NORTH WALES CJC STRATEGIC TRANSPORT SUB-COMMITTEE
23/03/2026

Present: Councillor David Bithell (Wrexham County Borough Council) (Chair).

Councillors:
Ieuan Williams (Isle of Anglesey County Council), Craig ab Iago (Cyngor Gwynedd), Mike Priestley (Conwy County Borough Council), Barry Mellor (Denbighshire County Council), and Glyn Banks (Flintshire County Council).

Co-opted Members (Non-voting):
Keira Sweenie (Eryri National Park) and Henry Bradshaw (Transport for Wales).

Constituent Councils' Liaison Officers:
Huw Percy (Isle of Anglesey County Council), Gerwyn Jones (Cyngor Gwynedd), Dylan Jones (Conwy County Borough Council), Emlyn Jones (Denbighshire County Council), Katie Wilby (Flintshire County Council) and Gwen Thomas (Wrexham County Borough Council).

Officers present:
Mark Watkins (Monitoring Officer), Claire Incledon (Deputy Monitoring Officer), Dewi Morgan (S151 Officer), Adam Graham (Senior Transport Officer), Rhodri Jones (Democracy Services Officer), and Sera Whitley (Democracy Services Officer).

Others present:
Ben George (Transport for Wales), Lee Robinson (Transport for Wales), Councillor Dave Hughes (Flintshire County Council) and Councillor Edgar Wyn Owen (Eryri National Park).

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from:-

- Dafydd Wyn Williams (Cyngor Gwynedd) with Gerwyn Jones deputising
- Angela Jones (Eryri National Park) with Keira Sweenie deputising
- Alwen Williams (Chief Executive of the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee)
- Geraint Edwards (Conwy County Borough Council) with Dylan Jones deputising
- Darren Williams (Wrexham County Borough Council)

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

There were no declarations of personal interest.

3. URGENT ITEMS

No urgent matters were raised.

4. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this Committee held on 15 December 2025 as a true record.

5. INTRODUCTION: T-NETWORK ADVISORY PANELS

An update on the T-Network Advisory Panels was submitted by Ben George (Transport for Wales).

6. INTRODUCTION: BUS FRANCHISING

An update on Bus Franchising was submitted by Lee Robinson (Transport for Wales).

RESOLVED

That Transport for Wales will provide the following for the Sub-Committee:

- **Timetables for engagement with the public**
- **The agreed approval process - Cabinet and Corporate Joint Committee process**
- **Memorandum of Joint Understanding with Local Authorities and funding arrangements, considering that Local Authorities contributed towards supporting the bus network across the region**

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

None to note.

DISCUSSION

An update on Bus Franchising was submitted by Transport for Wales.

Members were reminded that this presentation was relevant because the network was being prepared for bus franchising.

Concern was expressed about funding provided by local authorities, particularly about what guarantee local authorities received and what input local authorities had in the process. It was explained that local authorities had not been spending on the bus network in previous years but now contributed a few hundred thousand pounds each year as part of the Council Tax settlement. It was noted that this had resulted in a good bus network and that people had welcomed the extra buses in communities.

It was asked how much of the funding would go towards the bureaucratic aspect of bus franchising. It was confirmed that of the £240 million, which was the cost of the whole system across Wales, £20 million came from the contribution of individual local authorities. It was further confirmed that the funding did not go towards the cost of bureaucracy, and that all funding received from local authorities for bus franchising was put towards the network. It was added that the detail needed to be confirmed to show the value that each individual local authority received.

The risks of underperformance, and in particular the risk of where bus routes could be cut, were highlighted. It was confirmed that bus routes would not be cut, as there was an opportunity to trade the overperformance of one area with the underperformance of another. Concern was expressed about the possibility that other counties would have to subsidise any county that continued to underperform, and how that would have an impact in terms of reducing the network.

It was confirmed that the special services, for example the *Snowdon Sherpa* and the *flexi bus*, were included in the franchise services.

Certainty was sought about the approval process, and whether the approval of each network needed to go through the Cabinet of the individual local authority and then the CJC. It was confirmed that it was the decision of individual local authorities, and that Transport for Wales would provide support for any decision on the process. It was acknowledged that the approval process had gone through Cabinet and had been approved by the CJC in South West Wales. It was highlighted that the majority of Members were supportive of bus franchising but that a better understanding and certainty of the operational requirements was needed before approval.

It was explained that Transport for Wales categorised the funding received from local authorities into two elements, namely education transport and community transport. It was noted that the education transport element included elements such as taking children to school, and Members were reminded that local authorities paid Transport for Wales to implement this service on their behalf. It was recognised that contracts with smaller bus operators, for example those used to take children to school, were less risky and that Transport for Wales was aware of which operators were active and productive in the education transport market.

It was confirmed that the primary network would continue to operate without any improvement, but that local authority funding would fund journeys that would not otherwise operate. It was noted that the hope, over time, was that ticket box revenue would increase, by increasing the number of passengers rather than increasing prices, and that this revenue could be reinvested in the network. Members were informed that Transport for Wales officers would be familiar with the existing network, and would work to make it more efficient and effective in order to ensure value for money.

Thanks were expressed for the presentation.

7. THE STRATEGIC TRANSPORT SUB-COMMITTEE'S BIANNUAL REPORT

The report was presented by Adam Graham, Senior Transport Officer.

RESOLVED

The report was considered, noting the observations submitted during the discussion.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

The Terms of Reference for the Sub-committee required that an update report be produced twice a year.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted highlighting that Section 5 of the report provided an overview of the work that the Sub-committee and Ambition North Wales had undertaken over the last six months. This was reported to include the Regional Transport Plan approved by the Welsh Government in October 2025 and the process considered for allocating the Regional Transport Fund and submitting it to the Welsh Government. It was confirmed that approval from the Welsh Government had since been received and that funding had been secured. It was added that the report also included responses to consultations from partner organisations. It was explained that these included: *Liverpool City Region,* who were currently consulting on their Regional Transport Delivery Plan, and Transport for Wales and the Welsh Government who were looking to amend their travel guidance.

It was explained that the report also looked at the financial performance of Transport-related work. It was noted that staff recruitment was being considered, using a project management fee. It was highlighted that these figures had been discussed at this Sub-Committee previously.

8. CO-OPTION ONTO THE STRATEGIC TRANSPORT SUB-COMMITTEE

The report was presented by Claire Incledon, Deputy Monitoring Officer (interim).

RESOLVED

To recommend to the CJC that it co-opts Members (without a vote) on the Sub-committee to support its functions and responsibilities.

That the following are co-opted to the Strategic Transport Sub-committee for another year:

- **A representative of Eryri National Park who is responsible for the transport portfolio.**
- **A representative of Transport for Wales who is responsible for the North Wales region.**

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

Maintain the strength of skills and expertise on the Sub-committee by renewing its membership to continue to include representation of a co-opted Member with specific experience and expertise on transport from a regional and national perspective.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted to the Sub-committee and context was provided. It was clarified that co-options were held annually, and Members were asked to co-opt a representative from the Eryri National Park and a representative from Transport for Wales with responsibility for the North Wales region.

It was explained that the co-option of Members from outside local authorities supported and strengthened the skills and expertise of the Sub-committee, and that the renewal of co-opted members from the Eryri National Park and Transport for Wales provided expertise on transport from a regional and national perspective.

It was highlighted that this was an opportunity for the Sub-committee to identify key stakeholders that it considered would benefit the work of the Sub-committee. It was explained that statutory guidance encouraged the involvement of other officers in the discharge of the Sub-committee's functions and responsibilities.

Members were reminded that the two additional co-opted members were not permitted to vote on the Sub-committee and were not included for quorum purposes.

The meeting commenced at 14:00 and ended at 15:35.

Chair