Motion: Regional Travel Card

Conference notes with concern:

1. That commuting for work is becoming an increasing part in the lives of workers because of a range of factors, from property prices to individual preference.
2. The ever-increasing cost of commuting as seen in the figures from the Trade Union Congress that from the ten years since 2009 rail fares have increased at twice the speed of wages.
3. The large upfront costs of season tickets which can disadvantage commuters on lower wages who cannot afford this, and as result spend a larger proportion of their income on commuting costs and is an acute problem in more isolated communities where it can act as a barrier to social mobility.
4. The environmental impact of commuter culture centred around driving to work, rather than one centred around taking public transport, cycling or walking to work.
5. The lack of uniformity and cohesion between areas, such as Liverpool City Region and Greater Manchester, and more rural areas of the North West in terms of payment options on public transport.

Conference reaffirms the Liberal Democrat commitment to:

1. Ensuring access to affordable and efficient public transport for all, including intervention on rail in breach of franchise agreements.
2. Providing 16 to 21-year-olds a two-thirds discount on bus travel, the basis of accessing work, apprentices and education.
3. The devolution of greater powers to local authorities with regards to public transport, including franchise procurement for all forms of public transport.
4. Drawing on real world case studies that demonstrate a policy’s feasibility and success, in this case:
   1. London’s Oyster Card which uses a Pay-as-you-go system, capped zonal fares and offers uniformity of payment across different modes of transport.
   2. The Merseytravel Concessionary Agreement with Merseyrail, which extends of free concessionary travel on all forms of public transport, including Merseyrail Trains, within the Liverpool City Region.
   3. Denmark's Rejsekort which provides a single electronic ticket system for all forms of public transport, with the ability to register additional traveller on a single card, and other similar national schemes rolled out in European Union Countries.

Conference calls for:

1. The introduction of a Travel Card for use within the North West Region, that shall:
   1. Provide a single means of payment for all forms of public transport, including but not limited to buses, trams, light rail and trains.
   2. Operate on a pay-as-you-go system with the ability to easily top-up the balance or to have a system in place for automatic top up, with an optional pre-set minimum balance.
   3. Have the card preloaded with appropriate discounts and concessionary fares, such as those for young people, students, jobseekers, disabled people and Over 60s and have them applied automatically.
   4. Have the ability to register other travellers on a single card, on an ad hoc basis.
2. Inclusion of the Travel Card to become a prerequisite of future regional rail franchise agreements.
3. The creation of a regional Public Transport Oversight Board to:
   1. Oversee the administration and implementation of this scheme.
   2. Scrutinise the provider’s ability to meet the obligations of their franchise agreement and act accordingly.
   3. Conduct strategic transport planning across the region.
   4. Have a membership drawing from local government, trade unions, business groups and other relevant stakeholders.
4. The scheme should be piloted in the North West with an aim to extend this on a regional basis to the rest of England.