



TraCC Board meeting

Thursday 23 November 2017, 11am

Y Plas Machynlleth

Present:

Members:

Councillor Alun Williams (Chair)	<i>AW</i>	Ceredigion County Council
Councillor Dafydd Meurig (Vice Chair)	<i>DM</i>	Gwynedd Council
Councillor Liam Fitzpatrick	<i>LF</i>	Powys County Council

Officers in attendance:

Ann Elias	<i>AHE</i>	TraCC
Tony Caine	<i>TC</i>	Powys County Council
Rhodri Llwyd	<i>RLI</i>	Ceredigion County Council
Meirion Williams	<i>MW</i>	Gwynedd Council
Mike Shaw	<i>MS</i>	Ceredigion County Council
Dewi Rowlands	<i>DR</i>	Welsh Government
David Hern	<i>DH</i>	Welsh Government

Support Staff:

Dr Sion Aled Owen (Translation)	—	—
Carol Davies (Minutes)	<i>CD</i>	Ceredigion County Council

EITEMAU / ITEMS

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| 1.00 | <p>Welcome and Introductions
 The chair welcomed all Officers to the meeting, and all Officers present in turn introduced themselves.</p> | |
| 2.00 | <p>Apologies
 Apologies for their inability to attend the meeting were received from Councillors Gareth Lloyd (Ceredigion) and Martin Weale (Powys), Paul Griffiths and Nigel Brinn (Powys) and Richard Morgan (Welsh Government).</p> | |
| 3.00 | <p>Declarations of Interest
 There were no Declarations of Interest.</p> | |
| 4.00 | <p>Election of Chair and Vice Chair
 As the outgoing Chair, AW proposed DM as the new Chair, which was seconded by LF. AW also proposed LF as the new Vice-Chair, which was seconded by DM.</p> <p>As the new Chair, DM took over for the remainder of the meeting. DM</p> | |

thanked the Group for his nomination.

5.00 Minutes of the TraCC Board meeting held on 28 September 2016

The minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record.

6.00 The Growing Mid Wales Partnership (GMWP) (update by Mike Shaw)

MS stated that the Growing Mid Wales Partnership was recognised as fully inclusive and therefore was accepted by the Welsh Government (WG) as a region of Wales.

GMWP are currently working with Powys and Ceredigion on taking forward a regional agenda. There have been very positive comments from Gwynedd, who have confirmed their wish to be part of the GMWP and would wish to be part of any potential opportunity to attract regional funding, for example a growth deal.

By being a fully inclusive partnership we are fulfilling taking forward the Mid Wales region at a faster rate than other regions of Wales, as these haven't been as strong in bringing together wider stakeholders. In Mid-Wales there is a long tradition of working together to find common solutions for common problems.

GMWP are in talks with WG regarding a deal for an Integrated Economic Programme for Mid-Wales. A brief has been prepared and is focused around a series of propositions, trying to add value to a rural product and what we do in a rural area. The intention is that this work will be jointly managed by Officers from WG, Ceredigion and Powys.

Next Monday we are expecting the UK Government to announce a White Paper for the Industrial Strategy. Some of the important things for Mid-Wales are not devolved, and therefore we must work with the UK Government and identify what they can do for Mid-Wales?

The Chair (DM) stated that he was keen to see improvements but they need to connect all of Wales – regions are good, but Wales is one country.

DR stated that developments have taken place since we last met – Ken Skates feels very strongly over co-working regionally. Rhodri Griffiths has been appointed as Chief Regional Officer (for Mid and South West Wales), and one of his key focus will be targeting the economy so that there is a more balanced economy across the regions and the country as a whole. As regards the Growth Bid in North Wales, the Wales Office are placing emphasis on the importance of securing private sector buy-in. GMWP needs to be clear on the projects they wish to take forward and these need to reflect the likely funding being available to them. The funding available is not limitless, and therefore there is a need to be realistic with the ask and what can be achieved. When discussions take place, it is important that all parties are around the table to move things forward.

LF wished to stress that the Board needs to move at the speed of the private sector and take account of their needs.

7.00

TrawsCymru (update by David Hall)

DH provided a TrawsCymru update via a presentation shown on screen.

The first slide provided a map of Wales showing all the current routes operated by TrawsCymru. AW queried whether there was any scope for a route from Aberystwyth to Llandrindod, in order to fill the gaps in connectivity. Comments were also passed that the potential for tourism in Wales is huge if we could also connect the TrawsCymru services to Hereford and Shropshire.

As part of the Market Research undertaken in the Summer of 2017 – 728 passengers were interviewed across all services. 98% of passengers stated that they would recommend TrawsCymru to friends and family, and they also praised the service reliability and the affordability of tickets. Just over 30% of the passengers carried were aged 65 or over.

The current trial of free weekend travel will be running until May 2018. During some weekends of the trial, extra buses had to be used sometimes due to larger than expected passenger numbers. LF commented that the free weekends had had a big economic effect on the Brecon area and as a result of this Powys are now intending to operate a free park & ride service from Brecon to Pen-y-Fan.

With regard to the recent infrastructure improvements to the T4 & T6 routes, which have enabled Powys CC to provide new and upgraded bus stop and interchange signage, LF commented that they'd had a massive economic benefit, with a positive response from users demonstrating how much this type of investment actually matters to local people.

Further Potential Service Developments:

- Enhanced frequencies on the T2 Aberystwyth to Bangor route – which is out to tender at the moment
- Evaluation of new service on the A5 linking Bangor to Oswestry via Corwen – Llangollen – Chirk
- Evaluation of new service linking Newtown to Wrexham via Welshpool and Oswestry
- Improved connections between Dolgellau and Llandudno (Conwy Valley)

8.00

Welsh Government Transport (update by Dewi Rowlands / David Hern)

Dewi Rowlands

DR stated that there is a paper going to Cabinet next week seeking permission to start drafting an updated Wales Transport Strategy. Hoping to start work on scoping shortly, there will be work needed to identify how transport needs to work in the future to deliver the Well-Being and Future Generations goals and principles. Strategy will not be published until 2019 and there will be high level of engagement with stakeholders. LF stated that he was confident that we can work together and that there is a need to make sure we identify how cross border transport works.

The National Transport Finance Plan which contains information regarding a 5-year commitment on how we invest in transport, is under review. The revised version will identify what has been achieved, and outline proposals for the next 3 years.

WelTAG refresh will be available shortly – currently working with the Future Generations Commissioner to ensure the assessments take into account the new Act. There will be a WelTAG toolkit and supplementary guidance. One Guidance will identify how to use the goals and principles contained in the WBoFGA to evaluate options. Local authorities will be expected to use the toolkit if they require Welsh Government funding.

There is currently an opportunity to contribute and influence how we look at transport in Wales.

David Hern

DH began by stating that all 3 Authorities had been successful in obtaining money from Local Transport Grants.

He is currently dealing with in-year requests, and is grateful to Local Authority Officers for responding quickly and positively. It is hoped to provide more funding for Active Travel projects this year. DH also noted the WG commitment to maintain Road Safety and Safe Routes in Community funds.

9.00

Strategic Transport (update by Ann Elias)

AHE took the Board through the report, which was included as Enclosure B to the agenda:

Item 2.5 – The Board were happy for AHE to push forward in seeking a suitable road safety representative who has specific Road Safety knowledge.

Item 3.3 – regarding the joint bid for the T2 and T5 – Pembrokeshire have been included as the T5 goes to Haverfordwest.

Item 4.2 – AHE confirmed that she had met Abellio Rail Cymru in Hereford yesterday, and is trying to gather ideas to feed into their bid. Bids are due to be with the Government by 21 December 2017, with an early announcement due to be made in early 2018 with the new franchise starting in October 2018.

Item 4.6 – it was very pleasing to note that funding of £6.75million had been confirmed for the project to re-open Bow Street railway station, and that the region is working with WG and TfW to deliver the project.

Item 4.9 – DR stated that the Technical work was almost complete, and that the project is being managed by Transport for Wales. However, to date there had been no engagement with the commissioned consultants Mott Macdonald. DH to chase.

Item 4.13 – The DfT have confirmed a £80million network rail programme,

DH

that is being rolled out to introduce smart ticketing across England and Wales by the end of 2018.

Item 5.3 – DH stated that trunk road colleagues are currently working their way through objections. He is optimistic that the scheme can go ahead without a public enquiry.

Item 5.4 – The official opening of the A483 Newtown bypass had now moved to Spring 2019, due to tricky ground conditions.

Item 5.5 – The Government has confirmed £24million over 4 years to deliver Pinch Points.

Item 5.6 – WG have provided an additional £15million to support infrastructure for north-south links, which will have a particular focus on the A487 / A470 and A483. It will also be looking at the A44.

10.00

Any Other Business

Following the recent budget, the UK Government had confirmed they are to extend the age range of the rail card to include a new card for 26 - 30 year olds. It was suggested that a similar age range could be included in Bus concessions.

11.00

Date of Next Meeting

The AGM is arranged for 23 November 2018 at Y Plas, Machynlleth

Following discussion, the Board agreed to hold 2 meetings per year. CD to seek availability for June 2018.

Post Meeting Note: date of the next Board Meeting is confirmed as 22 June 2018 at Y Plas, Machynlleth between 11am – 1pm)

CD