**Fforwm Rhanbarthol y Canolbarth a’r Gorllewin TrC | TfW Mid and South West Regional Forum**

**07 September 2021**



**Adroddiad o’r cyfarfod**

**Meeting report**

Mid and West Wales Regional Stakeholder Forum

The forum met on the 08 September 2021, 10:00 – 12:00

**Attendees**

**Forum Members**

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| Amanda Phillips | Programme Commissioning Manager, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council |
| Ann Elias | Mid Wales Regional Engagement Team, Ceredigion Council |
| Jane Jones | Head of Public Affairs, GWR |
| Owen Williams  | Commercial Manager First Cymru Buses Ltd |
| Gareth Hurlow,  | Taf Valley Coaches Whitland |
| Wendy Abel | Tourism Officer with Powys County Council |
| Carol Willgoose | Principal Transport Planner, Welsh Government  |
| Chloe Lewis | Team Leader (Transport and Strategy Monitoring), Swansea Council |
| Chris Peake | Port Manager (Irish Ferries, Pembroke Dock) |
| David Bailey | Customer Service Manager, Great Western Railway |
| David Beaney | Chair, Carmarthenshire Tourism Assocation |
| David Beer | Senior Manager (Wales), Transport Focus |
| David Edwards | Heart of Wales Line Development Company  |
| Jayne Cornelius | Sustainable Travel Officer, Swansea University |
| Liz Williams | Projects and Office Manager, Pembrokeshire Tourism |
| Sharon Prosser | Customer Ambassador (South Wales), Great Western Railway |
| Tegryn Jones  | Chief Executive Pembrokeshire National Park  |
| Geraint Morgan  | Community Rail Manager, Transport for Wales  |
| Alex Bryant-Evans  | Incoming Stakeholder Manager, Mid and West Wales.  |

**Transport for Wales -** Other members of the TfW team were present to facilitate

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| Tomos Davies (Clerk) | Community Engagement Officer, Mid & West Wales |  |
| James Price | Chief Executive Officer | 10.05-10.20 |
| Dafydd Williams  | Performance & Planning Manager |  |
| Mat Howells | Senior Transport Modeller | 10.20 -11.00  |
| Andy Holder | TfW Planning, Development and Advisory Team | 10.20 -11.00  |
| Kate Clark | Advisor for Welsh Government working for Transport for Wales |  |
| Arron Bevan-John (Chair) | Stakeholder Manager, Mid and West Wales | 10-10.05  |
| Lewis Brencher | Director of Communications and Engagement |  |

**External Speakers**

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| Corinna James | Principal Transport Planner, Welsh Government | 10.20 -11.00  |
| Russ Owens  | Legislation Policy Lead, Bus Bill Team, Bus and Community Transport Division, Welsh Government | 11.00-11.30  |

**Apologies**

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| Bruce Roberts | Secretary, Swansea Bay Business Club |
| Carl Milne | Port Manager (Stena Line, Fishguard) |
| Cath Swain | Integrated Transport Manager, Swansea Council |
| Peter Austin | Stakeholder Engagement Manager, Swansea Bay City Deal |
| Steve Hopkins | Tourism and Marketing Manager, Swansea Council |
| Val Hawkins | Chief Executive, Mid Wales Tourism |
| Simon Charles | Transport Strategy and Infrastructure Manager, Carmarthenshire County Council |
| Tony Caine | Traffic and Travel Manager, Powys County Council |
| Michelle Roles | Stakeholder Manager, Transport Focus |
| Nick Lockely | Operations and Ticketing Supervisor (Ospreys, Liberty Stadium) |

**Note from the Chair, Aaron Bevan-John**

*“I would like to thank all of our members for attending our fifth Mid and West Wales regional Forum. I’d like to give thanks to our presenters who provided updates on the National Transport Delivery Plan, the Welsh Government’s 5-year plan for buses in Wales, rail service updates and upcoming timetable changes, and our TfW recovery campaign. Alongside these insightful presentations from our partners, members had the opportunity to participate in a Q&A session with James Price, Chief Executive for Transport for Wales. I would like to give thanks to members who further contributed to this Q&A session. Thank you for your time and invaluable contributions to our forum. This is my last forum and would like to thank all who have attended and contributed to these forums.”*

**Agenda**

1. **Introduction & Apologies**

Arron Bevan-John welcomed the forum members to the sixth meeting of the Mid and West Wales regional Forum. Arron introduced the format of the meeting and the guest speakers. Arron advised members of the current Travel Safer messaging and Welsh Government guidance still in place across Wales in respect of the Covid-19 pandemic.  Arron announced that this was his last forum meeting as he was leaving TfW.

1. **Question Time - James Price**

James Price, Chief Executive Officer (TfW), conducted an open question and answer session with the forum members. David Edwards from Heart of Wales Development Company asked a question on timetable improvements, whether there was going to be an improvement to the Heart of Wales Line’s rolling stock and whether there was going to be a continuation of the concessionary cards in October 2021. James Price stated that TfW were working on introducing a pre covid timetable in Wales. Arron Bevan John stated that there have been pressures on the timetable due to social distancing measures bought in through Covid which affected HoWL. TfW are having a discussion around December 2022 in the coming weeks to introduce further discussion on future timetables. Work has been undertaken to improve the rolling of the HoWL, including introducing rolling stock from Scotland. David Edwards stated that there was a key issue that trains don’t go directly to and from Swansea on the HOW line and had to go through Llanelli. Arron Bevan John stated that rolling stock for the area has been delayed due to covid and TfW is looking to improve services. James Price asked what the biggest issue for HoW Line and David Edwards stated it was the bus replacement and no direct route to Swansea. A link to an article was provided confirming that the concessionary cards would be available for free travel on the HoW line again this year from 1st October.

Arron Bevan-John read out a question that was submitted through email on whether we were expecting any changes in the next few months to the services? James Price stated it was difficult to predict, however, TfW are striving to bring back the pre covid timetable and pre covid improvements. For this region, he stated that post September, things will go back to pe covid levels. Dafydd Williams stated in chat that 6 out of the 8 services on the Heart of Wales are operating with 2-carriages today, which he will follow up to see if this plan continues in the autumn or if there's scope for an increase in capacity.

Arron Bevan-John read out another question submitted through email asking about station improvements in the region. James Price stated that money to be spent was reliant on passenger levels which have been hit by Covid. However, they were looking at more cost-effective methods of upgrading stations and looking for suggestions on key stations in the region to upgrade.

1. **National Transport Delivery Plan – Next Steps** – **Kate Clark, Advisor for Welsh Government working for Transport for Wales,** **Mat Howells, Senior Transport Modeller, Transport for Wales and Andy Holder, Contractor, Transport for Wales**

Kate Clark introduced the WelTAG which links into the UK transport appraisal. WelTAG looks at how we spend and deliver public transport in Wales. Ours links into the Future Generations Act. It analyses how planning is considered and related to transport in Wales. The Welsh Government has just published Llwybr Newydd – The Welsh Transport Strategy. The plan looks at how Welsh Government can deliver sustainable and effective travel in Wales and links into the Future Generations Act’s wellbeing goals and ambitions. Kate Clark is currently drafting the new WelTAG before it goes out to consultation and linking it to Llwybr Newydd.

Andy Holder gave an overview ofNational Transport Delivery Planand its development in Wales. The plan will be a key guide on funding and delivering transport in Wales. Will look at how UK Government projects link into Welsh Government projects and initiatives and funded. The plan will incorporate various strategies such as the upcoming Bus Plan 2022 and Net Zero Wales. This will be a 4-month consultation.

Matt Howells outlined the monitoring and evaluation against the Welsh Transport Strategy. It looks at weakness and strengths of transport delivery in Wales at national and strategic level. The Welsh Government are in the process of developing the matrix for monitoring and evaluating transport delivery. The methodology and matrix will be published in the Autumn and a baseline report in late 2022.

Ann Elias asked a question on a missing document within the Wales Transport Strategy – Regional Logistics Plan and whether there were plans to update. Andy Holder stated that there was no timeline for this but will hopefully update at next forum. Ann Elias then asked whether WelTAG recognised Network Rail’s Grip Process. The DfT had an acceleration unit which dealt with this. Kate Clark stated that the Welsh Government do not have similar unit and looked at proportionality where they had a checklist against risk in delivery.

1. **Bws Cymru – The Welsh Government’s 5 year Plan for Buses in Wales, Russell Owens,  Legislation Policy Lead, Bus Bill Team, Bus and Community Transport Division, Welsh Government**

Russell Owens gave an overview of the Bus Plan which is currently in consultation. Once published it will be a 5-year plan for bus services in Wales. The new plan will look at the ongoing reform of bus services with the Welsh Government moving from local delivery services to regional services in the future. The plan is currently in consultation phase and the Welsh Government has engaged in August - Sept this year. They will look to draft the plan in October for launch in winter 2021.

Jane Cornelius asked Russell Owens what engagement Welsh Government had with students. Russell Owens said he will e-mail her directly with an answer. Jane Cornelius asked whether the plan addressed key issues such as driver shortage and whether the Welsh Government would support bus companies and drivers with shortages. She also asked whether there would be any financial and other incentives like in England for bus companies to ‘green their fleet’. Russell Owens stated that greening of the fleet was a key priority for the Welsh Government ministers and will be considered within the plan.

Tegryn Jones from Pembrokeshire National Park agreed with question on green fleet but was concerned with rural transport. He asked whether there were any considerations for rural transport in the plan. Russell Owens stated that Welsh Government Ministers saw this as a key consideration and priority and would be outlined in plan. Tegryn Jones stated that coastal buses Pembrokeshire well established but better engagement was needed between tourism businesses in area. Jane Cornelius asked whether My pass for 18-21 year olds would be extended to mature students in their late 20s. Russell Owens stated that pass fundeding is part of the review and bus plan.

1. **Rail Service Update, Dafydd Williams, Rail Performance Manager**

Dafydd Williams gave a rail service update with consideration to the new timetable for September 2021 and December 2021. Services up to 85% of 2019 provision in keeping with other UK operators. The pandemic restrictions impacted TfW’s services. TfW want to get back to full services and are planning this in new timetable. Recent analysis state that drive in weekend and leisure demand over the summer. TfW are reviewing this demand. Looking at regional focus at Mid and West Wales – timetable changing this weekend. Reinstatement of new services and improved carriages. HOW Llanelli Swansea will hopefully be reinstated and later services such as Tenby. May 2022 strengthen late services. Need to consider and plan for the return to commuting levels too.

Ann Elias asked in relation to planning and demand. HoW line is the most scenic route and will only have 4 trains a day – hard to promote to tourists. Leisure services is a growth market. Dafydd Williams stated that immediate focus was how we can deliver current services – 2 extra services promised in future. Plan resource and plan to meet demand. Future development timetable will investigate this. Looking to recover and grow in the future. David Edwards stated he was still waiting for information on 5 trains a day. A quick win seen in WelTAG review would be a Sunday service. This will be raised in strategic meeting in next week.

1. **Demand Recovery - Lewis Brencher, Director of Communications and Engagement**

Lewis Brencher, Director of Communications and Engagement (TfW), led on from the presentation on Demand Recovery and the campaign of our lives which was the TfW campaign to promote multimodal public transport ‘The Real Social Network’ campaign to increase service users post pandemic and drive behavioural change and use of public transport as preferred transport. Lewis Brencher showed the TV campaign to the group – a 60-minute advert to be shown November onwards. Jane Cornelius asked whether disabled people were considered in advert as they were visually missing from advert. Lewis Brencher stated that the football team in advert were a disabled team. He also stated that the disabled people would be highlighted in supporting media to support the campaign.

1. **AOB**

# Arron Bevan-John highlighted various Transport Wales updates, consultations and campaigns including a recent consultation on the Swansea Bay and west Wales Metro, update of TfW website, 20 mph consultation and annual report. As it was his last forum, he personally thanked forum members for their support over the past few months and concluded the forum, thanking all for attending. He stated that he was going to be replaced by Alex Bryant-Evans and that Tomos Davies had also joined the team as Community Engagement Officer for the region.

## Actions

The actions below were raised during the forum and will be addressed prior to the next Regional Forum where possible.

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|  **Action**  | **What will be done?** |
| None |  |

## Forum digital chat highlights

* Concessionary cards will be available for free travel on the HoW line again this year from 1st October. Details here: [https://tfw.wales/info-for/over-60s/rail-concessionary-travel](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Ftfw.wales%2Finfo-for%2Fover-60s%2Frail-concessionary-travel&data=04%7C01%7CTomos.Davies%40tfw.wales%7C339343b27910427ee30008d971e478aa%7C87dcd024301948269956ba76b2a04ff4%7C0%7C0%7C637666048360699228%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=l4ui20AM8wsat%2FYrTOcYbx7Nhlq6yA%2BsRw35gqYITzE%3D&reserved=0)
* Increase in train services from September <https://news.tfw.wales/news/increase-in-train-services-from-september-tfw-customers-asked-to-still-plan-ahead>
* Contact TfW Community Engagement Team - [engagement@tfw.wales](engagement%40tfw.wales)

## Next Regional Stakeholder Forum

The next Mid and West Wales Regional Stakeholder Forum is scheduled for late November or early December 2021. The meeting will be held virtually over the Microsoft Teams platform between 10:00 – 12:00.