

# Government announces £150m funding for light rail and buses

March 1, 2022



Light rail and bus operators across England are set to benefit from over £150 million of government support.

The purpose of the money is to ensure services continue to run and millions of passengers can continue to get around as the country emerges from the pandemic.

This funding is dependent on local areas and operators co-designing a financially sustainable and passenger-focused public transport network that works for changing travel patterns post-pandemic.

The funding package announced today builds on almost two years of government support to keep light rail and bus networks running, with around £2 billion made available to over 160 operators during the pandemic.

This new funding represents the final tranche of pandemic-related support to operators and will run for six months until October 2022.

The hope is the new funding will support operators and authorities as they adapt to changing travel patterns. It is also intended to help the continued delivery of what the government calls “enhanced partnerships”: local authorities working closely with bus companies to draw on their operating knowledge and marketing skills.

Furthermore, it is being provided to support local authorities and operators across England as they continue working on bus service improvement plans and delivering substantive improvements to local services.

Transport secretary Grant Shapps said: “The funding I’ve announced today will ensure millions of us can continue to use vital public transport services and brings the total we’ve provided to the sector to keep services running throughout the pandemic to over £2 billion.

“Not only that – as we look ahead and continue our work to overhaul services and build back better from the pandemic, this funding will also help authorities and operators work together to provide even better services for people right across the country.”

Roads minister Baroness Vere said: “Millions of people rely on buses and trams to get them to work, school and the shops, which is why we have already provided billions of pounds of support for the sector throughout the pandemic.”

More details on the allocation of this funding will be provided by the government in due course.

David Sidebottom, director at the independent watchdog Transport Focus, said: “Key workers and the many millions of people who rely on tram and metros will welcome the news that the government is set to provide further support for services.

“Operators and local authorities must continue to work together to attract passengers back. Maintaining an attractive network for the longer term will be vital for delivering the government’s aims on climate change and cleaner air.”