



Evidence paper for Minister for Climate Change Transport Matters Scrutiny at CCEI Committee

13/12/2023

Information provided to aid the Committee in advance of the Deputy Minister's attendance to discuss Transport matters on 13 December.

The contents of this paper were prepared before, and are subject to, the forthcoming budget.

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1. Rail services and metro delivery

Background

1. Transport for Wales (TfW) has faced a number of challenges in 2023 in operating high quality rail services. After a number of incidents TfW had to take the difficult, but correct, decision to withdraw significant number of trains for urgent maintenance in the spring. This reduced the number of trains available by a fifth and led to further difficult decisions in allocating the available trains to deliver services across Wales.
2. The reduced number of trains available for services affected passengers on the Heart of Wales Line and the Wrexham to Bidston Line in particular. TfW recognised this impact and implemented a 5 point performance improvement plan for the Wrexham to Bidston line, appointing a dedicated manager to deliver this.
3. Following the poor Spring and Summer period, TfW's rail service performance has improved, including on the key North-South route. This is largely due to the continuing introduction of increasing numbers of more reliable brand-new trains to replace the older inherited fleet, alongside an increased focus on improvements.

Progress

New trains

4. TfW are currently accepting a new CAF train every 7-10 days with most recent deliveries being 3 carriage trains, helping to boost capacity on busy services. These trains are used right across Wales, with TfW recently extending their use to Carmarthen. Extensions further West are planned by the end of 2023. This will mean that it will be possible to travel from Milford Haven to Holyhead entirely on brand-new trains by the end of this year. In South Wales, TfW have received 11 brand-new trains which are currently used on services between Rhymney and Penarth.
5. Overall, brand-new trains now comprise a third of the fleet used by TfW each day. When all the brand-new fleet is delivered TfW will have 484 carriages available to them compared to the 270 inherited in 2018. TfW are confident that performance of services will continue to improve as more new trains are delivered.

Rail services

6. TfW are one of the few operators across the UK who have returned to a full timetable of services following the Covid pandemic. TfW will continue to increase the number of services they operate with the introduction of a new service between Ebbw Vale and Newport from December 2023. The new timetable in December 2023 will also include the return of an hourly TfW service between Chester and Liverpool and a more reliable service between Wrexham and Bidston aligned with the 5 point improvement plan for this line.
7. The performance of TfW's services has also improved, with targets for reducing cancellations and disruption to passengers being met from late summer and into the Autumn months. Many of the causes for cancellation and disruption to TfW's services have been the responsibility of Network Rail in Wales. While TfW continue to work to address those issues that are their responsibility they also work with Network Rail in Wales to reduce the number of infrastructure faults that delay or cancel trains.

Core Valley Lines transformation

Background

8. The Core Valley Lines (CVL) transformation is a £1bn investment which will transform the lines to Treherbert, Aberdare, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhymney and Coryton. The transformation includes electrification, enabling new electric trains to replace the inherited diesel-powered fleet.
9. The work to upgrade the largely Victorian infrastructure has caused disruption for people who live along the routes, but it essential to achieve our vision for a high-quality network fit for future generations. The transformation will reduce journey times and enable more services every hour operated by new trains.

Progress

10. The CVL transformation works were originally planned to be completed by the end of 2023. However, this has been delayed due to the impact Covid has had on the programme, which alongside the high levels of inflation, has also increased the cost of delivery.
11. So far TfW have electrified 60 km of track, including the lines from Cardiff to Aberdare and Merthyr. Six stations on the CVL are being significantly upgraded to ensure they ready for the new trains. 'Access for All' facilities are also being installed to make the Welsh Government's infrastructure as accessible as possible.
12. Work to transform the Treherbert Line necessitated the full closure of this route from 30 April 2023. The transformation work is on time to re-open the line as planned in early 2024 and includes electrification and the replacement of mid-19th Century signalling technology used on the line. TfW are continuing to offer local residents 50% off the cost of tickets to Cardiff Central (using rail replacement services as necessary) during the closure period.
13. The new fleet of trains which will operate services on the transformed CVL is currently being tested. The first of these trains is planned to enter service on the CVL in Summer 2024.

2. Update on 20mph delivery and evidence of impact to date

Background

14. Background information can be found in [previous written evidence](#) recently submitted to the Committee.

Latest developments

Highway authorities

15. Nearly all highway authorities have now completed their signage works. Some of the rural authorities with very extensive road networks will still be completing some of the signage on smaller side roads. Most authorities experienced vandalism of signs, ranging from spray painting to cutting of posts and damage to speed camera equipment. Although vandalism peaked in the first few weeks after the coming into force, some vandalism has been reported as late as mid-November. The vandalism has hampered highway authorities' timely delivery of their programmes.
16. The logistical challenge of changing the signs, compounded with the vandalism and the use of the incorrect term of "blanket" in relation to the default 20mph limit caused confusion amongst drivers. Some of this confusion indicates that drivers may not be very familiar with signing of speed limits.
17. The Minister and Deputy Minister for Climate Change met Council Leaders, Transport Cabinet members and Directors of Transport on 24 October and a [written statement](#) was published the day after, setting out the next steps for supporting highway authorities with the implementation.
18. Feedback sessions – getting a better understanding of how the exceptions criteria have been applied – with highway authorities took place during the month of November. Initial learnings and insights are being collated and shared with all highway authorities.

Evidence base

19. The Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) [wrote](#) to the Welsh Government on 23 November to outline concerns about the way in the leaflet sent to households about the change of default speed limit on restricted roads presented the analysis supporting the leaflet's claim that most journeys would be around one minute longer following the change. We welcome the feedback from the OSR and accept the recommendations.

Enforcement

20. The GoSafe partnership and Police have started enforcing on pre-existing 20mph and new 30mph exceptions roads (where traffic regulation orders and signage have been checked).
21. GoSafe have committed to begin enforcement on new 20mph sites as soon as policing and GoSafe are confident they can do so legally and legitimately.

22. The Police and fire and rescue teams have done some limited engagement sessions already, where operational capacity and resource have allowed it. The national 'Op Ugain' roadside engagement sessions, delivered by three dedicated regional teams, will be operational from January 2024.
23. GoSafe intends to use a range of media and communication opportunities to inform both the public and partners about the enforcement and the engagement opportunities. This will ensure that policing, GoSafe and the Welsh Government are aligned in being open and transparent with the public and those who use the road networks.

3. Support for bus services and preparations for delivery and implementation of the Bus Bill

Background

24. The Welsh Government made £46m available from bus budgets this year to support the Bus Emergency Scheme (BES) and the Bus Transition Fund (BTF) arrangements for the whole financial year. This funding has also kept the strategic TrawsCymru services running. By the end of this financial year the Welsh Government will have provided over £200m of funding to protect our bus network since the onset of the Covid pandemic.

Progress to date

25. The funding available will ensure that the majority of current bus services will be protected across Wales.

26. We established Regional Network Planning Teams, consisting of TfW, bus operators and local authorities, and tasked them with planning and costing a network of bus services which could be delivered when the emergency/transition funding ends. These Regional Planning Teams and TfW continue to meet to prepare an overview of the changes that will be made to services. Some services may change to reflect different travel patterns following the pandemic. This work continues at pace so that any potential future network changes are communicated with as much notice as possible.

27. Legislation will be introduced to reform the bus system in Wales by taking public control through a franchised network, allowing people to be put first before profit, and make buses as easy and attractive to use as we can. While legislation is being prepared officials continue to work with key bus industry stakeholders to develop a longer-term sustainable funding model that will bridge the gap to franchising.

Preparations for the Bus Bill

28. The white paper we published last year – ‘One Network, One Timetable, One Ticket’ – set out our proposals for new bus legislation. The First Minister confirmed in his [statement on the legislative programme](#) in July that we intend to introduce a bill during the third year of this Senedd.

29. In line with their updated, multi-modal, remit TfW have been working closely with local partners to prepare for a future in which bus services are franchised across Wales. This includes making organisational preparations to manage the operational processes involved in planning and implementing a franchised bus system. Over recent years TfW have worked closely with local authorities across Wales to consider how bus networks could be improved. This will form the basis of preparations for a franchised network but will need to be continuously reviewed and updated to reflect the fundamental challenges the sector is facing, with a combination of reduced patronage and cost inflation.

30. The written statement issued on 10 November set out some of the progress which has been made. The Regional Network Planning Teams can provide a strong foundation from which to jointly design and monitor a franchised network.
31. TfW are also working with local authorities on practical preparations to consider what further progress we can make ahead of new legislation. For example, where services are being contracted out, they are looking at whether improvements can be made to the network and contractual models updated to reduce the scale of the transition to franchising.

4. Development of Corporate Joint Committees and preparation of Regional Transport Plans

Background

32. Regional Transport Plans (RTPs) are required of the 4 formed Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs) in North Wales, Mid Wales, South East Wales and South West Wales respectively. The first plans will cover 2025-2030. RTPs are intended to deliver the Wales Transport Strategy in the regions. We are keen that they are strongly linked to Strategic Development Plans, so that there is better integration between transport, and land use planning and economic regeneration.

Progress to date

33. Guidance has been issued to the CJCs on how to produce RTPs, what steps we expect them to take and how the Welsh Government and TfW will be involved. Each CJC has submitted an implementation plan setting out how they will deliver their RTP.
34. The Welsh Government has allocated £125,000 for each CJC to support delivery in 2023-24. Allocations for future financial years are being considered. The 'Metro' teams in TfW have transitioned to 'Regional Transport Teams' to support the four regions in RTP development. They offer technical support, including from the TfW Analytical Unit, to do modelling and first principles Origin-Destination work using the regional models.

Key milestones

- 31st October 2023 – CJCs to submit Implementation Plan to Welsh Government [COMPLETE].
- 29th February 2024 – CJCs to submit Regional Transport Plan (RTP) Case for Change including SMART objectives to Welsh Government
- 29th May 2024 – CJCs to submit initial draft RTP, Integrated Wellbeing Appraisal (IWBA) and Regional Transport Delivery Plan (RTDP) to Welsh Government BEFORE public consultation
- 31st October 2024 – CJCs to submit final draft RTP, IWBA and RTDP to Welsh Government
- 29th March 2025 – CJCs to submit final RTP, IWBA and RTDP to Welsh Government
- 30th June 2025 – Welsh Government decision on approval of RTPs

5. Decarbonisation of bus, taxi and PHV – progress towards meeting targets

Background

35. Net Zero Wales' (NZW), our plan to decarbonise the Welsh economy focused on what has to be a decade of action. The targets for bus decarbonisation within NZW are:

- The whole Traws Cymru bus fleet to be zero tailpipe emission by 2026.
- The most polluting 50% of service buses to be replaced by a zero tailpipe emission bus fleet by 2028.
- The remaining 50% of the service bus fleet to be zero emission by 2035.
- To investigate opportunities to reduce the emissions of the less polluting service and school transport buses before their replacement before 2035.
- To review the policy for home to school transport before the autumn of 2022 and bring forward costed plans to replace the balance of the school fleet by 2035.

36. The replacement of the bus fleet in Wales over the next 15 years presents a high value opportunity for the economy in Wales.

37. Taxis and private hire vehicles are regulated by local authorities, some of which use licence conditions to limit the age or emissions of licensed vehicles. In our Programme for Government, we committed to legislate to modernise the taxi and private hire vehicle sector. One of our proposals is to introduce national vehicle standards. These standards will play an important role in making the industry more attractive to passengers and lowering emissions of licensed taxis and private vehicles over time.

Progress to date

Bus

38. The Minister for Economy and the Deputy Minister for Climate Change agreed to the establishment of a Task and Finish Group (TFG) to develop plans for Bus Fleet Decarbonisation and Demand Aggregation.

39. The role of the Task and Finish Group (TFG) was to bring together critical stakeholders from industry, transport, government, and TfW to work collaboratively in identifying the obstacles to progression on this agenda, and to discuss and agree on tangible opportunities to make progress toward delivery. This co-creation formulated recommendations by the TFG in a final paper in March 2022. The recommendations included:

- Inclusion of customer in bus fleet decarbonisation plan development, including plan to change public perceptions
- Undertake a thorough network evaluation based on existing opportunities and fuel or charging requirements, making clear recommendations for fuel type across the network in order to create long-term planning of network upgrades.

- Collaborate with operators to establish a clear understanding of the funding mechanisms and long-term volume of vehicles required, to address concerns raised by operators with regards to fleet transition.
- Develop a fleet transition plan, accounting for the range capability, network demands, volume requirements, and life-cycle of ZEB's in order to deploy ZEB's.
- Develop clear plans about re-charging/re-fuelling infrastructure requirements and how shared depots, resources, assets, and skills can help develop infrastructure in a cost and time effective way.

40. We are investing in and supporting moves to invest in new green zero emission vehicles for use on the local bus services across Wales. Plans for the decarbonisation of the service bus fleet by 2035 are now nearing completion with an outline business to be completed by the end of this financial year

41. Fully electric buses are now in daily service in Cardiff and Newport and we have grant funded fleets of new electric buses in west and north Wales for use on the Welsh Government funded TrawsCymru network. These deployments in Wales mean we are broadly in line with other areas of the UK, in terms of percentage of the service bus fleet having been decarbonised.

42. There are now 14 electric buses operating on the Traws Cymru service in North and West Wales. Newport Bus have purchased 44 EV vehicles and Cardiff Bus 36 EV vehicles. Both Cardiff and Newport bus will be deploying further buses later in this Financial Year.

43. To date the Welsh Government has invested £8.519m in support of electric buses for the Traws Cymru Network and provided a commercial loan to Newport Transport Ltd of £1.85m to purchase electric buses as well as grants to Cardiff and Newport City Councils (£8m and £6.323m respectively).

44. The budget for 2023-24 is £11m but this will also cover some network reform costs and the cost of preparation for franchising. In the remainder of this financial year we will:

- complete an outline business case for fleet transition.
- commence the procurement of the Traws Cymru fleet.
- procure and develop depots for the Traws Cymru fleet.
- commence the procurement of the hydrogen buses for the Swansea pathfinder project.

Taxi and private hire

45. The Deputy Minister for Climate Change has consulted on proposals for a Taxi and Private Hire Vehicles (Wales) Bill. In October 2023, the Deputy Minister published a [summary of consultation responses](#) and made an Oral Statement on the Bill.

46. We remain fully committed to achieving Net Zero by 2050 and decarbonising cars will be an important part of that. However, we recognise that there are challenges for the taxi and private hire vehicle trade including: the cost of buying a ZEV, anxiety about vehicle range and the availability of charging infrastructure. Wales cannot move faster than the rest of the UK on these issues. But we expect the taxi and PHV trade to transition to EV in line with the rest of the car market.

47. To encourage transition to zero emission vehicles, we are:

- Trialling charging points dedicated for electric taxis in key locations to try and make sure they have priority charging when they need it; and,
- Providing funding towards 44 electric taxis used for a “try before you buy” scheme in Wales.

6. Active travel

Background

48. This autumn marked the tenth anniversary of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013. In 2022 the Cross-Party Group on the Act undertook a review, led by an expert stakeholder panel, which resulted in a series of recommendations. Throughout 2023, the Welsh Government has been working with TfW, other delivery partners and external stakeholders to strengthen our current active travel delivery framework in response to these recommendations and more widely.

Progress to date

49. In response to the review, the Active Travel Board has been re-shaped and given a stronger scrutiny function. Independent members were appointed to lead the scrutiny role alongside the Board's chair and the secretariat function for the Board is now being undertaken by the Design Commission for Wales. The Board meets bi-monthly and in each meeting scrutinises specific delivery elements, for which it publishes its recommendations and the delivery partners response.
50. The delivery framework for the Active Travel Fund as the biggest strand of capital investment in active travel infrastructure in Wales has matured since its administration. Support functions were moved to TfW in 2021 in order to be able to provide greater levels of support and challenge to local authorities. The fund volume for local authorities was protected at the same level as in 2022-23 at just under £50 million in challenging budgetary circumstances, and £15m of this has been allocated as non-competitive core funding to enable all local authorities to undertake small scale improvements and preparatory work for larger schemes, as well as undertaking promotion and monitoring activities. Over 200 schemes are receiving funding through this core allocation. The remaining £35million has been allocated on the basis of a competitive application process to 43 main schemes and 16 packages of schemes.
51. All 22 local authorities have reviewed and revised their existing active travel routes and further developed their integrated network plans over the last two years. All maps submitted to the Welsh Ministers have now been approved and the full set of Active Travel Network Maps can be viewed on DataMap Wales. In response to recommendations made by the Cross-Party Group and supported by the Active Travel Board, the date for the next submission of revised maps has been moved to 1 December 2026 to allow local authorities more time before the next cycle to focus on delivering active travel improvements.
52. To support local authorities in this work, TfW have developed a national map-based prioritisation tool, that draws on a range of data, such as population densities and location of travel destinations such as schools, shopping centres and services, to provide an assessment of the potential impact on active travel use for each route.
53. Work has begun on developing tailored training programmes for the active travel sector and the first tranche has been delivered to 60 participants in autumn 2023.
54. Increasing the levels of children at both primary school and secondary school age who travel to school by active modes is a key priority for the Welsh Government, as well as the Cross-Party Group and the Active Travel Board. Over the last twelve months we have taken significant steps to build on our successful long-standing programmes like the Active Journey programme and the Safe Routes in Communities Grant with complementary elements. We have commissioned the development and trialling of resources to support the development of easy-to-

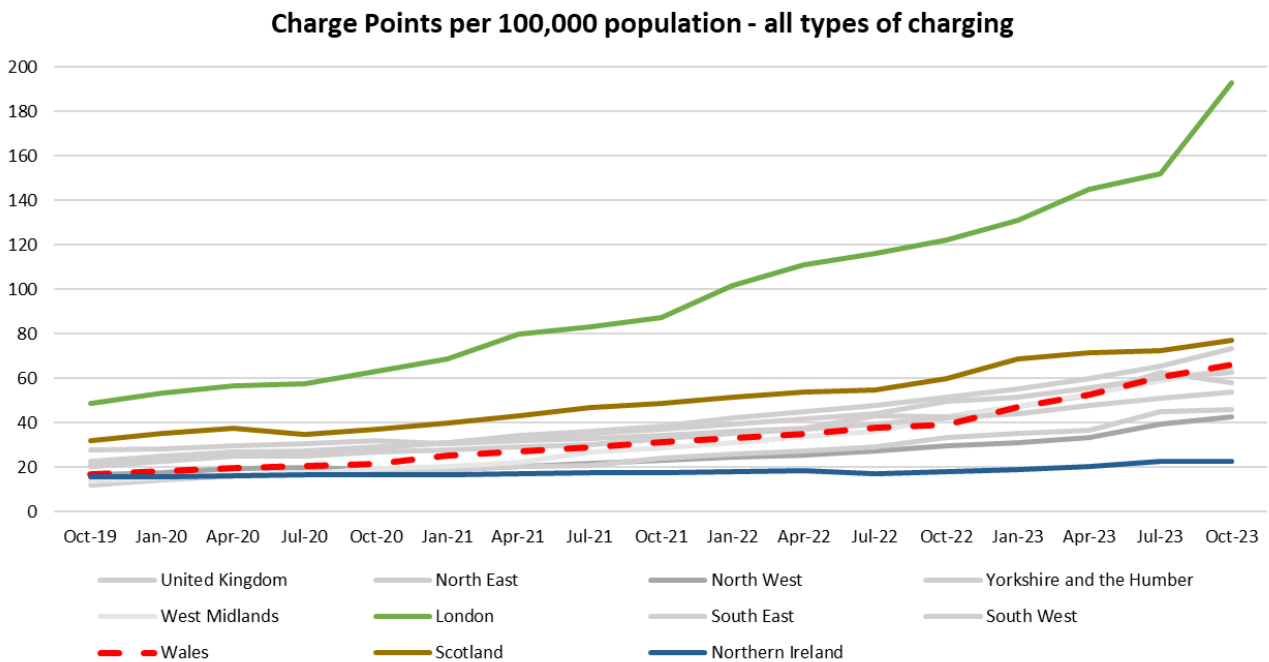
prepare and use Active Travel School Plans, as well as the roll-out of a large scale walk to school programme. We have been working with local authorities and other partners to develop Guidance on the implementation of School Streets, on which the Safe Routes in Communities Grant places increasing emphasis, as a proven way to encourage greater active travel to school and improve safety and air quality. We have also provided additional funding for local authorities to step up delivery of cycle training and funded bike fleets for schools to enable more children to be able to take part in training, as well as provide opportunities for trips during the school day to be undertaken by bike.

55. The recently passed Environment (Air Quality and Soundscapes) (Wales) Bill included provisions for the amendment of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 which we will commence by the end of 2024. The amendments require the Welsh Ministers and local authorities to promote active travel as a way of reducing or limiting air pollution and to report on the steps they have taken at set intervals and provide the Welsh Ministers with powers to extend this duty to other public bodies at a later stage. At the time the amendment is commenced, we will publish Guidance for local authorities and a statement setting out our plans for how we will meet this duty.

7. Delivery of the EV charging strategy and action plan – including the further update on progress against the action plan promised by September in the Welsh Government’s response to the Committee’s report

56. An update on the matters included in the 21 recommendations within the Committee’s report on EV charging infrastructure is being finalised and will be issued by the end of December.

57. The October 2023 report from the DfT indicates that the number of EV Charge Points in Wales has grown 68% annually and total infrastructure per head of population is surpassed only by London and Scotland. The dotted red line on the graph below illustrates this progress.



Electric vehicle charging device statistics: October 2023 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

8. Progress in meeting modal shift targets and development of an approach to behaviour change

National Travel Survey

58. Llwybr Newydd includes a commitment to establish a National Travel Survey for Wales to monitor progress against achieving our priorities and ambitions. The data it collects will enable us to track progress towards our targets on mode shift, active travel, car use per capita and remote working. It will inform policy development across Transport and support robust business cases. TfW has appointed a development and delivery partner to deliver a National Travel Survey. We aim to commence data collection in late 2024.

Behaviour Change

59. To change behaviour will mean people change those choices they habitually make to take the car rather than walk, cycle or take public transport. To do this we will encourage a shift to low-carbon sustainable transport and make using public and active travel the easy thing to do. We will do this by making sustainable transport more attractive and more affordable, and by adopting innovations that make it easier to use.

60. Our delivery programme will embed a strategic approach to behaviour change through application of the 'COM-B' model. The COM-B model is a widely used way of supporting behaviour change. It states that in order to change a behaviour, an individual must have the Capability to do it, the Motivation to do it, and external factors must provide them with an Opportunity to do it. We will apply this to all of our interventions so that we ensure that we are providing:

- the Opportunity to make sustainable transport choices
- the Capability to use sustainable transport
- the Motivation to make a shift away from private car use.

61. TfW has developed a behaviour change strategy to embed the COM-B model in its work. We are also continuing to implement proven behaviour change interventions, including delivering active journeys to schools programmes.

9. Delivery of South East Wales Transport Commission recommendations

Background

62. Lord Burns made 58 recommendations for sustainable alternatives to tackling congestion on the M4 around Newport. His 2020 report set out a plan for a modern public transport system for Newport, which will ease congestion around the M4 and improve services for residents of the city. The Commission's recommendations were all accepted in principle by the Welsh Government and aligned well with the new Wales Transport Strategy.
63. A Delivery Unit in TfW is pressing ahead with making the recommendations a reality. The Board of the Delivery Unit is formed of Welsh Government, TfW, Network Rail and the local authorities of Cardiff, Newport, and Monmouthshire. It is independently chaired by Professor Simon Gibson CBE and Dr Lynn Sloman MBE.
64. Co-working with Local Authorities is essential, and the Delivery Board are working productively and positively with Newport, Cardiff and Monmouthshire Councils.

Progress to date

65. TfW are running a [consultation](#) on the five proposed new train stations between Cardiff Central and Severn Tunnel Junction with improved cross border services. Rail infrastructure is not devolved, and officials are working closely with Network Rail and the UK Government, who have funded the current £2.7m stage of work that TfW are doing.
66. The Unit are pressing ahead in developing priority local measures such as:
- improving bus and active travel connections between Cardiff and Newport,
 - improving active travel and bus flow around Old Green Roundabout in central Newport, and
 - enhancing sustainable access to Severn Tunnel Junction rail station.

10. The North Wales Transport Commission

Background

67. The role of the North Wales Transport Commission is to investigate the problems, opportunities, challenges and objectives for realising a sustainable, integrated transport system in north Wales.

68. The group was announced in March 2022, led by Lord Burns GCB. The six commissioners are:

- Professor John Parkin, Professor of Transport Engineering at the University of the West of England and Deputy Director of the Centre for Transport and Society
- Ashley Rogers, Commercial Director of the North Wales Mersey Dee Business Council
- Dyfed Edwards, Deputy Chair of the Welsh Revenue Authority and former Leader of Gwynedd Council
- Dr Georgina Santos, Reader at Cardiff University and economist interested in environmental and transport economics and public policy.
- Sue Flack, Former Director of Planning and Transport at Nottingham City Council, now independent transport consultant specialising in integrating planning and transport.
- Stephen Joseph OBE, Advisor and former Director of the Campaign for Better Transport.

69. The Commission has also been asked to consider how the resilience of the Menai crossings can be improved.

70. A separate report to accompany the main document is being prepared looking at all options to achieve this. Both reports will be published at the same time.

Progress to date

71. On 29 January 2023, the North Wales Transport Commission, chaired by Lord Terry Burns, published its [Progress Statement](#). The Commission's [Interim Report](#), with its emerging conclusions and draft recommendations, was published on 9 June.

72. The Commission subsequently undertook a second round of stakeholder meetings accompanied by a public survey to test the Commission's findings with interested groups and the wider public. The final report and recommendations are due for publication by the end of the year [2023].

73. The Commission has concluded that travel patterns in north Wales need to change, and that change is possible, including in rural areas.

74. Current travel patterns are costly for households; those without car access (17% of households in north Wales) find it difficult and expensive to get around and are disadvantaged as a result. To address these issues, alternatives to car travel should and can become much better and more affordable. Many of the Commission's forthcoming recommendations will focus on public transport and active travel improvements that will provide a genuine alternative to the private car.

Conclusions of the interim report

Rail

75. The Commission welcomes the commitment to investment in north Wales rail from UK Government and agrees that improving the North Wales Main Line is a priority due to its pivotal role in the regional rail network. The Commission recognises the importance of both the North Wales Main and Borderlands Lines to transport in north Wales, for connections to the northwest of England, and beyond.
76. The forthcoming report and recommendations will set out the steps identified to improve rail in north Wales, starting with a first phase of infrastructure improvements on the North Wales Main Line and work to address capacity constraints at Chester station. Following second and third phase improvements, electrification would then be the final step in transforming the North Wales Main Line.
77. The Commission also identifies a range of work to improve access to and from Liverpool along the Borderlands line, with better interchange between this line and the North Wales Main Line at Shotton.

Bus

78. The Commission fully supports the legislative changes proposed by Welsh Government for buses as outlined in the white paper – ‘One Network, One Timetable, One Ticket’ – which offers a significant opportunity to address the issues identified in relation to the bus network. The Commission will recommend a revised bus network that at a whole-region level can effectively connect main locations and rail main lines. The services within the core network that connect directly to railway stations across the region will improve interchange between modes.

Active Travel

79. The Commission wants to see strengthened mechanisms for delivering comprehensive, attractive and comfortable active travel networks. A method for achieving this is with an extended remit for TFW and better collaboration with local highway authorities.
80. Priority areas for extensive active travel route development are identified, with enhancements supported for locations such as the Wrexham Industrial Park, Deeside Industrial Park, Parc Menai, and the Caernarfon Road retail strip in Bangor.

Integration

81. The Commission is interested in better regional ticketing integration, and improved access to information.

11. Transport links between north and south Wales (Cooperation Agreement)

Background

82. The Cooperation Agreement includes the following commitment on public transport:

- We will ask TfW and other partners to explore how transport links between the north and south of Wales can be developed, including how to protect potential travel corridors along the western coast of Wales from Swansea to Bangor.
- We will ask TfW to form a partnership with local authorities in the North West of Wales and the Welsh Government to develop delivery plans for an integrated transport system for the region.
- We will continue to press ahead with metro developments in different parts of Wales, focusing on how we can improve connectivity to achieve modal shift.

Progress to date

83. The rail infrastructure needed to reopen the lines between north and south Wales is not a devolved matter.

84. TfW have carried out a WelTAG stage 1 study into options to improve transport links between north and south Wales, including how to protect potential travel corridors along the western coast of Wales from Swansea to Bangor. As part of this work they are undertaking an initial feasibility study on the route between Bangor and Afon Wen, which will identify the best alignment for a connection and current constraints. This will help refine the land requirements for the route further, to help support any future decision on protecting the alignment in whole or part. They are also looking at the development of a Full Business Case for North to South Strategic Coach links. These are aimed at exploring a route between Bangor –Carmarthen (via Aberystwyth) with a circa 4.5 hour end to end journey time.

12. An update on plans to ban pavement parking, and work on unadopted roads (including delivery of the recommendations included in the unadopted roads task force report)

Pavement parking

85. The Wales Pavement Parking Taskforce (WPPT) was set up in 2019 and it recommended giving Local Authorities powers to tackle pavement parking by introducing subordinate legislation to allow civil enforcement (Report October 2020).
86. For this approach to work, the Welsh Government needed the UK Government to amend existing regulations on obstruction of the road – expressly separating out obstruction of the pavement. The UK Government committed to this, but this was reliant on parliamentary time being found, which is challenging.
87. The WPPT reconvened in April 2022 to explore the feasibility of using the existing offence of obstruction of the road to address the issue of pavement parking and produced an Addendum to the WPPT Report, recommending using the existing offence of the unnecessary obstruction of the road and to begin public consultation. The Addendum and its recommendations were accepted by Ministers in January 2023.
88. The public consultation and proposed laying of legislation were delayed because of pressures on local authorities and a written statement to this effect was published in April 2023.
89. Our aim is to consult on our proposals in January 2024 and for legislation to come into force by the end of 2024.

Unadopted roads

90. A written statement published in October 2020 set out the response to the report and recommendations from the Unadopted Roads Taskforce. Building on this, the Task Force undertook some follow up work, making further recommendations.
91. All local highway authorities were contacted and asked to identify the priority unadopted road issues and asked to provide cost estimates for improvements; any proposals would need to be justified in terms of need based on national and local priorities.
92. We decided to proceed on a pilot basis to address local unadopted road priorities, with the development of a process for distributing a potential future Unadopted Roads fund fairly and equitably across Wales, subject to the findings of the pilot.
93. Two pilot trials were funded, one in 2021 and another one this financial year. The pilots have been on hold due to local authority resource constraints. Nevertheless, we anticipate that local authorities will invest up to £600,000 in Welsh Government grant funding this financial year.
94. A suite of Common Standards was published for use by Local Highway Authorities and developers and annual funding was rewarded to enable these to be reviewed and updated regularly by the County Surveyors' Society Wales.

95. In addition we have also published a [Highways Adoption Advice Note](#).