



## Appendix 5

### **Cyngor Gwynedd's Draft Response to the Consultation on the North Wales Transport Plan**

Dear Cllr. Chairman of the Corporate Joint Committee or Chairman of the Transport Sub-Committee.

#### **Regional Transport Plan (RTP): Feedback from Cyngor Gwynedd**

Cyngor Gwynedd greatly appreciates the opportunity to provide input to the production of the 2025-2030 RTP and in this context the consultation process.

In the first instance, I would like to take the opportunity to sincerely congratulate the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee (CJC), for leading on and coordinating the production of the draft RTP and the supporting documents. In addition to the CJC staff I would also like to thank the elected members and the staff of the six local authorities in North Wales for working together to develop this regional plan together with the consultants ARUP who have supported and facilitated this work. It's also important to recognise the role and contribution of Transport for Wales and the Welsh Government with this work.

The draft RTP matches and aligns with the Welsh Government's guidelines for creating regional transport plans. With this it is difficult to argue with the vision and objectives included nor the policies and interventions that are detailed with the intention of realising and achieving them.


Cyngor Gwynedd is fully supportive of, and wants to see, a safe, sustainable, affordable, resilient and effective integrated transport network that supports economic growth, prosperity and well-being in North Wales. As part of this we want to see attractive opportunities and options that offer real choice and alternative methods of travel rather than the car. We are keen to see a network that is accessible and address wider aspirations to support specific groups within society which include vulnerable, disabled, young, old people and who also address the effects of rural poverty.

The wide range of plans included in the Delivery Plan reflects how challenging it is to assess and prioritise schemes when these are so varied in terms of their reach, if they address very regional or local demand, cost and what they will try, or achieve. The truth is that it is not the plan itself that is important but how many of these plans will be carried out during the RTP period. While fully understanding the need to prioritise and rank the plans, it is also necessary to recognise that the plans identified in the Delivery Plan will all have a high priority for the communities associated with them.

We are of the opinion that the Monitoring and Evaluation Plans are purposeful and relevant. Although, as with the RTP and supporting documents in general, we are concerned, in order to meet the Welsh Government's expectations and guidelines, if these documents are too technical and too detailed for the overwhelming majority of the region's population to be able to understand and follow and thereby participate in a meaningful way in processes such as this public consultation.

The Integrated Well-being Appraisal considers the correct questions from the point of view of how the programme or projects will benefit communities, environment, places and economy, culture and the Welsh language and the positive and negative effects in this context.

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The Council here recognises that it is a transitional period in the field of transport which includes from a point of view, among other factors, the following:

- Changes occurring structurally in the context of transport with, for example, the arrival of the CJC and Transport Wales.
- Changes taking place in terms of Welsh Government means, programmes and funding sources.
- Possible changes in the priorities and focus of the Welsh Government in the field of transport.
- Changes in legislation and models linked to provision in specific areas that include buses.

In addition to the above, a key factor in the relevance and reality of objectives and aspirations in the plan will be the provision of sufficient funding by the Welsh Government. This includes from a capital and revenue perspective. The current arrangements create obvious challenges for local authorities and in many cases the administration of grants on a year-on-year basis places a significant risk on Local Authorities, in the field of public bus provision for example where agreements are often set for a period of between 5-7 years.

We remain concerned that the Welsh Government's strategy and vision do not sufficiently recognise the unique dynamics of transport in rural areas. This includes from the point of view of our desires, wishes and the opportunities and challenges in the context of transport. With this, the mechanism for distributing funding is not sufficient or fair meaning there is a significant difference between the provision and ability to travel between urban and rural areas. We are also of the opinion that the input and influence of local authorities in the field of transport is now eroding which deprives our communities of decent and fair engagement in matters that affect them.

This Council will continue with the open and positive approach towards working together as a member of the CJC but also with the other key stakeholders namely Transport for Wales and the Welsh Government with the intention of providing and maintaining the best possible services and facilities for the communities of Gwynedd along with those of the rest of North Wales.

Yours sincerely,

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