
CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE

18 July, 2025

TITLE: Regional Transport Plan for North Wales – Post-Consultation

AUTHOR: Alwen Williams, Chief Executive

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1. The purpose of the report is to present the North Wales Regional Transport Plan (RTP) including supporting documents outlined in the appendices, for the Corporate Joint Committee to review and approve for submission to the Welsh Government.

2. DECISION SOUGHT

- 2.1. That the Corporate Joint Committee approves the RTP and supporting documentation for the submission to Welsh Government for Ministerial approval and publication in September 2025.

3. REASON FOR THE DECISION

- 3.1. Further to the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee Regulations 2021 transfers the function of developing transport policies in respect of the area of each of its constituent councils to the Corporate Joint Committee (CJC). The development and implementation of a Regional Transport Plan is a statutory function exercised by the CJC through its Corporate Joint Committee, supported by the Guidance to Corporate Joint Committees on Regional Transport Plans (Version 2) 2023. Following approval and publication by the Welsh Government the Regional Transport Plan for the North Wales region will be adopted by the CJC through its implementation process to deliver a 5-year investment programme.

4. BACKGROUND AND RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1. One of the key reasons why Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs) have been formed is to promote regional collaboration through a consistent and democratically controlled framework. CJCs are required to comply with all public body duties and have specific statutory duties including carrying out the function of the preparation of Regional Transport Plans (RTPs). For North Wales, the CJC must develop transport policies to implement the Llwybr Newydd: the Wales Transport Strategy 2021, providing a long-term vision for the next 25 years. This regional work is being carried out collaboratively across the six local authorities that make up the Membership of the North Wales CJC, and representatives from the Eryri National Park Authority and Transport for Wales.

- 4.2. The Strategic Transport Sub-Committee at its inaugural meeting on 1st October, 2024 recommended the CJC adopt the North Wales Regional Transport Plan Vision statement, including its SMART objectives, and Cross-cutting themes for inclusion in the presented draft Case for Change, and for the draft to be updated and presented to Corporate Joint Committee at its next meeting. The Corporate Joint Committee was also requested to note the draft Stakeholder Engagement Plan presented, which must be prepared in support of the RTP, and to recommend any additional considerations that should be included.
- 4.3. On the 16th December, 2024 the Strategic Transport Sub-Committee recommended that the CJC approve the Case for Change including the Stakeholder Engagement Plan, and to support the commencement of public consultation on the draft Regional Transport Plan.
- 4.4. The Corporate Joint Committee on the 17th January, 2025 approved the Case for Change, including the Stakeholder Engagement Plan and supported the commencement of public consultation on the draft Regional Transport Plan. CJC Papers for this decision are available here: [Agenda for North Wales Corporate Joint Committee on Friday, 17th January, 2025, 1.30 pm](#)
- 4.5. All RTP documents have been produced in partnership with consultant technical advisers ARUP with collaborative feedback from our key stakeholders. These were published as part of the public consultation process which was live from the 20th January to the 14th April, 2025. This 12 week public consultation process was carried out virtually whilst also promoted on social media and through partnership organisations.
- 4.6. Public consultation on the draft RTP is a key step in evaluating the strategic policy direction and aspirational values on the draft RTP and its associated documents, including:
 - i. The RTP at **Appendix 1** sets out the long-term vision for a region's transport system, alongside objectives, policies and interventions for improving the transport infrastructure and services. An 'Easy Read by Learning Disability Wales' at **Appendix 8** and 'Easy to Read' copies helped everyone with an interest in the proposals to engage.
 - ii. The draft Regional Transport Delivery Plan (RTDP) at **Appendices 2-3** sets out the local authority schemes to address the objectives, policies and interventions set out in the draft RTP. Supporting separate interactive PDF diagram documents help illustrate the schemes and their details.
 - iii. The Integrated Wellbeing Appraisal (IWBA) demonstrates how RTP policies will contribute to well-being, supported by impact assessments that consider matters such as the environment, health, equality and biodiversity. A Non-Technical Summary at **Appendix 4** supports the IWBA.
 - iv. The Monitoring and Evaluation Plan at **Appendix 6** outlines how the RTP will be monitored, measured and evaluated, seeking to ensure it will help achieve the national priorities and ambitions in the Wales Transport Strategy (WTS). It includes the region's contribution to national decarbonisation and modal shift targets.

4.7 The Consultation Report at **Appendix 7** sets out the findings of the consultation completed following the receipt of 1,684 responses, which included 1,421 related to a campaign supported by the North Wales Wildlife Trust opposing the A494/A55/Flintshire Corridor (commonly referred to as the 'Red Route') in relation to the perceived potential of a previously proposed trunk road being re-considered as an aspiration within the RTP. The objection sets out [verbatim]:

- i. The dual carriageway would destroy large areas of Flintshire's rich and irreplaceable wildlife, including for example, the Leadbrook ancient woodland and species-rich grassland.
- ii. The new highway would create new traffic, and the resultant increase in carbon emissions, including construction-related emissions would seriously damage Wales's fight against climate change.
- iii. The project is not needed. Recent advances in SMART traffic technology, minor 'on-line' highway works not involving new highway construction, coupled with enhanced public and active transport would go a very long way towards addressing any congestion issues, at a small fraction of the cost and carbon budget of the Red Route.
- iv. The cost has already spiralled out of control – the last Government budget update in 2019, estimated the cost of the Red Route as £300m. The cost, if the Red Route were to proceed now, would be a staggering £5700m, an increase of £207m or 70%. Even these astronomical sums are probably an underestimate.
- v. Welsh Government guidance states that Regional Transport Plans are supposed to focus on making the best use of existing transport infrastructure and help disincentivise car-use, so the inclusion of the Red Route as an aspiration runs counter to the remit of the plan. Please therefore delete the Red Route from the list of 'aspirational' schemes set out in the draft North Wales Regional Transport Plan

Alongside individual responses to the consultation, 37 organisational responses were also identified.

In summary, the draft Consultation Report outlines:

- i. Our alignment to statutory procedures;
- ii. Our approach to public consultation including local authority in-person events held and a summary of discussion;
- iii. Public consultation responses outlining a breakdown of demographics, thematic responses and data highlighting sentiment and feedback topics;
- iv. The campaign response from North Wales Wildlife Trust;
- v. How all feedback received has been taken into account.

- 4.8. All feedback has been carefully considered and taken into account, informing the RTP and its supporting documents. To help demonstrate how feedback has been taken into account, topics of feedback have been grouped and responses provided in a 'You Said, We Did' approach, which can be found in **Appendix 6** of the Consultation Report. Where the RTP or any of its supporting documents have been amended to address feedback, this is explained in the responses provided. A Post Adoption Statement for the IWBA at **Appendix 5** has been prepared alongside and separately to this Consultation Report, which explains how the feedback has shaped the IWBA and how the IWBA has informed the RTP documents accordingly (in accordance with Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and associated procedures).
- 4.9 On 30th June 2025 the Strategic Transport Sub-Committee convened and were provided a presentation of the RTP and supporting documents. This included an update on changes to draft documents taking into account feedback from the public consultation, and also our intentions to make further and final amendments in readiness for the CJC in July 2025. These amendments include:
- i. RTDP – Scheme 105 'Introduce a network of regional rural Fflecsi services with an hourly service frequency extending into the evenings that link rural settlements and are operated by a fleet of Fflecsi bus and coaches that are comfortable for longer journeys' – we have updated to reflect plans for Sherpa'r Wyddfa, G23, and Fflecsi services.
 - ii. RTDP – 'Road Safety Revenue: Educational Interventions' – we have amalgamated schemes 279 and 284 and merged into a single 'all local authorities' scheme to ensure all have the flexibility to retain the Road Safety Educational Interventions initiatives.
 - iii. RTDP – 'Highway maintenance and improvements, Wrexham' – we have updated scheme 159 to reflect plans for new innovative maintenance trials. The scheme description has been expanded to explain 'Highway maintenance and improvements: A range of schemes involving capacity and safety enhancements/ pinch point improvements and Transport Network resilience improvements, with specific measures including, but not limited to street lighting renewal, flood risk alleviation, greener maintenance methods and active travel route improvements. Wrexham will trial methods of resurfacing which are greener and help us reduce our carbon contribution, and this could help us address issues on rural roads which may get overlooked currently based on the need to prioritise strategic routes. These innovations if successful could bring efficiencies across the region, over and beyond the plan period.
 - iv. RTDP – we have removed scheme 153 relating to Pont Llanerch/Llanerch Bridge, now that Denbighshire County Council's Cabinet has taken the decision to withdraw the project.
 - v. RTP and supporting documents – we have amended SRN Aspiration 3 to read: The case for delivering strategic highway schemes should be reviewed, particularly where these can provide wider benefits and enhance facilities for sustainable travel. The Welsh Government has confirmed that the previous plans for A55/A494/A548 Flintshire Corridor Improvements are not being progressed following the recommendations of the Roads Review and it is currently in the process of commissioning new work to develop a Route Strategy for the A55/A494 which will identify the challenges and issues along the corridor along with potential interventions to address them. This includes confirmation from the Welsh Government that it has commissioned a study (WelTAG Stages 1 and 2) to consider

network operational challenges, resilience and road safety between Junction 14 and 18 on the A55.

- vi. The Consultation Report – types of responses received have been finalised with a minor amendment to the document.

During the meeting Members were also briefed that correspondence from the North Wales Wildlife Trust at **Appendix 9** in connection with the Stamp Out The Red Route local action group was received objecting to the Sub-Committee’s consideration of the RTP. This was addressed in the Sub-Committee meeting and followed up with a written response at **Appendix 10** to the North Wales Wildlife Trust.

The Strategic Transport Sub-Committee recommended that the CJC approve the RTP and its supporting documents for submission to the Welsh Government for Ministerial approval and publication. The Sub-Committee recognised and commended officers and partners for the significant collaborative effort required to produce these documents in readiness for submission.

- 4.10. Further to the Strategic Transport Sub-Committee’s recommendation Members are asked to now consider the RTP and its supporting material to approve its submission to Welsh Government for Ministerial approval. This step will also enable the CJC to meet Welsh Government deadlines for submission by end of July 2025 deadline and avoid any delay to the Grants Modernisation programme and commencement of new funding arrangement from 1st April, 2026.
- 4.11 Consideration has been given to the impact the decision sought in this report may have on opportunities for people to use and promote the Welsh Language and no negative impacts were identified. In developing the the decision sought regard has been had to the well-being duty arising under the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and in light of the evaluation work undertaken in the Integrated Well-Being appraisal Officers are of the view that the decision sought in this report meets the well-being duty requirements. The integrated well-being appraisal addresses equality implications and supports the decision and demonstrates how RTP policies will contribute to well-being, supported by impact assessments that consider matters such as the environment, health and equality.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. Costs will be drawn from existing North Wales CJC budgets with the necessary support from Cyngor Gwynedd’s Legal and Finance teams.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. The North Wales Corporate Joint Committee Regulations 2021 sets out the duty on the CJC to develop policies for the promotion and encouragement of safe, integrated, efficient and economic transport. In exercising this function, they are tasked to develop and implement transport policies for their area of the Wales Transport Strategy. The development and implementation of a Regional Transport Plan is a statutory function exercised by the CJC.
-

CORE APPENDICES:

Appendix 1:	Regional Transport Plan
Appendix 2:	Regional Transport Delivery Plan (Appendix A Unredacted) (Exempt)
Appendix 3:	Regional Transport Delivery Plan (Appendix A Redacted)
Appendix 4:	Integrated Well-being Appraisal Non-Technical Summary
Appendix 5:	Integrated Well-being Appraisal Post Adoption Statement
Appendix 6:	Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
Appendix 7:	Consultation Report
Appendix 8:	Regional Transport Plan – Easy Read (Learning Disability Wales)
Appendix 9:	North Wales Wildlife Trust letter dated 27 June 2025 (English Only)
Appendix 10:	North Wales CJC Letter to North Wales Wildlife Trust dated 09 July 2025

TECHNICAL APPENDICES (Included for reference)

Appendix 11:	RTDP Appendix A [Interactive Tool] (Exempt)
Appendix 12:	RTDP Appendix B1 [Interactive Tool] Total Perspective (Exempt)
Appendix 13:	RTDP Appendix B2 [Interactive Tool] Local Authority Delivery Perspective (Exempt)
Appendix 14:	RTDP Appendix B3 [Interactive Tool] Funding Source Perspective (Exempt)
Appendix 15:	RTDP Appendix B4 [Interactive Tool] Customer Perspective (Exempt)
Appendix 16:	Integrated Well-being Appraisal Report
Appendix 17:	Monitoring and Evaluation Plan Appendix A1 [Interactive Tool]

STATUTORY OFFICERS RESPONSE:

i. **Monitoring Officer.**

This is a key milestone for the CJC as it implements its statutory duties. The Transport Sub-Committee has provided its recommendation on the approval of the RTP for submission to Welsh Government. In coming to that decision, the CJC should have particular regard to the results of the consultation process as well as the other relevant matters which need to be considered. This is a decision which is reserved to the CJC and I am satisfied that the proper procedure has been followed.

ii. **Statutory Finance Officer:**

“The development of a Regional Transport Plan is a core statutory function of the CJC. As a result, resources have been approved for this function in the 2025/26 budget. This budget is kept under review and will be reported upon to the CJC during the year. The resources adjudged to be required for the further development of the RTP will be considered as part of the budget cycle for future years.”