
NORTH WALES CJC STRATEGIC TRANSPORT SUB-COMMITTEE
30/06/2025

Present:

Councillors:

Gary Pritchard (Isle of Anglesey County Council), Craig ab Iago (Cyngor Gwynedd), Goronwy Edwards (Conwy County Borough Council), Barry Mellor (Denbighshire County Council), Glyn Banks (Flintshire County Council) and David Bithell (Wrexham County Borough Council).

Co-opted Members (Without a Vote):

Angela Jones (Eryri National Park) and Henry Bradshaw (Transport for Wales)

Constituent Councils' Liaison Officers:

Huw Percy (Isle of Anglesey County Council), Gerwyn Jones (Cyngor Gwynedd), Geraint Edwards (Conwy County Borough Council), Emlyn Jones (Denbighshire County Council), Katie Wilby (Flintshire County Council) and Darren Williams and Gwen Thomas (Wrexham County Borough Council).

Officers present:

Alwen Williams (Chief Executive, North Wales Corporate Joint Committee), Claire Incledon (Deputy Monitoring Officer), Misbah Mahmood (Corporate Joint Committee Democracy Lead Officer), David Hole (North Wales Corporate Joint Committee), Andy Roberts (Regional Strategic Development Planning Officer) and Rhodri Jones (Democracy Services Officer).

Others present:

Allan Pitt (ARUP) and Adam Graham (Transport for Wales)

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

It was resolved to elect Councillor Goronwy Edwards as Chair of this Sub-committee for 2025-26.

2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

It was resolved to elect Councillor David Bithell as Vice-chair of this Sub-committee for 2025-26.

3. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from:

- Dafydd Wyn Williams (Cyngor Gwynedd) with Gerwyn Jones deputising
- Iwan Evans (Monitoring Officer)

4. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

There were no declarations of personal interest.

5. URGENT ITEMS

No urgent matters were raised.

6. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting held on 31 March 2025 as a true record.

7. NORTH WALES REGIONAL TRANSPORT PLAN - CONSULTATION

The report was presented by the Chief Executive of the North Wales CJC and the ARUP consultant.

RESOLVED

To approve the North Wales Regional Transport Plan and supporting documentation for submission by the Corporate Joint Committee to the Welsh Government for approval and publication by the Minister in September 2025.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

As a result of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee Regulations 2021 transfer the function of developing transport policies in respect of the area of each of its constituent councils to the Corporate Joint Committee. The development and implementation of a Regional Transport Plan is a statutory function exercised by the Corporate Joint Committee through its Sub-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 Corporate Joint Committee through its implementation process to deliver a five-year investment programme.

DISCUSSION

It was explained that this draft of the North Wales Regional Transport Plan and supporting appendices was being presented to this Sub-committee to allow its Members to review it and present an informed recommendation for submission by the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee to the Welsh Government for approval by the relevant Minister by September 2025. It was emphasised that the Report and all supplementary appendices submitted as part of this item responded to guidelines presented by the Welsh Government on how Corporate Joint Committees should form and develop Regional Transport Plans.

The Consultation Report submitted as part of the Item was discussed in detail and it was explained that it summarised the responses received during the 12 weeks of public consultation undertaken between 20 January and 14 April 2025. Pride was expressed in that 1684 responses had been received to the consultation during this period. Assurance was given that the responses received had contributed to the Plan, as several of its supplementary appendices had been adapted in accordance with the comments received. It was noted that some of the main adaptations included:

- **North Wales Regional Transport Plan** – There was now a commitment to comply with North Wales Network (Transport for Wales) policies, with updates to rail and bus network aspirations. It was noted that a number of schemes were part of this plan and that working with Transport for Wales supported potential future developments such as the development of a fleet of electric trains, a 'pay as you go' system to ensure that public transport was easy to use, and that work was being

done to ensure that trains were available more frequently and consistently. It was emphasised that the Plan and the Joint Committee's wider relationship with Transport for Wales was a long-term one with the likelihood that projects would evolve and adapt over time. It was noted that a number of other adaptations had been made to the plan and that some of these included ensuring support for residents and users of Holywell station (as upgrading this station was not currently a priority for Transport for Wales), improving internet connections, the Welsh Language as well as further adaptations to the Plan following 20mph regulations introduced by the Welsh Government.

- **Non-technical Summary** – Assurance was given that this document had been adapted to reflect the various changes that had been made to the Regional Transport Plan following the observations in the public consultation.
- **Regional Transport Plan Delivery Plan** – It was emphasised that a detailed assessment of projects and costs had been delivered jointly with the Local Authorities, Transport for Wales and other partners. It was explained that information had been confirmed within this document indicating how this region's Plan would work with the national Plan. It was expanded that information about affordability had been included in the document which addressed Welsh Government budgets and the money available to fund various projects. It was noted that some of the other adaptations to this document included information on the prioritisation arrangement for the projects and potential plans to extend Fflecsi services such as Snowdon Sherpa.
- **Integrated Well-being Appraisal** – It was noted that this document had been adapted to correspond to the requirements set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, following the receipt of feedback from the Welsh Government to do this.
- **Post-adoption Statement for the Integrated Well-being Appraisal** – It was explained that this document was new and noted how the Plan conformed to environmental assessments regulations. It was reported that there was detail here on how the Appraisal was delivered and its wider impact on the Plan.
- **Consultation Report** – It was reported that this new document detailed how the Public Consultation was delivered, its impact on the wider Plan and how responses had been considered.
- **The Case for Change** – It was explained that there was no change to this document as it was a support document for the Regional Transport Plan.

It was recommended that it should be ensured that the Joint Committee delegated the right to correct any minor adaptations to the Chief Executive to ensure accuracy.

Members were guided through the next steps of the Regional Transport Plan's development, confirming that the Plan would be presented to the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee. It was confirmed that the Joint Committee would decide whether it wished to submit the draft Plan to the Welsh Government for approval. It was noted that once the Plan had been approved by the government, it would come into effect immediately and would not need to be re-adopted by the Joint Committee and Local Authorities.

Attention was drawn to the fact that members of the Sub-committee had received a letter from North Wales Wildlife Trust highlighting specific grounds for objecting to the discussion of the Plan within this meeting, setting out their desire for the Joint Committee to deal with the letter as an addendum to their response to the public consultation. They were thanked for their letter, and it was emphasised that officers and Members had received this and given it due consideration.

The content of the letter was expanded upon to provide clarity, detailing all the grounds for rejecting the Plan. In response to the first ground for refusal, which stated that the documentation of this meeting had been published on 25 June, limiting the time available to Members to consider it, it was acknowledged that there was very detailed information within the documentation. However, assurance was given that all the members of this Sub-committee were very knowledgeable about the Plan as a number of discussions had taken place since December 2024 and that the Members had been very active in scrutinising the documentation within their relevant local authorities and also with the other Members of the Sub-committee. It was stressed that no formal decision was being approved during this meeting, and it was reiterated that the purpose of the meeting was to submit recommendations to the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee. It was elaborated that the Trust noted that the documentation should be published 10-14 days before the meeting. The Deputy Monitoring Officer noted that there were no grounds for this objection for the above reasons and that three clear days before the date of the meeting was the last date on which North Wales Corporate Joint Committee Meetings documentation could be published in accordance with the Constitution. For clarity, it was explained that Members had received the documentation on 24 June.

In response to the second ground for refusal in the letter stating that Appendix 6 (the interactive supplementary document to the Delivery Plan), should not have been redacted because, in the interest of transparency, the ways in which the sub-committee's consultant Arup addresses the grounds for objection, including legal grounds made in their objection, should be in the public domain, the ARUP consultant confirmed that this document referred to a number of local authority plans and it was confirmed that it was not a public document because it contained commercially confidential information. It was noted that the vast majority of information was available within the Delivery Plan itself.

In response to the third ground for refusal in the letter, which stated that highway schemes within the Welsh Government's Roads Review had been cancelled rather than paused, the ARUP consultant confirmed that there was no development on the projects and therefore this variance in the terms did not make a difference to that. It was highlighted that officers had held discussions with the Welsh Government noting that revised documentation referred to the fact that there was no development in these schemes and that the Joint Corporate Committee would be keen to support a further review of the schemes within the Roads Review in the future.

It was clarified that if Members did not consider the draft Regional Transport Plan and made recommendations to the Joint Committee and adjourned the discussion to another meeting of this Sub-committee, that would have implications for the timetable. It was detailed that the Joint Committee aimed to meet tight deadlines to allow the Welsh Government to give approval to the Plan over the summer. It was elaborated that this would allow the Plan to be published in September. However, assurance was given that the discussion would be adjourned to another meeting if the Members agreed that they wished to do so. The Deputy Monitoring Officer reported that there was no legal requirement to adjourn it as detailed consideration had been given to the letter submitted by North Wales Wildlife Trust, stating that their grounds for refusing this discussion had not proved deserving.

All partners across North Wales were thanked for their continued co-operation which had led to the advent of the Regional Transport Plan to date. ARUP consultants were also thanked for working closely with the Corporate Joint Committee to ensure that a comprehensive draft of the Regional Transport Plan (and supporting appendices) was submitted to this Sub-committee and a meeting of the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee.

The meeting commenced at 14:00 and concluded at 14:45.

Chair