**Fforwm Rhanbarthol TrC – Rhanddeiliaid De Ddwyrain Cymru**

**TfW Regional Forum – South-East Wales**

**13 September 2021**



**Adroddiad o’r cyfarfod**

**Meeting report**

South-East Wales Regional Stakeholder Forum

The forum met on the 13th of September 2021, 10:00 – 12:00

**Attendees**

**Forum Members**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Abryantevans | abryantevans@googlemail.com |
| Adrian Field | Executive Director, FOR Cardiff |
| Andy Johns | Vice Principal, Coleg Y Cymoedd |
| Charlie E Nelson | Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council |
| Christian Schmidt | Transport Projects & Programmes Manager, Monmouthshire County Council |
| Clare Cameron | Cardiff City Council |
| Clive Campbell | Transportation Engineering Manager, Caerphilly County Borough Council |
| David Dawkins | Transport Policy Planner, The Community Transport Association Wales |
| Gwyn Smith | Welsh Government Active Travel Advisor and Network Development Manager, Sustrans |
| Helen Boyle | First Bus |
| Jason Coleman | Welsh Government |
| Jason Dixon | Team Leader for Transport Policy, Cardiff City Council |
| John Gibson | Project Development Officer, Cardiff City Council |
| Jonathan Parsons | Bridgend County Borough Council |
| Kevin Sales | Public Transport Officer, Bridgend County Borough Council |
| Leanne Waring | Business Development Manager, Cardiff and Vale College |
| Marcus Lloyd | Head of Infrastructure, Caerphilly County Borough Council |
| Michele Mitchell | Torfaen County Borough Council |
| Morgan Stevens | Newport Transport |
| Rebecca Smith | Transport Planner, Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council |
| Richard Cope | Passenger Transport Manager, Monmouthshire County Council & Newport City Council |
| Richard Davies | Adventure travel |
| Russell Owens | Welsh Government |
| Scott Pearson | Newport Transport |

**Speakers**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Alexia Course | Transport Operations Director, TfW | 10:05-10:20 |
| Kate Clark  Andy Holder  Mat Howells | Government Advisor, TFW  Contractor to TfW for the National Transport Delivery Plan, Project Lead, TFW  Senior Transport Modeller, TFW | 10:20-11:00 |
| Russ Owens | Legislation Policy Lead, Bus Bill Team, Bus and Community Transport Division, Welsh Government | 11:00 – 11:30 |
| Dafydd Williams | Rail Performance Manager, TfW | 11:30 – 11:45 |
| Lewis Brencher | Director of Communications and Engagement, TfW | 11:45 – 11:55 |

**Apologies**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Adam Keen | NAT Travel |
| Alex Clarke | Passenger Transport Information Officer, Caerphilly County Borough Council |
| Alun Evans | Bridgend County Borough Council |
| Alyn Owen | Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council |
| Carol Willgoose | Welsh Government |
| Ceri Stephens | South Wales Chamber of Commerce |
| Corinna James | Welsh Government |
| Daniel Bowden | Stagecoach |
| David Beer | Senior Manager for Wales, Transport Focus |
| Debbie Hudd | Welsh Government |
| Derek Jones | Welsh Government |
| Emma Bingham | The Community Transport Association |
| Enfys Griffiths | Transport Services, Vale of Glamorgan Council |
| Gemma Hayne | Bridgend County Borough Council |
| Gemma Lelliott | The Community Transport Association |
| Heather Anstey-Myers | South Wales Chamber of Commerce |
| Jane Reakes Davies | First Cymru |
| Julie Twells | Samaritans |
| Kevin Mulcahy | Group Manager, Bridgend County Borough Council |
| Kwaku Opoku-Addo | Bridgend County Borough Council |
| Kyle Phillips | Vale of Glamorgan County Borough Council |
| Michelle Roles | Transport Focus |
| Natalie Curtis | Bridgend County Borough Council |
| Nicola Somerville | Valleys Taskforce |
| Nigel winter | Managing Director for South Wales, Stagecoach |
| Nina Slevin | South Wales Chamber of Commerce |
| Owen Williams | First Bus |
| Paul Carter | Cardiff City Council |
| Paul Jones | Newport City Council |
| Paul Selvin | South Wales Chamber of Commerce |
| pdyer@cardiffbus.com | Cardiff Bus |
| philanslowcoaches@outlook.com | philanslowcoaches@outlook.com |
| [roberrh@cymoedd.ac.uk](mailto:roberrh@cymoedd.ac.uk) | Cymoedd |
| Robert. G. | Caerphilly County Borough Council |
| Roger Waters | Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council |
| Sam Palmer | NAT Travel |
| Samuel Hadley | Network Rail |
| Sharon Adams | South Wales Chamber of Commerce |
| Sian Rees | Cardiff Metropolitan University |
| Simon Livsey | British Transport Police |
| Simon Nicholls | Bus Coordinator at Newport Council |
| Stuart Ingram | Welsh Government |
| Tracey Messner | Public Affairs Manager, Network Rail |

**Note from the Chair, Helen Dale, Stakeholder Manager, TfW**

*“I would like to thank all of our members for attending our fifth South East 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 Alexia Course, Director of Transport Operations 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.”*

**Agenda**

1. **Introduction & Apologies**

Helen Dale, Stakeholder Manager, welcomed the forum members to the fifth meeting of the South-East Wales regional Forum. Helen introduced the agenda of the meeting, including an update on the current Travel Safer messaging and Welsh Government rules in place across Wales in respect of the Covid-19 pandemic.

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

Helen introduced Alexia Course, Director of Transport Operations, and began the Q&A session by asking a question that had been submitted prior to the forum by Alex Clarke, Passenger Transport Information Officer at Caerphilly County Borough Council. The question concerned stakeholders receiving advanced notice for timetable changes. Alex Clarke emphasised the importance of advanced notice when coordinating appropriate bus links. Alex asked what steps TfW will be taking to ensure that stakeholders are informed of forthcoming changes and what assurances TfW will give that concerns raised at the regional forums will be taken seriously.

Alexia responded that it has been difficult to plan timetable changes in advance over the past year, due to lockdowns and pandemic restrictions. TfW have not been able to stick to the informed traveller timescale of T-12 weeks, which is the industry prerequisite pre-pandemic, due to the number of timetable changes within the previous 12 months. However, TfW are working to increase the number of weeks pre-timetable change when announcements of changes to services are made, including for the December 2021 and March 2022 planned timetable changes. Alexia added that these two timetable changes are expected to be incremental changes to services rather than fundamental changes to the existing timetable.

Helen Dale, Stakeholder Manager, added that TfW are preparing for the launch of the South Wales Metro in late 2022 and early 2023 and that this will make a positive difference to integrated travelling across South Wales.

Adrian Field, Executive Director at FOR Cardiff, asked a question in the chat regarding what FOR Cardiff can do to share any communications plans for encouraging workers back onto public transport. Adrian added that a recent survey of major employers in Cardiff found that confidence in public transport provisions and safety were the leading concerns of workers when asked about the key barriers in preventing them from returning to the office.

Alexia responded that TfW have seen a large bounce back in leisure travel as restrictions have eased, and in some areas leisure travel has been higher than pre-pandemic levels. However, the Monday to Friday commuter market has not bounced back and is currently at around 50-60% compared to pre-covid levels. Alexia added that TfW are open to the idea that commuter travel may never fully recover to pre-covid levels, and they may see a change in demand and travel patterns. In saying this, TfW do wish to encourage people back to the railway as part of the climate change agenda, and the communications team has worked on a recovery campaign, including a TV advert, with the aim of encouraging people to use the train services.

Lewis Brencher, Director of Communications and Engagement at TfW, added that the Welsh Government have a target of 30% of employees working from home, therefore TfW needs to review how this will influence commuter travel. TfW may encourage people to travel in a different way, therefore the pre-covid travel patterns may not return. He expressed that this is a good opportunity to re-set expectations of travel patterns.

Adrian Field, Executive Director at FOR Cardiff, added that there are concerns over single car journeys into Cardiff over the Christmas period, as this goes against the aim of the council. There are also many businesses within the city centre that rely on workers to return to the office. However, retail and leisure footfall is doing well. Adrian expressed that they want to inform businesses and employers of the opportunities to travel by train and change their mentality around how they travel to work.

Alexia Course mentioned the TfW flexible season ticket, which can be used over a month-long period, to accommodate those who can work from home but may wish to go into the office a few times a week/ month. Alexia welcomed any help from stakeholders in promoting these season tickets, as it’s not necessarily thought of as an option for passengers.

Helen Dale, Stakeholder Manager TfW, added that TfW have prepared a stakeholder toolkit and are keen to get stakeholders on board with this to develop insight around what returning to the office looks like for our passengers.

Adrian Field, Executive Director at FOR Cardiff, also asked if there is any possibility of improving the look and feel of the bridges on the approach to Cardiff Central. Adrian added that many adverts on the bridges are very old, and they want to create a good first impression for visitors and staycation-ers.

Alexia Course responded that it depends on where on the network the bridge is located. If the bridge is towards Cardiff Queen Street Station, it may have been transferred to TfW from Network Rail. However, if the bridges are along the South Wales Mainline, they may still be under Network Rail ownership. Alexia mentioned that she will action this with the infrastructure management team who manage assets along the Core Valley Lines to see if the bridges can be improved. If the advertisements on the bridges cannot be rented out to advertisers, the communications team could use them to promote the South Wales Metro.

Adrian replied that there is interest from a large commercial operator in the city centre to use this advertisement space and will pass on this information to TfW.

Helen Dale added that TfW are currently doing some early exploration work into bridges across the network and hopes to be in a better position to discuss opportunities with bridges next year.

1. **National Transport Delivery Plan – Next Steps**

Kate Clark, Government Advisor at TFW, introduced the Welsh Transport Appraisal Guidance (WelTAG) which links into the UK transport appraisal. WelTAG looks at how we spend and deliver public transport in Wales and analyses how planning is considered. The Welsh Government (WG) have just published Llwybr Newydd – The Welsh Transport Strategy. The plan looks at how WG 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 is linking it to Llwybr Newydd.

Andy Holder, TFW Contractor, gave an overview ofthe National Transport Delivery Planand its development in Wales. The plan will be a key guide on funding and delivering transport in Wales. The plan will incorporate various strategies such as the upcoming Bus Plan 2022 and Net Zero Wales. A 4-month consultation will take place in the near future.

Mat Howells, Senior Transport Modeller at TFW, outlined that WG are in the process of developing a matrix for monitoring and evaluating transport delivery. The methodology and matrix will be published in the Autumn and a baseline report is planned for early 2022.

1. **Bws Cymru – The Welsh Government’s 5 year Plan for Buses in Wales**

Russ Owens, Legislation Policy Lead, Bus Bill Team, Bus and Community Transport Division, Welsh Government, gave an overview of the Bus Plan which is currently in the consultation phase. Once published it will form a 5-year plan for bus services in Wales. The new plan will look at the ongoing reform of bus services with WG moving from local delivery services to regional services. The aim is to launch the plan in Winter 2021/22.

Clive Campbell, Cardiff City Council, asked where he could find details of the proposed engagement sessions so the council can direct the appropriate officer to each session. Russ Owens replied that he will share the engagement plans which details more information about each session.

Clare Cameron, Cardiff City Council, asked how this 5-year plans fits with CJCs and RTAs. Russ Owens responded that the bus plan oversees the delivery of the Wales Transport Strategy. Under the bus plan will be the regional transport plans which will be drafted by the CJCs from next year and will replace the local transport plans. They are going to be consulting on whether the CJCs should have more responsibility in delivering bus functions, and this is an area for discussion within the sessions.

Helen Dale, Stakeholder Manager, confirmed that details of the proposed engagement plans will be distributed to all attendees following the forum.

1. **Rail Service Update**

Dafydd Williams, Rail Performance Manager at TfW, gave a rail service update with consideration to the new timetable for Sept 2021 and late 2022. Services are currently at 85% of 2019 provision, in keeping with other UK operators. Demand has ranged from 10-80%, largely driven by a demand for leisure travel. Pandemic restrictions, issues with rolling stock and driver availability have affected services. There has been high demand along the North Wales Coast due to leisure travel, with less demand around Cardiff and the South Wales Valleys, with passenger numbers around 50% compared to pre-pandemic numbers.

Dafydd also went over the changes that were introduced during the September 2021 timetable change. This included an increase to 2 trains per hour on the Valley lines, including on the Aberdare, Merthyr and Treherbert lines. Services have also been increased along the Rhymney line, from hourly services to half hourly. Services around Pontypridd and Caerphilly have also been increased to accommodate local schools and colleges. Elsewhere on the network, two Mark 4 units have been added to the Cardiff to Holyhead service, to assist the demand for leisure travel and station stops in North Wales have been reintroduced due to the easing of social distancing measures.

This was followed by an overview of the December 2021 timetable change, which will include a new hourly service between Newport and Cross Keys. The introduction of a service between Ebbw Vale and Newport was also discussed, with this being possible after infrastructure work on the network has been completed.

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

Lewis Brencher, Director of Communications and Engagement (TfW) discussed the new TfW campaign to promote multimodal public transport. ‘The Real Social Network’ is to respond to the longer-term plan around modal shift and decreasing carbon emissions as well as increasing service users post pandemic and driving behavioural change. Lewis showed the proposed TV campaign to the group – a 60-second advert to be shown from November onwards.

Adrian Field, Executive Director at FOR Cardiff, commented that FOR Cardiff are happy to share the campaign, as they represent over 800 Businesses in Cardiff, and would like to add information to their intranets as a resource they can regularly access. He added that any information/ engagement packs would be useful for those conducting engagement with these businesses. Adrian also added that he would be happy to share this information with other town centre partnerships, for example in Swansea and Newport, and would be happy to introduce Lewis to these partnerships.

1. **AOB**

Helen Dale provided updates on several TfW projects currently being undertaken, including the 20mph Welsh Government consultations, a public TfW survey into the future of transport planning, and the TfW annual report.

**Actions**

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

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Action** | **What will be done?** |
| Presentations to be shared with forum members | Presentations will be attached to the diary marker |

## Forum digital chat highlights

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

Journey checker: <https://tfwrail.wales/>

Capacity checker: <https://tfwrail.wales/planning-ahead/capacity-checker>

Face Coverings: [Travel Safer | Transport for Wales (trc.cymru)](https://trc.cymru/travel-safer)

Our multiflex ticketing is also available for those who want more flexibility when commuting into the office - [Cheap Train Tickets with Multiflex | TfW](https://tfw.wales/ways-to-travel/rail/ticket-types/multiflex)

Here is some further information on the September timetable change - [*https://news.tfw.wales/news/increase-in-train-services-from-september-tfw-customers-asked-to-still-plan-ahead*](https://news.tfw.wales/news/increase-in-train-services-from-september-tfw-customers-asked-to-still-plan-ahead)

## Next Regional Stakeholder Forum

The next North and Mid Wales Regional Stakeholder Forum is scheduled for November/December 2021