**Fforwm Rhanbarthol Rhanddeiliaid Cymru a'r Gororau Wales and BordersRegional Stakeholder Forum**

**31st March 2022**



**Adroddiad o’r cyfarfod**

**Meeting report**

Wales and Borders Regional Stakeholder Forum

The forum met on the 31stMarch 2022, 10:00 – 12:30

**Attendees**

**Forum Members**

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| Heather Bolton | Telford and Wrekin Council |
| Victoria Hammond | Herefordshire County Council |
| Sean Croshaw | Transport for Greater Manchester |
| Adam Graham | Warrington Borough Council |
| Gerard Rhodes | Cheshire West and Chester Council |
| David Jones | Liverpool City Region |
| Matt King | Arriva Bus |
| Jon Harris | Gloucestershire Community Rail Partnership |
| Jon Furley | University of Gloucestershire |
| Toby Rackliff | West Midlands Rail Executive |
| Richard Gibson | Crosscountry Trains |

**Speakers**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Alexia Course | Director of Transport Operations, TfW |  |
| Lewis Brencher | Director of Communications and Engagement, TfW |  |
| Alex Fortune | Senior Project Manager, TfW |  |
| Mike Dalton | Stakeholder Manager, TfW |  |
| Elise Jackson | Community Engagement Officer, TfW |  |
| Kelsey Barcenilla | Stakeholder Manager, TfW |  |

**Note from the Chair, Mike Dalton, Stakeholder Manager, TfW**

*“This was our seventh Borders Regional stakeholder forum, and I’m really grateful to our stakeholders across the Borders who attended to share with us their insights. I’d like to give thanks to our presenters for their updates and our attendees for their time and invaluable contributions.”*

**Agenda**

1. **Introduction & Apologies**

Mike Dalton welcomed the forum members to the seventh meeting of the Wales and Borders regional Forum. Mike introduced the format of the meeting, including an update on the current Travel Safer messaging and Welsh Government rules still in place across Wales in respect of the Covid-19 pandemic.

1. **Question Time with Alexia Course, Director of Transport Operations, Transport for Wales**

Alexia began by giving an overview of recent events, including the recent impact of storms on the Wales and Borders Rail Network. Alexia suggested that with climate change, Transport for Wales were anticipating weather events such as storms to become a more regular occurrence, and in response TfW was working with Network Rail to focus on resilience of the rail network. Alexia went on to explain how resilience was also being built into the timetable in order to address staff absences due to COVID-19. Patronage was returning steadily particularly on the Borders routes at the weekends, Alexia explained, and TfW would soon be launching a new recovery marketing campaign. In response to a question from Mike, Alexia explained that in terms of priorities TfW were preparing to introduce new Mark IV units on the Marches lines, as well as the Class 197s.

1. **The Real Social Network Recovery Campaign, Director of Communications and Engagement Lewis Brencher**

Lewis Brencher introduced the Real Social Network campaign with some context to the campaigns background, pointing out that with revenue down there was also question over whether a culture of nervousness was developing and travel behaviours were changing to reflect work from home and leisure travel. Lewis explained that the aim of the campaign was to help raise revenue through public transport use, the build the brand of sustainable transport and engage people emotionally in the topic and to encourage behaviour change and modal shift. The campaign featured three main themes: rediscovering places, reconnecting with people and returning to work which were backed by market research. He encouraged stakeholders to get involved and disseminate the assets, if they would like to.

Mike asked what underpins the decision to gear the campaign towards leisure travel. Lewis explained that long term there will be a reduction in demand for commuting travel long term, but there is less certainty about how employers would respond until some times after people can return to offices. Lewis also acknowledged that messages around leisure tend to do better with audiences and are more emotionally engaging.

Toby Rackliff expressed that the campaign was really impressive, and that there needed to be more not only in Wales but across the UK. He asked whether there were any promotions to support the campaign? Lewis explained there was an advanced fare promotion as part of the campaign, but there was also demand there and the advance fare was important for helping to manage demand. Lewis noted that there was existing offers, such as kids go free (under 11s) that TfW would like to really push in future.

Jon Harris celebrated the campaign. He asked whether Geraint Morgan could present the campaign to stakeholders at the Gloucester Community Rail Partnership meeting. Jon also asked what engagement was taking place with community transport partners. Lewis expressed that conversations were taking place with Community Transport Association Cymru, and that we would pick up with the relevant organisations in the Forest of Dean.

1. **North Wales Metro, Senior Project Manager, Alex Fortune**

Alex Fortune explained the aims of the North Wales Metro, and the overlay between strategic bus networks and the rail service. Alex demonstrated how the metro model had been built on layers of economic data and indices of deprivation, in addition to journey time date. Alex spoke through emerging priorities including active travel projects, rail network development which include service frequency enhancements.

Sean Croshaw asked how the ambitions for Manchester to Chester could tie into the ambitions for service frequency on the North Wales Coast. Alex acknowledged that it was important to consider onward journey implications, and work with others to understand the potential without duplicating journeys.

1. **Talking Transport Toolkit, Kelsey Barcenilla, Stakeholder Manager for Metro Central; Elise Jackson, Community Engagement Officer**

Kelsey and Elise explained the talking transport toolkit, an engagement toolkit for helping communities to understand transport problems and solutions in communities. Kelsey and Elise explained the process that the toolkit would take people through, and asked for feedback on their workbook.

Jon Harris asked whether the community would be able to download this and use it, or whether it would have to be used with a TfW facilitator. Kelsey said that the community would have access to training videos to become a facilitator. Jon suggested there was some cross-over with what was taking place in Chepstow, Lydney and Gloucestershire. Jon did offer feedback that the document appeared accessible and clean. Jon offered the opportunity to trial the workbook with their community groups.

Toby Rackliff noted that there were some teams at Transport for West Midlands doing similar community engagement with schools in the Midlands.

1. **TfW Corporate Strategy, Director of Communications and Engagement, Lewis Brencher**

Lewis introduced the Corporate Strategy for Transport for Wales, sharing the 5 year plan and the remit letter. He explained the strategy was based around four pillars, including ‘Advisory Planning and Development’ which considered transport analytics, planning and network development, transport decarbonisation and social and commercial development.

Lewis went onto discuss network development before a technical issues meant that he had to leave the meeting earlier than planned.

1. **AOB**

None

**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?** |
| To follow up with Jon Harris regarding opportunities for testing and developing the talking Transport Toolkit | Followed up |

## Forum digital chat highlights

Highlights of the conversation within the chat function of the Forum were:

* Great forum as always. The toolkit looks interesting. Let me know if you need anything from XC.
* Much interesting work by TfW.
* We have some links with TfGM and TfWM with regards to engagement delivered on walking and cycling, but if there are teams looking at transport in a broader sense it would be good to be in touch.

## Next Regional Stakeholder Forum

The next Borders Regional Stakeholder Forum is scheduled for …