

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CJC - REGIONAL TRANSPORT PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE HELD BY ZOOM ON TUESDAY 23RD OCTOBER 2023.



PRESENT:

Powys County Council:

Members: County Councillor County Councillors J Charlton, D Selby, A Davies

Officers: John Forsey Snr Manager Highways Transport and Recycling, Shaun James Snr Manager Highways and Technical Services, Nicola Williams Strategic Programme Delivery Manager.

Ceredigion County Council:

Members: County Councillor C Davies, Keith Henson, Alun Williams

Officers: Rhodri Llwyd Corporate Lead Officer Highways and Environmental Services, Ann Elias Regional Officer Mid Wales Transportation, Gerwyn Jones Corporate Manager Environmental Services

1. APPOINT CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR
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Following the AGM of the CJC and abiding by the Constitution of the CJC, each year the Chair of the Sub Committee is rotated.

Cllr Jackie Charlton was elected as Chair.

Cllr Keith Henson was elected as Vice Chair.

The Chair and Vice Chair formally thanked the Committee for nominations.

2. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES / CROESO A YMDDIHEURIADAU

Chair formally welcomed all members to the inaugural Regional Transport Planning meeting. Chair commented that this was a forum that could promote transport to the top of the agenda of Welsh Government, as without a good transport policy for Mid Wales, there cannot be a transport policy for the whole of Wales that is suitable for the constituents of Wales.

3. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from the following:

Powys County Council:

Officers: Matt Perry.

Ceredigion County Council:

Carwyn Jones Evans, Phil Jones.

4.	DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST
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There were no Declarations of Interest from Members relating to items to be on the agenda.

5.	TERMS OF REFERENCE
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The Terms of Reference were accepted by the Committee.

6.	REGIONAL TRANSPORT PLAN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN
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Ann Elias presented the Mid Wales Regional Transport Plan Implementation Plan 2024/25 to the Committee (forwarded within the agenda pack) which sets out how as a region the strategy would be delivered. Guidance was published by WG in July 2023 with a requirement that an Implementation Plan would be produced by the 31st October 2023.

A Working Group has been established between Powys and Ceredigion Councils Welsh Government and Transport for Wales officers.

The Implementation plan cover Powys Ceredigion and includes part of Bannau Brecheiniog National Park area.

Through a process of scoping out the key work packages the following risks were noted:

- Political agreement on policies and high-level outcomes.
 - To be mitigated through engagement and discussion throughout the process
- Regional agreement on prioritised RTDP schemes list
 - To be mitigated through the development of a robust and impartial scoring methodology
- Challenging timescales for submission and adoption of the RTP
- If the RTP is linked to Transport funding from April 2025, it may be necessary to seek an early approval process from Welsh Government to ensure schemes and projects identified within the RTP receive funding.

Prior to public consultation there should be an assessment received from WG. A plan for the proposed consultation period will also need to be drafted

Best practice and guidance across Wales to be sought on identifying a methodology for prioritising schemes.

1. Timeline and Key Dates for noting:

31 st October 2023	CJC to submit implementation plan to WG
29 th February 2024	CJC to submit RTP Case for Change including SMART objectives to WG

29 th May 2024	CJC to submit initial draft RTP, IWNA and RTDP to WG BEFORE public consultation
31 st October 2024	CJC to submit final draft RTP, IWBA and RTDP to WG
29 th March 2025	CJC to submit final RTP, IWBA and RTDP to WG
30 th June 2025	Welsh Government decision to approve RTP.

Questions from Committee	Responses from Officers
As a committee we will need to challenge WG on the guidance. There is currently an officers working, The timeframe dictated within the guidance may prove the biggest challenge	
Follow the comment above as to what from the ambition of the region could be implemented, concern raised that the schemes would need to be more dynamic than current and backed by appropriate funding and resources.	This region is made up of 2 LA's whereas other regions benefit from numerous stakeholders. Therefore, trying to pool resources from a factor of 2 whereas SE Wales has a factor of 10. Without funding from WG it will be extremely difficult for this RTP to progress.
Chair noted that the delay in notifying of any funding streams by and from WG is a significant risk to the progress of this RTP.	Agreed there has been no formal offer of funding.
There was no reference to Transport For Wales rail network within the Implementation plan and have been advised to not include the national network, despite this being a vital part of our transport planning.	The guidance stipulates that it would not be for the regions to tell WG what to deliver on their transport road and rail network, despite petitions that this region needs to demonstrate how the national network affects rural Mid-Wales with the integration of the county roads and bus networks.
The rail network through Wales is a vital part of the transport infrastructure, including the Heart of Wales and Cambrian lines. If there is not good transport infrastructure in central Wales, there is not a good transport infrastructure across the whole of Wales. Mid Wales is not just that area between the M4 and A55 corridors. An internal transport network within Mid Wales is vital to the economy as without a functioning core there isn't a cohesive Wales.	

<p>The 1 ticket 1 Network access to transport was meant to join Wales together regardless of location.</p>	
<p>These issues affect the whole of Wales, Mid Wales bus routes and timetables are possibly in a worse position than other counties.</p>	
<p>Powys shares a border with England which may mean different timetabling as well as differing regulations.</p>	
<p>Following up on the funding challenges, Transport for Wales have recently withdrawn funding for the Bwcabws scheme, the business model is not working due to the low numbers involved. We need to find a new solution with the assistance of WG.</p>	
<p>Concern expressed that as 2 LA's without the funding the RTP is set up for failure. In Powys private companies are used to deliver transport services, without adequate and proper funding support. A further challenge for individuals coming through Mid Wales by car would be that WG have ceased funding for public toilets. As WG have requested the CJC it would be appropriate to request funding for delivery of the RTP.</p>	<p>Recommendation: - How could the CJC overcome the resourcing issues for what is required in Mid Wales by WG</p> <p>As the guidance from WG was that the RTP cannot have influence on the Rail or trunk road network, gives a clear steer for the region to concentrate efforts on county highway network.</p> <p>The new PSVAR regulations are to be implemented by 2026, this allows time to reset and rethink. The RTP would need to incorporate how LA's hold WG to account for a resilient strategic network for both the economy and leisure activities.</p>
	<p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee and Formal CJC to sign off the Implementation Plan. • Establish Working Groups • Establish and secure stakeholder engagement. • Request funding for resources from WG.

7.	ANY OTHER BUSINESS
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Meeting Frequency

Committee decided to meet quarterly as per CJC requirements and to provide updates to the formal CJC.

Request to be forwarded via the formal CJC for a response from WG in respect of funding.

6.1 EXEMPT ITEM

To consider passing the following Resolution:

RESOLVED to exclude the public for the following item of business on the grounds that there would be disclosure to them of exempt information under category 3 of The Local Authorities (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007).

The Monitoring Officer has determined that category 3 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules applies to the following item. His view on the public interest test (having taken account of the provisions of Rule 14.8 of the Council's Access to Information Rules) was that to make this information public would disclose information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

These factors in his view outweigh the public interest in disclosing this information. Members are asked to consider these factors when determining the public interest test, which they must decide when considering excluding the public from this part of the meeting.

6.2 REGIONAL TRANSPORT PLAN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Committee held a discussion on the Exempt report: Appendix 1

The CJC will need to seek agreement as to whether Powys and Ceredigion intend to undertake a joint regional transport delivery plan.