Fforwm Rhanbarthol TrC – Rhanddeiliaid De Ddwyrain Cymru

TfW Regional Forum – South-East Wales

29th June 2022



Adroddiad o’r cyfarfod

Meeting report

South-East Wales Regional Stakeholder Forum

The forum met virtually using Microsoft Teams on the 29th of June 2022, 10:00am – 12:00pm.

Attendees

Forum Members

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| Alex Clarke (AC) | Newport Transport |
| Alyn Owen | Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council |
| Andrew Griffiths | Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council |
| Christian Reed | Stagecoach South Wales |
| Christian Schmidt (CS) | Monmouthshire County Council |
| Clive Campbell (CC) | Caerphilly County Borough Council |
| David Dawkins | The Community Transport Association (Wales) |
| Emma Bingham | The Community Transport Association (Wales) |
| Jason Dixon | Cardiff City Council |
| John Gibson | Cardiff City Council |
| Jonathan Parsons | Bridgend County Borough Council |
| Kevin Sales | Bridgend County Borough Council |
| Leanne Waring  | Cardiff and Vale College |
| Marcus Lloyd | Caerphilly County Borough Council |
| Mark Tunstall | Stagecoach Bus |
| Michelle Roles (MR) | Transport Focus |
| Morgan Stevens  | Newport Transport  |
| Owen Williams  | First Bus |
| Rebecca Smith | Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council |
| Richard Cope | Newport City Council & Monmouthshire County Council |
| Simon Nicholls (SN) | Newport City Council |

Transport for Wales & Presenters

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| Helen Dale (HD) (chair) | Regional Stakeholder Manager, Transport for Wales |
| Alex Chung (ACH) | Community Engagement Officer, Transport for Wales (Presenter) |
| Colin Lea (CL) | Planning and Performance Director, Transport for Wales (Presenter) |
| Corinna James (CJ) | Head of Transport Planning & Appraisal, Welsh Government (Presenter) |
| Elise Jackson (EJ) | Community Engagement Officer, Transport for Wales (Presenter) |
| Gail Jones | Stakeholder Manager, Transport for Wales |
| Jessica Clement (JC) | Community Engagement Officer, Transport for Wales (Presenter) |
| Kelsey Barcenilla (KB) | Stakeholder Manager, Transport for Wales (Presenter) |
| Lewis Brencher | Communications Director, Transport for Wales |
| Lowri Joyce (LJ) | Head of Community and Stakeholder Engagement |
| Paula Bowen (PB) | Community Engagement Officer, Transport for Wales (Presenter) |
| Rebecca Johnson (RJ) | Head of Transport Strategy, Welsh Government (Presenter) |
| Ross Whiting (RW) | Community Engagement Officer, Transport for Wales (Presenter) |
| Tomos Davies (TD) | Community Engagement Officer, Transport for Wales (Presenter) |

Apologies

Apologies were received from other stakeholder forum members not listed in the attendance table above.

Note from the Chair, Helen Dale, Stakeholder Manager, Transport for Wales

“I would like to thank all our members for attending our South East Wales regional Forum. I would like to pay a quick welcome to Ross Whiting and Alex Chung our newly appointed community engagement officers, who we will meet later in the agenda.”

Agenda

1. Introduction & Apologies

Helen Dale (HD), Stakeholder Manager, Transport for Wales (TfW), welcomed the forum members to the eighth meeting of the South-East Wales regional Forum and thanked members for joining. HD introduced the agenda and noted that James Price, Chief Executive, TfW had to give his apologies for the meeting and Colin Lea (CL), Planning and Performance Director, TfW, could answer any questions members had for James Price. There would also be a slight re-ordering of the agenda where item 4 would be brought forward to follow item 2.

HD explained the format of the meeting including general housekeeping guidelines and invited members to introduce themselves using the meeting chat function. HD gave a Travel Safer update including current COVID-19 and journey planning guidelines. Attendees were provided with contact details in case they wish to get in touch following the meeting.

1. Q&A session

Colin Lea, Planning and Performance Director, Transport for Wales
*on behalf of James Price, Chief Executive Officer, Transport for Wales*

CL introduced himself to members and informed them he would be happy to take questions on behalf of James Price, who was unable to attend the meeting.

Michelle Roles (MR) said she had been asked about the return of reservations for travel following removal due to COVID. CL replied that there are internal discussions on their return, with pros and cons are being weighed up for different routes and times. He noted that there has been no decision yet to bring them back but that there is a question of the practical logistical challenges after so long.

MR asked a follow up question about whether there is any consideration being given to increasing capacity onboard trains for bicycles. CL noted that the new trains being coming soon will have more capacity for bicycles. He also noted on the Heart of Wales line that they would be introducing an ‘active travel carriage’ which will cater primarily to cyclists and have much more bicycle and luggage storage space. This will be to encourage people to undertake physical activities in the area. CL suggested that this could be introduced elsewhere if there was demand, but that it could take a little time for the carriages to be brought into service.

CL agreed that there appears to be more people taking part in cycling and other physical activity because of COVID, and this represents an opportunity for TfW and partners including local authorities to potentially use S106 money to improve provision to meet demand. MR noted that she had recently noticed a rise in demand for bringing bicycles onto trains.

1. How we plan our railways

Colin Lea, Planning and Performance Director, Transport for Wales Rail

HD thanked CL for answering the questions and invited him to deliver his presentation on how we plan our railways.

CL shared a PowerPoint presentation to members and introduced himself and his role within Transport for Wales Rail. He noted that his presentation would cover timetable planning and provide insight on what influences them. He gave an example of the complexities around small timetable change requests which can have significant knock-on implications for UK-wide railway network, due to the interlinked nature of services. He also illustrated why it is so important to ensure good train planning using recent issues in England as an example. He showed members a blueprint for timetable planning which has many stages going back 100 weeks from going live.

CL showed slides which covered a range of factors that need to be considered when planning timetables. These included:

* Unit & Crew Diagrams
These show which services a unit will cover and its requirements, as well as what staff will do on a particular day, their requirements, and which units they can operate.
* Demand and Capacity
Both need to be matched and the team use comparison data and longer-term forecasts to do this. New trains will have higher capacity.
* Fleet
This includes the specifications of individual vehicles, and concerns whether trains can meet section run times. This is influenced by top speed, rate of acceleration and braking. Other considerations include couplers, number of seats, toilet facilities, and other elements. This also involves availability of certain vehicles and knock-on effects this can have.
* Depots and Stabling
The need for the right trains to finish each day in the appropriate depot overnight, which can be influenced by fuelling, ability to empty toilets if required, and the location of crew depots for specific trains.
* Infrastructure
This can include gauging, which refers to the size and shape requirements of trains, stations, tunnels, bridges, awnings, signals, viaducts, and walls. This can be a particular issue due to the age of the infrastructure on the UK rail network and historical lack of standardisation. The impact of this can mean some trains cannot use certain lines without significant alteration works. The length of platforms is also important, and trains that are too long for a platform cannot stop there unless they have selective door opening due to passenger safety concerns.
* Track Gradient and Passing Loops
The railway tracks are not flat so performance of train units at different gradients can impact what lines they can operate on if they do not have the required power at full load. Single line tracks require passing loops where trains must be in the right place at the right time to pass each other to allow operation in two directions. This is a particular issue in rural Wales and in the valleys, and the transformation programme includes passing loops to allow increased services.
* Signalling
This can impact rail planning as signalling can influence which train units and drivers can operate on a line. An example is the Cambrian line, which until recently had a unique signalling system which has now been upgraded to the European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS).
* Performance
CL showed members an example daily performance table which showed the percentage of trains that were on time (within three minutes) at various stations. This can reveal patterns in performance which can impact thinking in future timetable planning.
* Crew Resource
This includes ensuring drivers, conductors and other crew are available in the right quantity, at the right time, and in the right places to meet increasing timetable demands. There must also be sufficient driver route and traction knowledge to operate specific routes and trains.
* Other Trains
This includes timetabling to ensure we can share the lines with other passenger rail providers, specialist network rail maintenance trains, materials trains, freight services and charter trains.

CL said these factors must come together and emphasised the need for increased standardisation of infrastructure and trains. He added that planning can be a complex puzzle which is not always possible to get right first time.

HD thanked CL for his presentation and asked members if they had any questions.

Questions

Christian Schmidt (CS) commented about clock face scheduling and how trains running at various non-exact times can make bus-train integration extremely difficult. CL answered that TfW tries its best to do clock face scheduling and the CVL will have this as part of the transformation programme. The CV will have four trains per hour separated by 15 minutes which should assist bus-train integration. He also noted that clock face timetabling could result in trade-off costs such as reduced frequency of services which would need to be balanced carefully.

CS asked a further question about SWML timetabling options – which are being considered and whether there will be consultation. CL answered that the SWML options are all linked to the Burns Commission work and many options including upgrades to the SWML and new stations are being worked through. He added that he expects these to go to consultation but is not aware of timings.

1. National Transport Delivery Plan & Regional Transport Plans

Rebecca Johnson, Head of Transport Strategy, Welsh Government
Corinna James, Head of Transport Planning & Appraisal, Welsh Government

HD thanked CL for his presentation, and introduced Rebecca Johnson (RJ), Head of Transport Strategy at Welsh Government, and Corinna James (CJ), Head of Transport Planning & Appraisal at Welsh Government. HD informed members that they would be making presentations on the National Transport Delivery Plan (NTDP) and Regional Transport Plans (RTP).

CJ spoke to the forum members about regional transport plans, which are a requirement of the Transport Act 2000. The duty to prepare transport plans has now transferred from LAs (Local Authorities) to CJCs (Corporate Joint Committees), however the duty to deliver these remails with the LAs.

CJ outlined the history of RTPs from 2008 to the current situation with the Llwybr Newydd: the Wales Transport Strategy 2021 (Wales Transport Strategy). There are 9 existing Local Transport Plans (LTP), the deadline for replacing these was extended to 2022. But this has now been replaced by the CJCs.

The approval of Welsh transport plans must go through Welsh Ministers, must be consistent with the Wales Transport Strategy and the policies must be adequate for the implementation of the strategy.

The Welsh Government (WG) does not have statutory duty to provide guidance. But the CJCs must consider any guidance issued by WG on content, preparation, alteration, and publication of plans, as well as the needs of disabled persons (Equality Act 2010).

CJ went through the key points of the Wales Transport Strategy and what WG will be expecting the RTPs to focus on. CJCs will be expected to look at current and future trends, policies set out in RTPs must maximise wellbeing goals and sustainability, take account of the Road Review NTDP, Active Travel, Bws Cymru and Metro plans.

CJ shared the proposed timetable with members and then opened the floor to questions with some prompts for questions on screen.

RJ then shared her presentation on the NTDP, which has been prepared in the context of the Wales Transport Strategy priorities. Moving from a modal approach to a far more integrated approach. Things are continually moving and progressing, problematic when trying to keep document up to date. The document seeks to provide a framework but also a place that can be updated in line with WG policy initiatives.

The NTDP document is split into four sections. The Strategic Context, how it fits with WG and UK Government (UKG) policies. Then turning that strategy into action and what we will deliver. The Annex lists the various projects and interventions that are planned alongside details about timescales and funding. RJ highlighted that they cannot deliver and fund these projects alone and many of the activities will last beyond the life of the plan.

HD thanked RJ and CJ for their presentations and asked whether the slides can be distributed. CJ confirmed that they are and invited questions.

Questions

CS asked whether there would be annual delivery plans, following WG comments previously, and whether the NTDP would be updated annually. Clive Campbell (CC) asked a related question in the meeting chat about whether WG have checked how the plans align with other WG key strategic plans and strategies, and whether there is any indication on what level of funding may be available to CJCs to plan for delivery of RTPs.

CJ said the RTPs are different from previous as the plan is produced by CJCs and delivery is with LAs. She added that they want to move to a regional approach and are likely to be asking for a regional programme. CJ added that the RTP would be replaced every five years and monitored after three and five years. They would have monitoring requirements for individual grant funded projects annually for three years following completion. RJ added that everyone (WG and regional) needs to strike the right balance between having plans and strategies and implementing them without being stuck in a plan cycle. She added that there are mechanisms in place to monitor progress on delivery against the plan and that WG may not re-issue the NTDP annually but may keep it a ‘live’ and updated document.

Simon Nicholls (SN) noted the challenging timescales and uncertainty about bus legislation, road review, and this may require a review of timescales to consider publication of other strategies. He noted the tension between regional plan delivered locally and how this works with funding bids and avoiding unnecessary competition.

CJ noted WG have discussed how the bus legislation fits in with the RTP work and added that this is likely to affect subsequent RTPs rather than the first wave of five-year RTPs. She added that WG can issue guidance at any point about updating RTPs and urged a need to proceed and address any issues that arise as and when, rather than be paralysed by the possibility of future changes.

SN added that some of the guidance could involve thinking of the future and avoid too much emphasis on short term plans. CJ added there would be more emphasis on behaviour change in the upcoming plans as it is one of the priorities.

Alex Clarke (AC) asked a question about where bus services sit in the RTP without knowing the outcome of the white paper on bus services. CJ said the legislative requirement of the RTP should include policies for bus travel in the region mindful that the white paper outcome may not be fully known until the next round of RTPs. The RTP should also consider where opportunities exist for bus priority and enhancements, and that this can be done without knowing the outcome of the white paper. CJ added that there is a need to get started on these plans using the information we know now and address any changes in future plans once more is known.

1. Regional Item: Cardiff Central Enhancement Programme: GRIP2 Engagement Review

Kelsey Barcenilla, Stakeholder Manager, Transport for Wales

HD thanked RJ and CJ for their presentation and answers before introducing Kelsey Barcenilla (KB) to provide an overview of the Cardiff Central Enhancement Programme GRIP (Governance for Railway Investment Projects) 2 Public Engagement.

KB introduced her role in TfW and shared a PowerPoint presentation. She provided an overview of the Cardiff Central Enhancement Programme and noted various parties involved including TfW, Cardiff Capital Region (CCR), WG, the UKG Department for Transport (DfT) and Network Rail.

She added that the proposed enhancements to Cardiff Central Station will include increasing capacity, reducing congestion, transforming the passenger environment. It will also improve interchange areas with more linked to other modes of transport including active travel and consolidate a car park to include electric vehicle charging provision.

KB provided an overview of the eight aims of the enhancement programme and the GRIP process which will be used to ensure TfW effectively engage with stakeholders and the public. She gave an update of the Stage 2 Engagement that had taken place and noted the impact of COVID and how this was addressed. She shared some of the engagement findings as well as future GRIP Stage 3 engagement plans and methods which will last between August and October 2022.

Questions

MR asked whether there are specific plans for seldom heard groups. KB said there are not but she would be very happy to discuss this with MR in the future.

1. Introduction and overview of Transport for Wales’ Community Engagement Officers and the work they do in local communities

Kelsey Barcenilla, Stakeholder Manager, Transport for Wales
*on behalf of Lowri Joyce, Head of Community and Stakeholder Engagement, Transport for Wales*

KB outlined the work of the Community Engagement Officers across Wales. She gave an overview of each Community Engagement Officer and outlined their areas. She then proceeded to outline each community engagement team’s objectives and how their roles were aligned with the Wellbeing of the Future Generation Act. She explained that each Community Engagement Officer had a specific project to support the seven well-being goals.

Alex Chung (ACH), Community Engagement Officer for Metro Central and the Bay outlined the work undertaken to support the A Prosperous Wales - Good Neighbour goal. He outlined the work supporting and encouraging schools and college pupils, in particular women, to undertake STEM subjects and how TfW collaborated and supported small community groups through its Lottery funded Green Routes Project.

Jess Clement (JC) and Ross Whiting (RW), Community Engagement Officers for South Wales East outlined their work to meet the A Vibrant Culture - Education goal. JC and RW gave an overview of the education support they had provided including providing classroom talks and seminars to promote the work and careers within TfW, school visits to the Mock Up in Taff’s Well and the Young People Charter. JC and RW then outlined their work in the South East Wales region where they were heavily involved in the development of the Metro, hosting drop-in sessions and updating stakeholders on key upcoming project and works.

Tomos Davies (TD), Community Engagement Officer for Mid and West Wales then outlined work undertaken to meet the A Healthier Wales, Community Safety & Wellbeing goal. He outlined the work undertaken in the past year, for example working with partners to delivery partners around lineside safety, anti-social behaviour, and suicide prevention. He promoted the upcoming Rail Safety Week, centred around the Network Rail’s ‘Beware of the Bubble’ campaign which was happening at the end of July 2022.

Paula Bowen (PB), Community Engagement Officer for Wales and the Borders outlined her work to meet the A Resilient and Globally Responsible Wales goal. As part of her role, she concentrated on promoting Modal Shift and particular active travel. This included working with communities to improve their understanding of local modal shift and active travel issues, including on active-travel station improvements. She outlined the community work undertaken by TfW in Anglesey and the LA active travel officers’ group which was overseen by TfW. PB then outlined her work in the region including supporting the new TfW Lottery funded Community Woodland project and her work in promoting Fflecsi bus service in Newport.

Elise Jackson (EJ), Community Engagement Officer for North Wales then outlined her work in supporting the A More Equal Wales goal. As part her work she concentrated on Mobility and Inclusion, which involved working with local accessibility groups, health boards and the third sector to identify barriers to public transport and working with TfW accessibility panel to make change and improvement. She then outlined her work in the region including helping to shape public transport projects such as the Newtown College Gateway Students Project, developing the Talking Transport Toolkit and promoting community transport in North Wales.

HD noted that these projects are not region specific, and that any stakeholders who would like to introduce any of these projects or something similar in their areas would be more than welcome to get in touch.

1. AOB

HD asked whether there were any other business items. She added that the Caerphilly Interchange Consultation was now open and gave an overview of the project.

CS raised two questions. The first was he noted a lack of community rail groups in Monmouthshire but pointed out that there could be an interest for the establishment of one. He asked whether this would be something TfW would set up and support. The second question he raised was around whether there would be more TfW merchandise developed and available on the TfW website to strengthen the TfW brand. He also asked who Monmouthshire should contact about railway consultations.

HD answered that there is a community rail team and offered to send CS a contact. She added that TfW would raise the merchandise suggestion with the commercial team. Lowri Joyce (LJ) said this could link to some of our other projects. HD added that if Monmouthshire would like to share any consultations with the stakeholder team, we could distribute them.

HD thanked members for attending and contributing, before closing the meeting.

## Next Regional Stakeholder Forum

The next South-East Wales Regional Stakeholder Forum is scheduled for 28th September 2022. The meeting will be held virtually using Microsoft Teams.