

**Grwp yr Economi, Sgiliau a Chyfoeth Naturiol
Economy, Skills and Natural Resources Group**

Cyfarwyddwr Cyffredinol - Director General



**Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government**

Nick Ramsay AM
Chair
Public Accounts Committee

16 January 2020

Dear Chair

The Welsh Government's youth discounted bus fare scheme – MyTravelPass

Thank you for your letter of 29 October requesting further clarification on the number of 19-21 year olds holding MyTravelPass passes and the Welsh Government's approach to marketing of the scheme. I am sorry for the inconsistency in the numbers we have previously provided and the delay in responding to you, and hope that this response will address the various points you raised.

Number of 19-21 years old holding MyTravelPass passes

My letter of 1 October 2019 stated the number of 19-21 year olds holding passes in August 2019 was 551. This was inconsistent with previous information provided to PAC, which indicated there were 834 passes in May 2019.

We have been working to understand why the reported numbers had changed. Transport officials receive management information from different providers, with the data presented in different ways. We are now aware that some of the numbers provided previously were incomplete and did not include postal applications. Additionally, we are aware that timing delays inherent in updating the systems used for new cards approved and cards withdrawn – for example, as people age out – also led to inconsistencies in the data.

ACT, our back office provider, operates the database of journeys undertaken by MyTravelPass holders used by the bus industry to record discounted (and concessionary) bus journeys. We are working with ACT on reporting of data, but have agreed with them what data set should be used for consistency of reporting as we move forward. On this basis, the figures reported for the 19-21 age bracket should have been 931 valid cards created by the end May 2019; 1,619 cards by end August 2019; and 4,547 cards by end October 2019.

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Annex 1 provides a breakdown by age bracket of the number of valid travel cards created each month between January and October 2019. The significant increase in October 2019 is due to the improved marketing of the scheme, as illustrated below.

Welsh Government's approach to marketing of the scheme

Annex 2 details the marketing activities undertaken since January 2019.

You will see we have used social media to promote the initiative as it is a highly targeted method to reach the primary audience (16-21 year olds) and secondary audience (parents and guardians of 16-18 year olds), and it can be measured.

Facebook advertising and "Snapchat Top Snaps" were the most engaging platforms for 16-21 year olds. Display and audio advertising did not perform as well as expected.

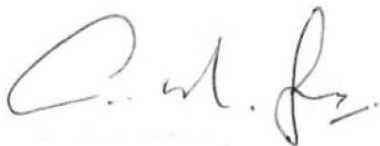
An excellent digital performer was UCAS Media as it targeted 10,000 freshers attending Welsh Universities. Attending fresher events is a very important vehicle to actively reach the target audience to create awareness and stimulate signup.

Ambient activity (e.g. bus stop posters) cannot be measured, but remains an important marketing tool to help create the awareness of the product.

I hope this information will assist you with your further deliberations.

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely

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

Andrew Slade
Director General
Economy, Skills and Natural Resources

Annex 1: Number of valid travel cards created for each of the age bands from January to October 2019

Age	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19	Jul-19	Aug-19	Sep-19	Oct-19	TOTAL
15	4	0	2	6	7	20	20	34	0	4	97
16	265	87	125	364	334	429	541	926	1,336	1,557	5,964
17	163	72	104	244	228	195	235	224	334	744	2,543
18	23	22	83	185	186	149	161	332	412	1,608	3,161
19	0	26	192	214	166	55	138	196	261	1,162	2,410
20	0	10	92	88	68	23	92	97	158	783	1,411
21	0	0	25	22	28	6	29	52	79	485	726
TOTAL	455	217	623	1123	1017	877	1216	1,861	2,580	6,343	16,312

Data source: ACT Analytics system report: as at end October 2019

Annex 2: Marketing activities undertaken since January 2019

Medium	Timing and audience	Impact
New content written on MyTravelPass website.	December	This site is the call to action for all the social media, digital and ambient activity
Press Releases – announcing the extension up to 21	Nov/ December Articles online on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BBC wales news • ITV news 	
New content written on external websites	From January 2019 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neath Port Talbot Council • Gwynedd Council • Swansea University • Swansea University Students Union • Cardiff Met University • Flintshire Council • NPTC Group of colleges • St David's College • Ysgol Greenhill Tenby • Wrexham Council • Gov.UK – Apprentices discount 	
Spring campaign – Social media advertising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facebook • Snapchat – Top Snaps • Instagram 	Feb/March/April <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facebook – to target parents • Instagram and Snapchat – target 16-21 year olds 	Facebook – 2,304 clicks to website Instagram – 926 clicks to website Snapchat – 14,387 swipes on advert
New content drafted, sent and appeared on operator's websites:	January <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stagecoach • Travel Line • Arriva • First Cymru • Cardiff Bus • Bwcabus • TfW 	

Medium	Timing and audience	Impact
Autumn Campaign – Social media and digital advertising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facebook • Snapchat • Spotify Audio • Display Banner 	September/October <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facebook and Display banner – targeting parents and guardians in Wales via Daily Mail, Mums Net, Wales Online, Mirror, eBay, Sky Sports, South Wales Argus, Dibly • Snapchat and Spotify – targeting 16-21 year olds in Wales 	In total resulted in over 24k clicks and swipes to website Facebook – 3,960 clicks to website Snapchat – 19,214 swipes on advert Display banner – 1,127 clicks to website
Bus stop advertising	September/October <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 digital sites in Cardiff and Swansea (near university campuses) executed 1 million impressions • 44 static poster sites (13 North Wales; 16 South Wales; 15 South East Wales) 	
Fresher's events at Universities and colleges across Wales	From September <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 26 events attended to date. More to follow in the New Year 	
UCAS media	September <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted 10,000 freshers starting at Welsh universities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website was opened by 6,429 • Achieved 1,159 unique clicks
Bus Wraps	September/October <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 x First Bus publicity in South East Wales 	