to offer good value, high quality services, we look forward to attracting people onto our trains. We will continue to expand the scheme to include more tickets**

**- David Horne MD**

**Contribute to this newsletter: If you wish to contribute to ITSONews please contact Sheila MacDonald, Communications Advisor, on 01908 255487, email [sheila.macdonald@itso.org.uk](mailto:sheila.macdonald@itso.org.uk).**

**Your news should be relevant to an existing or planned ITSO-compliant scheme.**

# New franchise for West Coast must include ITSO

**THE FOUR shortlisted bidders for the Inter City West Coast rail franchise have now received their invitation to tender (ITT), which details requirements for ITSO-compliant ticketing.**

They are Abellio, First Group, Keolis/SNCF (which has joint interests elsewhere with both First and Go-Ahead) and Virgin.

Virgin Trains – a joint venture between Virgin and Stagecoach – currently holds the franchise. The new franchise will run from December 2012 to March 2026 with an option for the DfT to extend for up to 20 months. Bids need to be in by May this year and the new operator will be announced in August.

The franchise stretches from London to Glasgow serving Manchester, Birmingham, Liverpool and North Wales.

The following includes the key points on ITSO-compliant ticketing outlined in the ITT.

## Oyster

Bidders must detail how they will facilitate the provision, staffing and maintenance of new ITSO smart ticketing compliant gate lines at Birmingham New Street Station which will be provided as part of the major £600 million Gateway Project.

ITSO-compliant ticketing must be available throughout the franchise area on all ticket types no later than February 2017 and, for the majority of first and standard ticketing types, no later than February 2015.

The scheme must be able to issue, accept and validate all valid ticketing products on any valid ITSO customer media, in accordance with the ITSO Operating Licence.

Bidders have been told they should assume that Oyster equipment on the TfL network will be capable of reading ITSO-based products from January 2014.

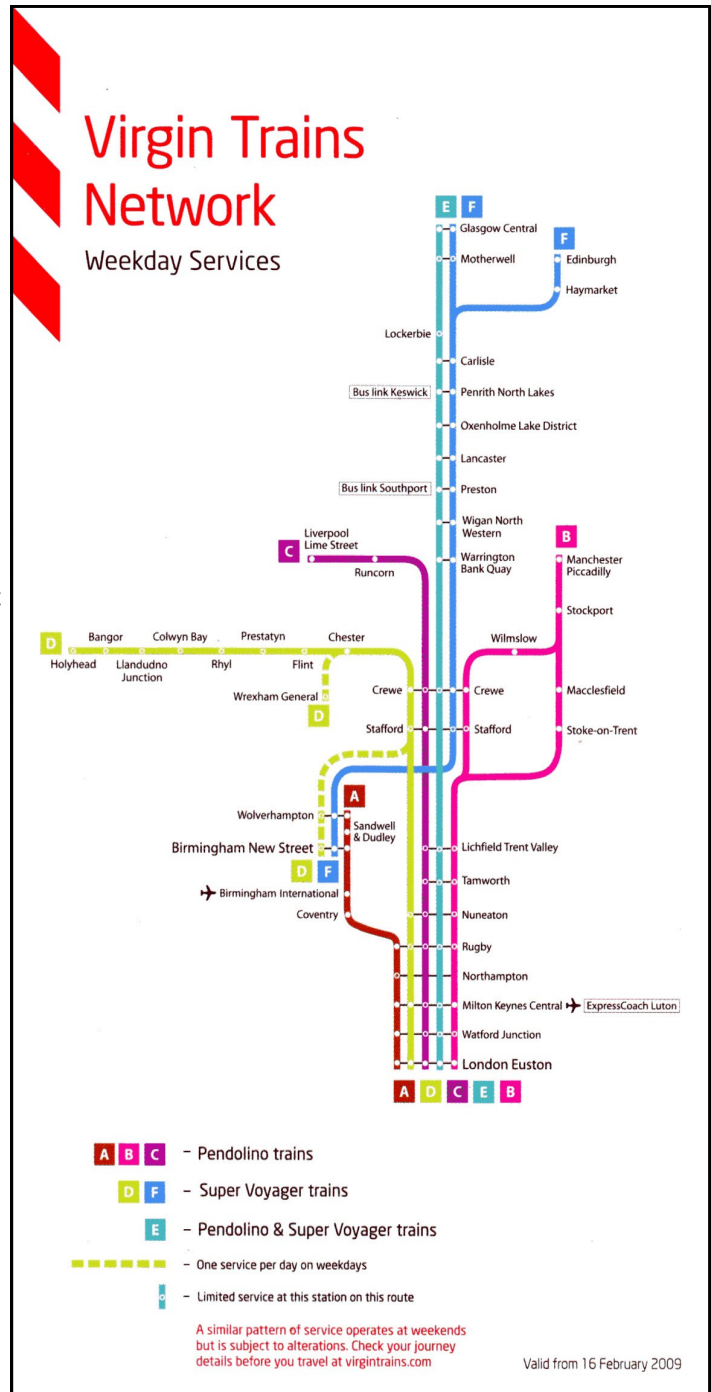
Franchisees would have to provide an ITSO-compliant ticketing system comprising ticket issuing equipment, readers and validators (and where appropriate on gates) throughout the franchise and any necessary ITSO back-office functionality. Bidders have been told this may also require negotiations with other train operators.

## Key stations

Franchisees will be required to use ‘all reasonable endeavours’ to promote inter-availability and to join any ATOC-approved smartcard-related ticketing schemes, as well as work with PTEs (Passenger Transport Executives) and local authorities within the franchise area who may wish to move any multi-modal ticketing schemes onto ITSO and to not unreasonably withhold consent.

As a minimum, bidders must provide ITSO-compliant ticket issuing and validation equipment to facilitate ticket checking on trains and at the following stations where the franchise would own the station facilities.

Bidders must also work with Network Rail and other Train Operating Companies to provide ITSO-compliant ticket issuing and validation equipment at key stations within the franchise which are Birmingham New Street, Edinburgh, Glasgow Central, Liverpool Lime Street, London Euston and Manchester Piccadilly. Provision of equipment at other stations is at the discretion of the Bidder.



### • Inter City West Coast line: Virgin has current franchise

Bidders will also be expected to demonstrate how they will ensure a steady growth of passenger journeys are undertaken on ITSO-compliant ticketing. Uptake targets will be set and, where the targets are not achieved, franchisees will be required to set out an improvement plan, with a defined level of expenditure for each target not achieved.

Bidders are being encouraged to propose new and alternative ways of retailing tickets such as selling via local shops, internet,

**Continued on page 9**

## West Coast line

### • From page 8

mobile telephone and home printing amongst others. The DfT says they may also wish to consider how contactless EMV payment cards might be utilised alongside other alternative ways of retailing.

Bidders are also being asked to look at a variety of season tickets including allowing passengers who travel regularly but not every weekday or not to a standard pattern to benefit from some season ticket discount.

Proposals may be linked to the adoption of ITSO-compliant ticketing and might include payment methods not normally used by national rail, for example, direct debit.

Bidders should be aware that flexi-smart ticketing schemes may be introduced on certain parts of the network by other franchised operators. They would be expected to cooperate with the development and implementation of such schemes.

## £45 million for South East ticketing

**AT the end of November last year Chancellor George Osborne pledged in his Autumn Statement that the Government would be funding improvements to the quality of travel for rail users, including £45 million to extend smart ticketing across London and the South-East.**

ITSO expects to play a significant part in this project.

The National Infrastructure Plan says this means the Government will “Actively explore the scope for promoting smart ticketing in a way that will enable and encourage operators to develop smarter

fare options, both to manage peak demand and also to recognise that traditional options, such as period season tickets, might not offer an attractive deal to passengers with a more flexible work pattern, for instance travelling regularly but fewer than four or five days a week.

“The Department for Transport intends to work closely with rail operators to pilot new smart products and evaluate their effect on peak demand levels.”

At the recent Transport Ticketing conference, Transport Minister Norman Baker said: “Southern Railway will use some of this funding to extend the key smartcard which it launched on a trial basis last year and the Oyster network will also be extended.”

ITSO is delighted with the positive impact this will have for travellers and looks forward to continuing to work closely with its Members as they progress with this initiative.

### • Norman Baker at Southern Railway launch of the key



## West of England begins ticket machine rollout

**THE West of England Local Authorities (Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol City, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire councils) have begun the rollout and installation of ticket machines with smaller bus operators in their areas.**

The authorities have procured 100 ITSO-compliant ticket machines and are offering them to bus operators on affordable terms.

### Standards

Operators not wanting to use the authority procured ticket machines are being incentivised to purchase their own, as long as they meet the same standards.

The West of England has recently upgraded the ACT-provided HOPS to version 2.1.4 of the ITSO Specification and is to use the ACT card management system to manage future local authority-run carnet and period pass type tickets.

So far four bus operators (Abus, Somerbus, Severnside Transport, and North Somerset Coaches) have signed agreements and ETMs have been installed in 36 buses.

Agreements in principle have been reached with several other smaller operators for the supply of Ticketer Electronic Ticketing Machines (ETMs).

The HOPS is also being made available to local authorities and bus operators through the SWSAL partnership (South West Smart Applications Limited). This partnership brings together 15 local authorities and 17 public transport operators under one umbrella to provide smart ticketing for an area which covers the six counties of Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Somerset and Wiltshire.

To date three bus operators have been set up in the HOPS and have gone live (Western Greyhound, Bournemouth

Travel Ltd ‘Yellowbus’, and Thamesdown Transport). All four West of England authorities have completed the process of migrating from the ISL HOPS.

An e-money pilot is also being progressed by Bath & North East Somerset in conjunction with SWSAL and a pilot scheme is to go live in the Bath area.

### Migrate

There are also plans to migrate an existing commercial smartcard scheme for Bristol University and the University of the West of England over to ITSO.

Peter Mann, Transport Director at Bristol City Council and Senior Responsible Officer for the project, said: “The development of smart ticketing has been an aspiration of the West of England Authorities for some time and, with the roll out of ITSO smart ticket machines and an e-purse pilot in 2012, this is taking a major step forward to making it a reality.”

## West Midlands launches its e-purse

**WEST MIDLANDS** transport authority Centro has launched a small trial of commercial e-ticketing.

Since 9 January, bus operator Rotala has been making a smartcard available on six routes in the Solihull region. The ITSO-compliant card is currently going under the name of the Signature card and is issued free.

The cards are topped up by £10 initially (this can be done online), then can be topped on the bus or at travel shops. There is also a facility for an auto top-up linked directly to the customer's credit or debit card which can add £15 whenever a smart reader is presented with a balance below £2. Those not opting for auto top-up have a 'get-you-home' guarantee where the card can go into £2 deficit.

Cardholders pay a flat fare of £1.60 per journey when using a Signature card on one of the trial Rotala routes compared to £1.70 or £1.90. The cards are read by the contactless reader on the ticket machine and a paper ticket is then issued after deducting the fare.

If successful, Centro hopes that all 40 of its bus operators in the region will accept

**It offers passengers the opportunity to make savings against cash fares, and have the convenience of not finding relatively small amounts of cash for each journey**

**- Ian Pollard, Rotala**

the card as one of the means of paying for their journeys. More than 2,500 buses across the majority of operators in the West Midlands have ITSO-compliant Parkeon ticketing machines installed. As such 22% of all journeys are currently smart due to the use of the ENCTS concessions pass.

These buses account for more than six million journeys a month for which there are currently 550,000 concessionary smartcard holders.

Operators and the regional shire



• **On the money: Geoff Inskip of Centro (right) and Trevor Johnson of Rotala**

authorities in the West Midlands without their own HOPS back office systems are also able to buy in to Centro's existing infrastructure and expertise, creating regional economies of scale.

Centro's chief executive Geoff Inskip said: "This is a massive step towards our aim of eventually rolling out smartcard technology later this year for all bus users across the Centro region.

"Fare-paying passengers can do away with the need for cash and will be able to make their journeys using a development which takes bus travel into the 21<sup>st</sup> century."

Ian Pollard, commercial manager of Rotala, said of the Signature card: "Initially it offers passengers the opportunity to make savings against cash fares, and have the convenience of not finding relatively small amounts of cash for each journey.

"Longer term we hope it can be developed to include all operators and make a significant contribution to making ticketing in the West Midlands more passenger-friendly, enabling a wider group of bus users to find a solution that is perfect for their requirements."

• **CENTRO was pipped at the post in the recent UK Public Sector Digital Awards formerly known as the E-**

**Government awards.**

It had reached the last six national finalists for the Best Example of Commercial Innovation award out of 430 entries (a record number of entries this year). This was predominantly for Centro's Smartcard Framework solution which is a national initiative enabling other UK transport authorities and bus operators to purchase smartcard equipment and related services without having to undergo a lengthy and costly procurement process.

Eleven local authorities have so far placed orders through the framework with more to follow and 18 additional authorities have registered interest (more than 30 per cent of Travel Concessionary Authorities across the UK).

More than 70% of eligible operators (16 bus operators) have taken advantage of Centro's Managed Services scheme allowing them (irrespective of their technical capabilities and resources) to participate in the scheme. Centro say two more operators have recently shown strong interest to join the scheme.

The winner of the award was Nottingham City Council for its Portfolio Marketplace – a website which allows local authorities to reduce costs by buying campaigns from each other then tailor them to their area.