

Additional support for light rail operators in Scotland

March 25, 2021



The Scottish Government is to provide a further £7.5 million of emergency funding for Glasgow Subway and Edinburgh Trams in response to the on-going financial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This latest emergency funding brings the total light rail support available up to £28.5 million and this will now be in place until the end of June 2021.

This funding announcement follows ongoing discussions with Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT) and Edinburgh Trams regarding available resources due to the unprecedented impact that COVID-19 has had on travel demand.

Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity Michael Matheson said: “The light rail networks in our two biggest cities continue to play a vital role in keeping Scotland moving safely, facilitating essential travel which of course, now includes people attending vaccination appointments.

“While travel restrictions and physical distancing requirements mean capacity on public transport remains reduced, our support to date has enabled Glasgow Subway and Edinburgh Trams to carry around 3 million

trips since July 2020, further demonstrating the importance of these services.

“Glasgow and Edinburgh are expected to see continued significant financial constraint over the coming months and as such we are providing further financial assistance until the end of June to enable services to continue.

“I reiterate my heartfelt thanks to everyone working across the light rail sector who has, and continues to, provide services for key workers and others who needed to travel for essential journeys to do so during very challenging circumstances. The subway and tram will help our wider society and economy recover as we begin to gradually and safely transition out of lockdown.”

George Lowder, Chief Executive of Transport for Edinburgh added: “This is very welcome confirmation of further funding support, as we continue to deliver services for essential and key workers and those using the tram to get to vaccination centres. We also welcome the continued dialogue with regard to continued support beyond June, through the uncertainty of Summer 2021. Despite the gradual easing of lockdown, we continue to encourage all customers to follow the latest guidance when using public transport.”

SPT Chair, Councillor Dr Martin Bartos said: “SPT welcomes this latest emergency funding for Glasgow Subway. The Subway has continued to operate throughout the pandemic, retaining an vital service for those keyworkers who have needed it to carry out essential journeys. This funding to cover the period from now until the end of June is crucial while we continue to see low numbers travelling on the system.”

Photo credit: Transport Scotland