

GD 2017/0018



Isle of Man Government

Reiltys Ellan Vannin

Council of Ministers

**Response to the Report of the Select Committee on Free
Train and Tram Travel (Petition for Redress)
2016-2017**

To be laid before May 2017 Tynwald

May 2017

Foreword by the Minister of Infrastructure

The Council of Ministers welcomes the report of the Select Committee on Free Train and Tram Travel (Petition for Redress) 2016-2017.

The Department of Infrastructure has reviewed the findings of the Select Committee.

The Council of Ministers notes that the conclusions of the Select Committee and the recommendation that the Department of Infrastructure should consider offering an advance purchase discount on annual passes for the Isle of Man Steam Railway and Manx Electric Railway, but not for the Snaefell Mountain Railway.

I am pleased to be able to announce that the Department will be offering a discount on all concessionary Go Platinum Rail, Go Platinum Steam and Go Platinum Electric cards purchased between the 1st September 2017 and the 31st October 2017 and, subject to review, annually between these dates thereafter. This is in line with the recommendations of the Select Committee.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Harmer', is positioned above the printed name of the Minister.

**Hon R Harmer MHK
Minister**

Response to the Select Committee Report on Free Train and Tram Travel (Petition for Redress) 2016-2017

1. Background and Context

- 1.1 On 18th October 2016 Tynwald resolved to form a Select Committee to consider and report on the Petition for Redress in relation to free train and tram travel for residents over retirement age.
- 1.2 The Department of Infrastructure introduced a charge for those over retirement age to travel by train and tram from March 2015 whilst retaining the ability for those same people to travel free of charge on the buses albeit not during the morning and evening peak travel time. This was in recognition that travel undertaken by train or tram is essentially a leisure pursuit whilst travelling by bus was meeting essential travel needs.
- 1.3 The charge to travel by train or tram for those in receipt of a concessionary pass is set at half the adult fare for journeys undertaken after 9am. This can be further discounted through the purchase of an annual card called a "Go Platinum" card. These cards offer a substantial saving on the "pay as you go" half fare. The Go Platinum Rail provides unlimited travel on scheduled services of the Steam Railway, Manx Electric Railway and Snaefell Mountain Railway and costs £75 for adults which is discounted to £37.50 for children and those in receipt of their old age pension. A similar card is available for unlimited travel just on the Steam Railway (Go Platinum Steam) or just on the Manx Electric Railway and Snaefell Mountain Railway (Go Platinum Electric). These cards are £60 each per adult, reduced to £30 for children and those in receipt of their old age pension.

2. Conclusions and Recommendations included within the report

- 2.1 The report of the Select Committee contains a number of conclusions. The Department of Infrastructure has noted these conclusions.
- 2.2 The report contained one recommendation, which was as follows:

That the Department of Infrastructure should consider offering an advance purchase discount on annual passes for the Isle of Man Steam Railway and Manx Electric Railway, but not for the Snaefell Mountain Railway.

3. Departmental Response to the Recommendation of the Report

- 3.1 The Department has considered the recommendation in the report. Given that there is not a separate annual pass for just the Snaefell Mountain Railway there has not been an opportunity to exclude the Snaefell Mountain Railway from the discount scheme. The only way to have achieved this would be to apply the discount exclusively to the Go Platinum Steam cards but this would have not met with the Select Committee recommendation as it would not have applied any advance purchase discount for annual passes for use on the Manx Electric Railway.
- 3.2 Therefore it is proposed that an advance purchase discount will be applied to all concessionary Go Platinum Rail, Go Platinum Steam and Go Platinum Electric annual passes purchased between 1st September 2017 and 31st October 2017. During this time the normal £37.50 price of a concessionary Go Platinum Rail annual pass will be reduced to £35. Similarly the normal £30 price for an annual concessionary Go Platinum Steam or Go Platinum Electric pass will be reduced to £28.
- 3.3 The Department will monitor the impact of the introduction of this discount and will determine how best to take this forward in future years. Given that the Committee indicated that this advance purchase discount should apply to all Go Platinum Rail, Steam and Electric annual passes i.e. including Adult and

Family passes, this consideration will include whether there would be merit in extending such a discount to cover those passes in addition to the concessionary passes.

4. Summary

- 4.1 The Department has reviewed the Select Committee Report on Free Train and Tram Travel (Petition for Redress) 2016-2017, notes the conclusions and accepts the recommendation contained therein.