ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Date: 9 February 2005
Time: 09.00 to 12.30
Venue: National Assembly for Wales, Cardiff Bay
Title: Wales' Transport needs and Policies – Future Issues

**CYNULLIAD CENEDLAETHOL CYMRU
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FOR WALES**

**PWLLGOR DATBLYGU ECONOMAIDD A THRAFNIDIAETH
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE**

9 Chwefror / February 2005

**WALES' TRANSPORT NEEDS AND POLICIES – FUTURE
ISSUES**

**Professor Stuart Cole, Director, Wales Transport Research Centre, University of
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INTRODUCTION

There is a generally accepted view that the long term (30 – 40 year time
span)solution to the energy and pollution consequences of the motor car in Europe
and the other oil using areas of the world (see Fig 1) must be the delivery of an
integrated transport policy. Wales is, at least, representative of the EU as a whole.

As a relatively small country with an established pattern of spatial development,
Wales has clearly definable areas, namely:

- major urban areas;
- Valleys communities;
- rural areas (affluent, often referred to as "urban shadow");
- rural market towns
- remote (often called "deep rural") rural areas.

Wales is therefore not an homogeneous country. It has a densely populated area in
south east Wales with 120 persons per hectaire while in north west Wales density is as
low as 6 pph

Each of these area types has particular transport needs. Future aspirations for
transport service provision in each area type need to be explicitly stated so that a
blueprint may be developed with appropriate targets for service provision by each

transport mode. Thus two quite separate sets of solutions reflecting different needs can be identified. In urban Wales the issue is one of relieving congestion and reducing the environmental impact of the motor car. In rural Wales basic mobility and no car access is the issue. In all areas there are many on low incomes with the consequent social exclusion.

The Assembly Government, both directly and by commissioning studies and reviews, has made strides towards recognition of transport problems and has identified some possible solutions. These include the extension of transport concessions, extension of Transport Grant allocation to cover a three year period and increased use of transport telematics (eg in highway management and the BWCABUS a rural public transport service for the Teifi Valley using GPS, satellite control and demand responsive real time bus services with a conventional high frequency primary route.

Transport despite being the function, which links our business and leisure activities, often lies forgotten. Wales is no exception. The First Minister set out education, health and employment as the three primary functions of the Welsh government. Transport's political phoenix came in the last four years and the National Assembly, to its credit, has been a leader.

One of the major issues has also been the disintegration of the transport business in Wales, England and Scotland partly through privatisation but also by mode and transport authority. Indeed within transport authorities there are often limited links between the roads department, public transport, education passenger and social services transport.

This is a serious fiscal problem involving not just the UK and Ireland but most of the EU member states.

Dovetailing policies by different governments within the UK and within Europe is therefore only one part of the problem. There is also the realisation that policies designed for large cities are not suited to rural areas. This the department for Transport in England has found particularly when some of those policies are applied to other areas within the UK and to those predominantly rural areas in England. Examples might be road charging and workplace parking in terms of the provision of adequate alternative public transport.

There is a clear recognition that it is the urban journey to work movement where the most dramatic changes must occur. This does not mean that other aspects of policy, such as greater inclusivity with a focus on accessibility rather than simply mobility should not be pursued. However, without addressing the journey to work problem, it is unlikely that other aspects will achieve or deliver overall aspirations.
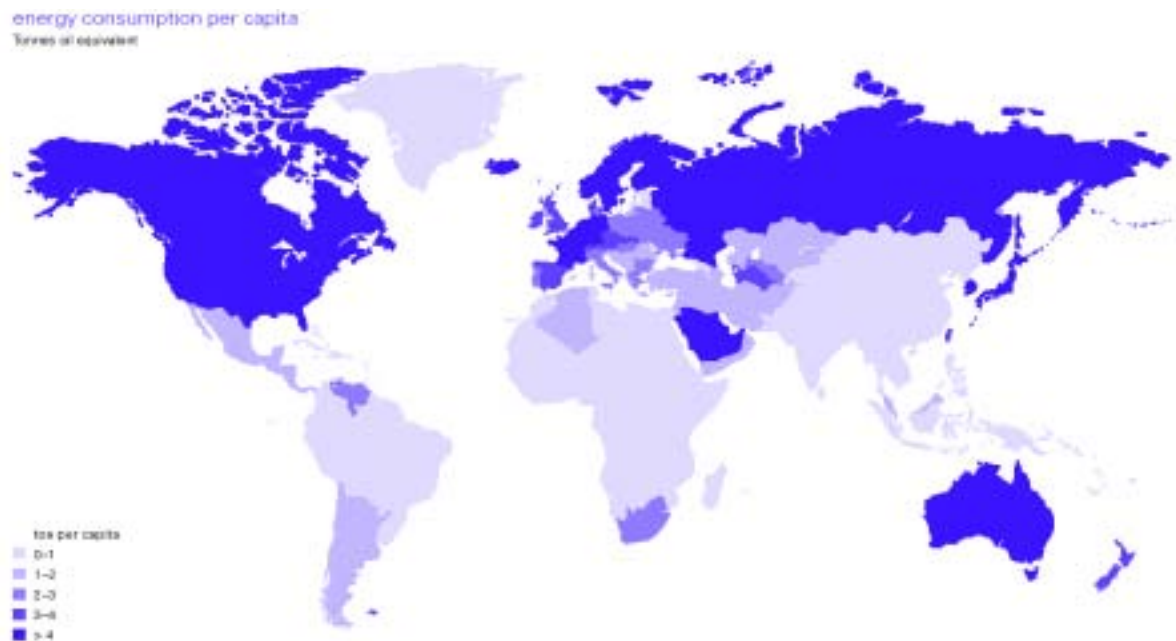
energy consumption per capita
Tonnes of equivalent

toe per capita
0-1
1-2
2-3
3-4
> 4

FIGURE 1: Who Uses the Energy?

This paper examines the transport needs of Wales over the next 30 years, which, assuming conventional travel continues (see Figs 2a and 2b) will see significant rises in car based travel. It questions whether these demands are sustainable over that period.

The current policy requirements expressed by Government and Committee show the optimistic and realistic levels of investment. Integrated transport is the base of the solution – at a strategic and an operational level. Its rationale and elements are considered.

The use of the 4I's (see Appendix 2), and in particular investment, are fundamental to its achievement. However the underlying questions remain – is investment at a sufficiently high level to influence modal split, and what are the future sources of funding.

The paper then switches to 2040 when predictions (from, for example BP,) indicate the oil will have run out! It illustrates the position in relation to current energy sources for motorised transport and to its unsustainable position unless investment in more efficient or alternative energy sources (eg hydrogen) are used.
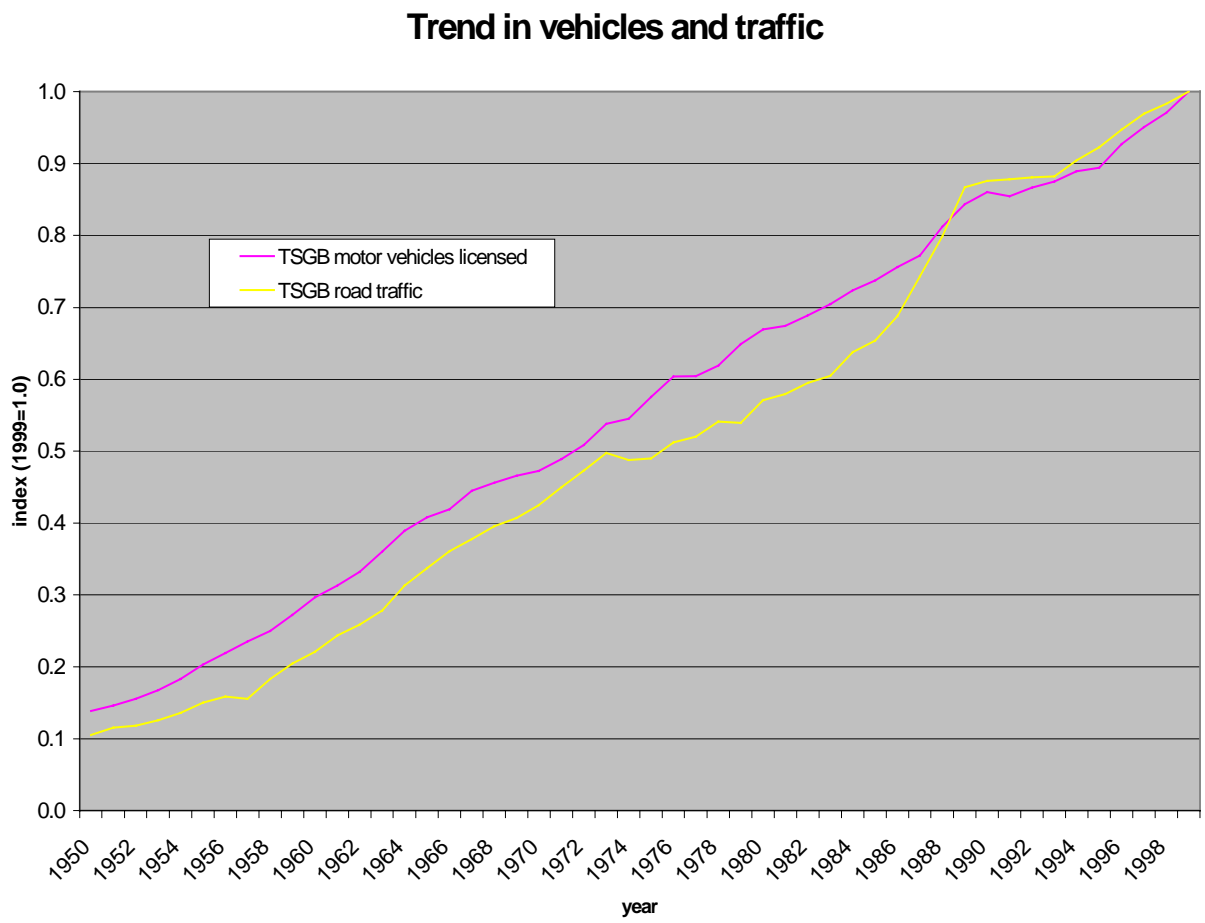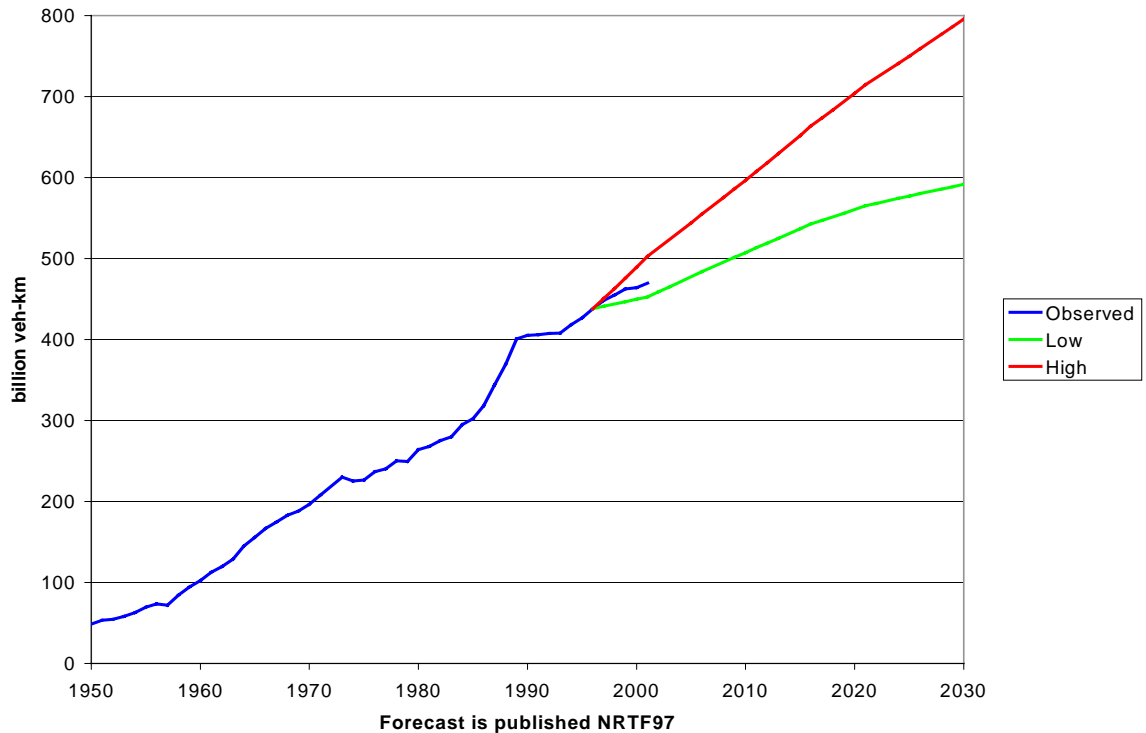
FIGURE 2a:

Trend in vehicles and traffic

FIGURE 2b:

Observed & forecast traffic growth

Forecast is published NRTF97

TRANSPORT LINKS REFLECT DEMAND

Historically the land transport network, both road and rail, in Wales was London oriented. In some ways this has been of value in linking Wales to major markets in Southeast England and in other European Union countries. East – west links in the north and south of Wales provided for the development of markets in England for industrial, agricultural and tourism products through both road and rail.

So what are the current needs of transport in Wales? There is a need to provide high quality links giving reliability and minimum journey times to markets; which provide for increased social inclusion; which link north to South Wales, and which link the Canolbarth into primary markets.

Wales has, for too long, been seen as a peripheral part of the United Kingdom. The prime objective has therefore to be a transport network linking all of Wales to its markets. The needs are set out here.

Links to London

Improved rail services from north Wales (every hour), mid Wales (every 2 hours) and south Wales (every 30 minutes) will begin to attract more car users. However, first and last train departure times will have to be extended and journey times reduced to the level of TGV services in France. In Welsh terms this would mean investment in a proposal for 200 mph train for the South Wales Main Line (Cardiff – London 30mins, Swansea – London 1h 30m) (see Cole S, Right Tracks in agenda, Summer 2004, IWA). On The West Coast Main Line (at 200 mph) and the North Wales Main Line at 100+ mph, will have to be modified now and the funding found from public and private (if available) sources to meet a 2040 deadline.

Road links from both north and south Wales' coastal areas are of a high standard but links to mid Wales do not meet the needs of inward investors.

Links to major English markets

North Wales links to Manchester and Yorkshire and south Wales links to London and Southeast England by rail and road are good but require improvements. These regions also require reduced journey times by high quality routes to the English midlands. Rail services on these routes have to be improved and a new half -hourly service from Bangor to Birmingham via Wrexham and Shrewsbury introduced. These will be increased line speeds and capacity providing a significant improvement to services serving Wrexham and Northeast Wales.

Road improvements are part of this development based on a high quality core road network, which will link into the A55/M56 in the north, the M54 in mid Wales and the M4/M48 in the south. This will facilitate low energy, LPG and low pollutive long distance coach operations.

Links to European Union countries

By road the internal network (figure of 8) will link via England's motorway network to the Channel Tunnel and channel ports and onwards via the Trans European Network (TENs). However the "motorway of the seas" (proposed by the European Union) connected to Wales by the ports of Swansea, Cardiff, Pembroke/Milford Haven, Fishguard and Holyhead can provide high quality links with western France, Spain, Portugal and Ireland and some inter-continental destinations more efficiently and with less pollution. This requires improved road links and for rail freight links to those ports. Investment in the A40 and specific access roads will be forthcoming. These issues are currently being considered by WTRC in its Study "Ports and Hinterlands - intermodality between the means of goods transport funded by the Interreg 3 programme (Atlantic Transnational Network Accessibility Working Group) and the National Assembly for Wales.

By rail via the Channel Tunnel using the originally planned regional Eurostar service.

By air on one of the following airlines with direct links from Cardiff to other European destinations or with one change:

- BMI baby and its development of services
- Air Wales
- Further interlining through the established KLM services via Schipol (Amsterdam)

Links within Wales

The need for a high quality internal road network linking all four corners of Wales with economic growth, increased employment and income per head as the primary drivers. A good quality internal transport network (by road and/or rail) is essential in attracting inward investment and tourists - two of Wales' primary job creators.

Long distance public transport network

The network of long distance public transport would be based on the core rail and road networks. The rail network could provide train services:-

- at 10 minute intervals on all urban services in the Cardiff and Newport travel areas (SEWTA) either through heavy rail or light rail.
- at 15 minute intervals between Bangor and Chester; Newport and Carmarthen and a return to the Swanline concept for Swansea;
- half- hourly between Holyhead and Bangor; Milford Haven/Pembroke Dock and Newport; Bridgend and Cardiff via Rhoose (Cardiff International Airport); Shrewsbury and Aberystwyth; Cardiff and Manchester/Birmingham/Bangor/ Chester; Bangor and Wrexham/Shrewsbury/Birmingham. Existing hourly services not specified elsewhere;
- hourly between Machynlleth and Pwllheli; Llanelli and Shrewsbury.

The long distance bus and coach network due to be launched in February 2005 with Carmarthen-Aberystwyth-Bangor service would link directly to the rail network with an integrated timetable and seamless interchanges at key locations such as Cardiff, Merthyr, Bridgend, Carmarthen, Haverfordwest, Aberystwyth, Bangor, Blaenau Ffestiniog, Wrecsam, Shrewsbury, Llandrindod Wells, and Hereford. Hubs at locations such as Rhaeadr could provide connections within the long distance road passenger network. Bus priority measures would be introduced in towns and on the core road network.

Local bus networks

These would be the joint responsibility of public transport boards and bus service providers (both public and private sector). The current consortia could be strengthened and through primary legislation would franchise bus services and create local ticketing systems. The national free travel service could be extended from the elderly to the under-18's and to the unemployed. This would contribute to the increase in social inclusion through increased mobility. The national Wales Flexipass ticket could be better promoted to encourage the use of bus and trains. In rural areas, alternative means of providing public transport through demand-responsive services linked to conventional bus and rail services could be introduced to improve the possible number of departures from small communities.

Questions: Can these links be sustained in the long term at present and forecast levels of traffic growth? What energy sources would be used? What is the most efficient (in social cost benefit terms)means of moving urban dwellers

CURRENT POLICY

The current policies of the various governance bodies with a responsibility for Wales are agreed on the need for transfer of certain powers but are also aware that the current levels of expenditure on capital schemes require considerable enhancement if we are to achieve a provision of sustainable forms of surface transport by 2040.

Several reports have recently considered the issues:-

- the Policy Review of Public Transport (Environment, Planning and Transport Committee, (EPT)National Assembly for Wales, 2000)
- Transport Framework for Wales (National Assembly for Wales, 2000)
- Transport in Wales (House of Commons Select Committee on Welsh Affairs, 2003)
- Welsh Assembly Government's (WAG) response to the House of Commons Report (2003)
- Minister of the Environment /Cabinet statements on transport to Plenary, National Assembly for Wales
- Transport in Wales : Response of the Government(UK) (2003)
- Provision of Rail Services in Wales (House of Commons Select Committee on Welsh Affairs 2004)
- Draft Transport (Wales) Bill 2004 (Reports from House of Commons and from National Assembly ED&T Committee)

INTEGRATED TRANSPORT POLICY

Definition

Considerable discussion has surrounded this policy but what does it mean?
An Integrated Transport Policy examines four relationships:

- integration within and between different types of transport - better and easier interchange between car/bus/rail etc. with better information on services and availability of integrated tickets. Thus it is between between public and private transport, between motorised and non-motorised (walking, cycling) transport and within public transport

- integration with the environment - considering the effect of transport policies on the environment and selecting the most environmentally friendly solution whenever possible.

- integration with land use planning - to reduce the need for travel and to ensure new developments can be reached by public transport.

- integration with policies on social welfare, education, health and wealth creation so that cross-cutting policies on issues such as social inclusion, school travel,

cycling and walking, and the profitability of business work together rather than against each other.

The preferred structure to achieve such integration nationally, regionally or locally has three prerequisites:-

a   a single policy and budgetary authority at the strategic (geographic) level both national and regional

b   a single co-ordinating body for all modes of transport at the strategic (geographic) level both national and regional

c   operational level co-ordinating bodies to achieve seamless interchange between modes, within modes, and between modes and land uses/human activities. This relates to physical interface and the provision of through ticketing.

While services in (c) may be provided by contractors, (a) and (b) must involve a single body.

The parallel for such a system exists in other member states of the European Union where high investment levels, with co-ordination policies of services, fares and infrastructure developments, may be found in major centres as well as in local areas. The Regional Councils of France have transport as a major policy issue with their responsibility covering local railway services (with SNCF) and for bus operations in the municipalities. In Sweden regional public transport bodies run local bus and rail services in a country with many rural areas, a small population (8m) and a concentration of people in a small part of the total land area. The Netherlands has a national ticketing system for local public transport (the Nationale Strippenkaart) and a national railway service but with provinces being responsible for all bus, rail and train-taxi services and for stations. Track operations are retained by the State-owned Railned. In Austria, the Land (equivalent to the consortia areas) has responsibility within its areas for all local public transport and land use planning and which link into a national policy for rail services. Joint ticketing exists on all services within the Land. The proposals for Wales, equate in many ways to these, would be taken further to the point where control and finance, policy and service provision, though not necessarily all operations, would be conducted by one national, and four associated regional bodies based on the consortia.

Elements

If the analysis is confined (for the moment) to passenger transport then the elements may be integrated (with a trade off in expenditure between them based on a single multi-modal evaluation technique). The elements are :-

      road investment
      rail investment (infrastructure/rolling stock)
      bus investment (terminals and vehicles)
      public transport interchanges
      walking/cycling facilities investment
      traffic management (physical and fiscal)
      public transport fares levels)   and consequent

public transport service level)   contractual payments

Rationale

The key objective of integrated transport is to provide for a split between accessible and affordable modes of travel which are both sustainable and become the preferred modes of travel in Wales.

However, Wales has different spatial characteristics from densely populated urban areas (e.g. Cardiff, Newport, Merthyr, Ebbw Vale, Swansea, Wrexham), through major towns (e.g.Neath, Port Talbot, Llanelli, Aberystwyth, Llandudno) and important rural centres (e.g.Carmarthen, Haverfordwest, Castell Newydd Emlyn, Llandeilo, Brecon, Newtown, Ruthin, Denbigh) to deep rural Wales (e.g.Ceredigion, Gwynedd). The potential for transfer to public transport therefore, varies between urban and rural areas. But even such a difference can be narrowed.

However, improvements are required in the public transport system before car users can be persuaded to change and non-car owners be able to make reasonably timed and priced journeys.

Local Transport Plans(LTP's) , the centrepiece of the UK Government's proposals for the co-ordination of transport movements, have a crucial role in promoting integrated and sustainable transport. They must be seen in the context of users and suppliers and backed by appropriate policies, powers and resources. The policies and proposals in the LTP's must relate and support the UDP's and be compatible in a regional context. An integrated transport policy is not anti-road nor pro-public transport; rather it seeks to optimise investment expenditure on a sustainable basis. It means getting best value for the investment made but bearing in mind the long-term consequences which personal travel and movement of freight has on the environment, health and quality of life. It is not a low cost policy nor need it be unaffordable.

The models discussed in the Policy Review of Public Transport (PRPT, 2001) present several options. The proposal set out above formalises much of what is currently the reality. A national/regional model offers benefits in terms of a framework for policies to be consistent in all parts of Wales to fund and deliver public transport.

The provision for bottom up decision making by county councils through the consortia/JTA's will ensure that the diverse characteristics of need are provided for. The distinctive needs of urban Wales and rural Wales highlight the reality that while decisions on the rail franchise have to be made by the Assembly, decisions on local bus and associated public transport (including taxis) have to be made regionally/locally, and the whole operation has to be integrated into one total journey network.

If Wales is to develop its own integrated transport policy best suited to the needs of Wales, certain key functions have to be transferred from UK institutions. The Policy Review sets out (p.29) the need to link a series of key activities and their provider(s):-

- a national Wales rail network   NAfW/DfT
  (Wales and Borders franchise)

- the national road network	NAfW
- bus policy (regulation)	NAfW (from DT)
- regional public transport policies	Consortia/JTA's/CC's
- local roads	CC's
- land use planning	CC's
- bus quality partnerships	CC's
- traffic management	CC's

NAfW	-	National Assembly for Wales
DfT	-	Department for Transport (GB/England)
CC'S	-	County Councils/County Borough Councils/City and County
Consortia/JTA's	-	groups of county areas)

The suggested structure will achieve all the requirements of an integrated transport policy, but the concerns that it will lead to a top down approach althpough understandable, can be overcome if the function of the national and regional bodies are clearly set out.

Transfer of powers

If the desire is to achieve an integrated transport policy for Wales the following responsibilities, powers and functions would need to be transferred from London to the Assembly Government and local authorities who between them would have the policy making role for, and power to finance:-

- road construction investment and maintenance
- bus service frequencies, routes, and subsidy/contract payment levels
- investment incentives
- rail investment (DfT/Network Rail)
- rail passenger service levels and contractual arrangements with TOC's (DfT/NAfW/SE) (block grant would be increased by an amount commensurate with current expenditure)
- environmental issues
- land use/development
- current powers of the Traffic Commissioners (DfT)
- traffic reduction/traffic management policy and regulation (DfT/NAfW)
- personal safety of pedestrians, cyclists and provision for those groups
- mobility impaired people
- liaison with Sustrans in Wales
- airport development and air service development and regulation (with appropriate private sector involvement) (DfT, CAA)
- bus industry regulation (DfT)
- public transport policy generally (DfT)
- rail regulation (Rail Regulator)
- user group representation (PTUC/NAfW)
- regulatory framework for taxis/private hire cars (part DfT, local councils)
- port development and shipping services promotion (DfT)
- integration of road/rail freight operations (Network Rail, NAfW DfT)

NafW   -   National Assembly for Wales
DfT   -   Department for Transport (Great Britain/England)
SE   -   Scottish Executive

(Note: Names in brackets indicate the holders of that responsibility where these are not the National Assembly and assuming the Railways Bill/Transport (Wales) Bill become law).

The primary means of affecting modal split in the short term is through attracting more passengers out of their cars and onto public transport. The opportunities to reduce leisure <u>journeys</u> are few; some opportunities exist for some people to work from home on say one day a week but service providers and production workers, by the very nature of their jobs, are excluded.

Questions:

The "Visions" of UK white papers and reports in Wales are a reconciliation of the need - the best transport system in Europe - and the reality. Is the policy achievable? Will the investment be provided?

What of rural Wales? Road improvements will be vital for both public and private transport use. But will the car have to continue to be the most common means of travel and is any other alternative better in energy/pollution terms given the sparcity of the population. New techniques for controlling bus operations will be introduced in Carmarthenshire (July 2005). The BWCABUS scheme designed by the Wales Transport Research Centre with funding from the Assembly Government and Carmarthenshire County Council will provide a significant rise in travel options (from 4 per week to 72 per week for some villages). It will also provide for local journeys and park and ride thus influencing modal split. Gwynedd have introduced real time information at bus stops to improve information. Tourist honeypots may also be considered as small urban solutions because of high passenger flows and a current CPRW (2003) study will provide further insights later this year.

The issue of funding is dealt in more detail in Appendix 1.

SHORT TO MEDIUM TERM ISSUES

1.   In situations where road space is at a premium, it may be argued that multi occupancy vehicles need preferential treatment over other vehicles. This is already occurring with selective detection at signals and bus lanes road space allocations. However, to ensure that a supply driven approach is adopted to public transport provision, this should develop into physical segregation in the form of guided bus tracks or (in limited cases) LRT tracks or other futuristic urban transit systems. The policy for public transport may be *'provide and promote'* as opposed to the previous approach of *'predict and provide'* adopted for road infrastructure. Relevant authorities need to identify and reserve land now, against this future requirement.

2.   A road-based guided urban transit system needs to be piloted in Wales in order to evaluate the wider applicability of such a system. Equally, the role of rail in contributing to local transport needs to be fully exploited. As a target, it would seem appropriate to aim to supply 10 new busway projects and at least one light rail project in urban areas in Wales by 2015.

3.   Promote through the planning process, the reservation of land for transport interchange development and for lines of route (eg preserving remaining railway lines for rail/bus/tram use). Demonstration projects to promote public transport interchanges in Wales should be established. Fifteen locations could virtually be identified.

4.   There is little evidence in Wales of fully integrated transport. Progress in this respect will require forward planning and resources, through partnership in the transport system.   This will inevitably mean land acquisition and capital expenditure.

5.   The   Passenger Transport Information (PTI) Cymru initiative must be supplemented by widespread introduction of real time passenger information. This is a major confidence building factor in assuring the public that public transport is for them.

6.   In considering transport schemes often widely differing in nature and type, demonstration projects and pilot schemes are needed to increase the knowledge base and experience in new areas of activity. Investment thereafter would be informed by monitoring and evaluation of the demonstrations and pilots. Examples of possible demonstration projects for Wales might include:

      • Interchange Demonstration Project - 4 schemes in 5 year finance period, one per region of Wales
      • School Transport Demonstration Project - long term procurement for bespoke school buses
      • Guided Bus Pilot Scheme – demonstration length of heavily trafficked urban radial route

7.   The preparation of local Transport Plans, bus strategies and quality partnerships, and bus information

8.   Road pricing and charging for parking at the workplace

9.   Railways and the role of the National Assembly for Wales.

10.   Consultation process between the different players (e.g. County Councils , NAfW/WAG, DfT)

11.   The role of the Public Transport Users Committee - Cymru/Wales as proposed in the Transport (Wales) Bill. The transport integration objectives would suggest that railway users should be linked to bus, ferry and possibly taxi users (through the county council hackney carriage offices).

12. Bus strategy

The provision of bus priority schemes is the responsibility of local authorities. However, the Government could encourage through the transport grant system the development of schemes such as the Quality Bus Corridors in Dublin and the Greenways in Edinburgh. The provision of real time information will also be a key element in expenditure plans as will the development of seamless interchanges.

13. Free Bus Travel

The current Government has provided free bus travel for the elderly. This has cost more than expected because more use was made of it and will increase from the next financial year when all over 60's are included. There are clearly social inclusion benefits of meeting and a "nice trip " being achieved in addition to the basic mobility objective.

The scheme for the elderly was justified on the basis that their economic inactivity and thus lower disposable income reduced their ability to travel despite have the time and inclination to do so. A large proportion of the under 19's fall into the same category especially students, school children and the unemployed. The proposal avoids parents having to transport young people to various functions - e.g. social, educational, sport - it reduces congestion, reduces traffic flows, enhances the environment increases social inclusion for the young, and reduces the need for parking facilities. It allows post-16-year-olds choice/flexibility for a range of activities including education.

14. Traffic Commissioner

Transferring the responsibility to the Traffic Commissioner to the NAfW provides five advantages:
- provides a Welsh body to oversee the role, in place of an English minister whose understanding of the issues in Wales may not be as clear as that of a Welsh minister
- reduce the costs of holding the Commissioner's Court in Cardiff
- enable the court to be held in north Wales as well as in Cardiff
- reduce costs of operating in more expensive premises in Birmingham
- make it easier and cheaper for people in Wales who wish to complain about a bus or road haulage company so to do.

In addition the Transport Tribunal would be encouraged to meet in Wales when appropriate. This is the body responsible for appeals against the Traffic Commissioner's decision. At present it travels to Scotland, but has to date has refused to travel to Wales.

Welsh experience and good practice in the above areas, where currently there is neither, should be built up on the basis of the demonstration projects so as to inform future investment decisions in a more meaningful way.

APPENDIX 1 POLICY ISSUES AND FUNDING

How, for example, would the funding for different modal options be achieved through the National Assembly? What levels of funding will be available and how will the evaluation and allocation of the funding be decided? A national transport partnership could also be seen within a supportive fiscal framework using various fuel taxes. A land use planning policy should be integrated with transport infrastructure through the county councils. Changes in the decision making process inherent in the proposals outlined above, the setting of environmental targets promoting greener forms of transport; and landscape and countryside protection policy could then provide a sustainable integrated transport policy for Wales within the context of the Transport Framework for Wales.

Railways

Its responsibilities currently only provide the National Assembly with a national role in roads and a role in road/rail transport through its links with local authorities. This therefore severely limits its ability to balance investment between the best solutions to transport problems.

The Assembly could currently make a decision on these options but there are financial implications and issues in relation to funding sources (eg block grant; current SRA payments, DETR investment funding for railways) which would need to be considered.

The Wales' issue has been extensively discussed in both the National Assembly and the House of Commons. There is no doubt that the Public Transport Policy review and the four reports covering rail from the House of Commons Select Committee on Public Transport

- The Transport Bill and its impact on Wales
- Transport in Wales
- the provision of Rail Services in Wales
- the Draft Transport (Wales) Bill

had a positive effect on the discussions between the Assembly Government and the Department of Transport which should not be underestimated.

The National Assembly responsibilities have changed considerably since the Transport Act 2000 and these represent a substantial step forward towards putting railways within an integrated transport strategy..

It's new responsibilities are:-

- co signatory (with DfT) for Wales and Borders franchise
- can determine fares and frequencies (in agreement with DfT)
- consulted on WCML (north Wales service); south Wales main line (Greater Western Franchise) and the expected "Birmingham" franchise currently the Cardiff Birmingham service
- to establish a passengers users committee for Wales

- to prepare a national transport strategy.

In terms of railway issues Scotland has the following additional powers:-

- infrastructure specification (with Network Rail)
- station closure decision
- single franchisor for Scotland
- co-signatory in other franchise (WCML;ECML)

Powers of a similar nature were recommended by the Welsh Affairs Committee and the Economic Development and Transport Committee

These were (approximately) the subject of amendments at the Committee Stage and the Report Stage in the House of Commons but none were carried. For the moments there is little chance of further powers but this is a process to be considered in the future.

Clauses 10 and 56 in the Railways Bill would be the relevant one's to change were it felt appropriate.

The issues lie in two aspects:-

- the national [railway] authority to cover Wales (the DfT) in the current Bill
- the distinction between 'Wales only' and 'Welsh' services which delineate between the franchises upon which the National Assembly has different levels of direction/consultation.

Adding the railways to the National Assembly's expenditure portfolio and responsibilities as proposed in the Transport (Wales) Bill, Railways Bill 2004 would require a negotiated Welsh Block Grant settlement in respect of the payments currently made by the SRA to train operating companies with services in Wales or through direct infrastructure payments. The cost of the annual operating subsidy was estimated by the SRA in 2000 as £94.7m (not dissimilar to the author's calculation of £100m based on passenger miles within each franchise) which could become a matter for Assembly expenditure priority decisions. The second relates to Transport 2010 (DETR, 2000) and an implied total expenditure of £300m per annum on Wales' railways.

Rail infrastructure budget

Table 1   Alternative expenditure levels

	Thoroughly Modern European Railway (Reflection of the Vision)	Smartened-up Railway
New Investment	**£m**	**£m**
South Wales ML	**400**	
Valley Lines	**250**	
North Wales ML	**150**	**200**
Other (inc. Wrexham, Manchester, Cambrian)	**400**	
TOTAL COST	**1,200**	**200**

Sources: Agenda, Summer 1999; Sewta; RNMS 2000; SRA, 2002; various rail studies (1996-2001)

Table 2   10-year investment programme   (£bn)

	Vision	Expected
New investment	**1.2**	**0.2**
Renewals and maintenance	**0.8**	
Contractual payments (subsidy)	**1.0**	**1.0**
TOTAL COST	**3.0**	**1.2**

Notes on Table 2

Public and private expenditure on the railway system is in two parts:-

- new investment - enhancement of the service (through new/upgraded track, signals, stations and trains)
- revenue support/contractual payments and renewal of the existing infrastructure.

If the public/private partnership split in the UK Government report " Transport 2010" is taken then about 50% of the cost of the above programme would fall on the public sector. However forms of finance other than PPP's, e.g. bonds, may be used instead.

APPENDIX 2:   THE 4I'S

In an English Tourism Council study (ETB, 2000; ETC, 2001) the following 4 Is were identified as the integration equation for passenger transport:-

Information + **I**nterchange + **I**nvestment = **I**ntegration

The absence of any of these elements will hinder or even prevent the development of an integrated passenger transport system.

Information

Visitors, particularly those coming from overseas, need to know more than simply how to undertake the first stage of their journey. They need to know how to travel beyond any given intermediate transfer point and on to their chosen destination - the Dutch refer to this as trip chain management through the Planner Plus information system. Each mode of transport can provide information about its services, such as the National Rail Enquiry Service, airport hotlines, as well as coach and bus timetables and route planners.

The drawback of the existing systems is that whilst they work for single one-mode journeys, planning more complex travel in advance is not well served. Additionally, it assumes that all travellers are the same, and does not cater for differences in visitor types or specific markets such as people with disabilities. Transport Direct Cymru's Journey Planner currently (2002) being developed out of Traveline is expected to have this total approach.

Train and bus operators have low budgets (£20m p.a. on rail advertising, £2.5m on Traveline) available to promote these modes when compared with car manufacturers (£480m p.a.). The majority of the public may also perceive car travel costs as being petrol only and, subsequently have little appreciation of the true costs of motoring, and the relative costs of train/bus options.

Currently, the pricing structure of rail tickets (where the cheapest fares can only be booked in advance) penalises both tourists making last-minute plans as well as those not aware that tickets bought on the day of travel are more expensive. Greater information needs to be made available here with a simplified, easier to understand fare structure for the railways.

The ultimate goal must be along the lines of the Planner Plus system introduced by Netherlands Railways (NS) ten years ago. It provides all the travel information identified in the **Information Needs of the Independent Traveller** study recently completed by the Wales Transport Research Centre for the Welsh Assembly Government, (WTRC, 2003). These are:-

-   train, bus and coach times and taxi telephone numbers, and fares, as the primary needs (air/ferry information was also identified)
-   rail information is well provided for by the NRES telephone line but is difficult to find on the internet
-   simplified fares structure is complex; _

- bus information available locally is usually good. Traveline Cymru provides a telephone service and when completed will come near to "Planner Plus" for local bus information
- timetables are difficult to read and not lit at bus stops and railway/bus stations
- signage outside bus/rail stations is in general poor and at best average. Full clear signage does not exist
- railway station on-platform information on buses, taxis, routes to telephone, and village/town centre requires improvement
- connecting services bus/rail are often unco-ordinated
- there is a need for travellers to have their own pre-information on locations. More training in route geography for call centre staff was identified
- printed versions of through travel information as produced by Planner Plus in the Netherlands would be welcomed by travellers.
- although not an information issue, a lack of left luggage facilities was criticised compared with other EU member states. The security issue was dismissed by most travellers

The Wales Tourist Board Destination Management System could also provide comprehensive information for visitors via the internet and will incorporate an online facility to book tourism products. It can have a rôle to play in providing all modal information to visitors.

Interchanges

High quality seamless interchange facilities are an essential requirement to match the convenience of private vehicles. Particular attention needs to be paid to the ease of ticketing arrangements e.g. tickets that allow travel on different types of transport, and the physical environment of interchanges.

a. Ticketing - The ability to purchase tickets for the entire journey, across all transport modes, needs to be improved, without introducing complex pricing structures that become a disincentive to travel. In addition, the case for issuing tickets allowing entry to certain attractions, as well as travel, needs to be considered.

b. Physical environment - Tourists, usually with luggage, require ease and comfort when changing between transport modes, otherwise it will be difficult to persuade people of the benefits of using public transport. In order to make interchanges attractive and user-friendly, there is a need to provide for ease of movement; luggage storage facilities; secure parking for cycles, cars and motorcycles; undercover links; clear signage and timetable displays; short walking distances; well maintained facilities; and personal safety and security.

The visitor is likely to be burdened down with luggage; they may well have young children with them or could be impaired in terms of their mobility due to age or physical disability. The ease with which they can change between modes from train to bus or taxi will be critical to determining their experience of public transport and whether they would wish to use it again.

Studies into traveller needs (ETB, 2000; DSW, 2001;WTRC 2003) have suggested the following criteria for seamless interchanges:-
-   clear, comprehensive information on the interchange characteristics.
-   ease of movement (particularly for those with heavy luggage or young children).
-   secure parking for cycles, cars and motorcycles.
-   undercover links between modes.
-   clear directional signs, between modes and to local destinations (e.g. town centre, hotels).
-   short walking distances.
-   good timetable displays.
-   well maintained infrastructure, clean toilets, etc.
-   personal security.
-   left luggage facilities.
-   car hire provision.

Action has to be taken to implement these policies so providing seamless interchange between train, bus and taxi. As with many policies their success lies in the positive impact on traveller convenience.

Investment

On the strategic level the achievement of travellers requirements - the prerequisite to inducing modal change - is through funding and organisation of change.

There is a general recognition that changes in personal commitment is the real key to achieving more sustainable mobility. Changing personal behaviour is not easy particularly when motor car advertising is twenty-four times that of railway expenditure. Blaming the government (whether Welsh or UK or European) is a familiar excuse, in that it might be argued that public awareness of the public transport options is its responsibility. Making the train or bus more attractive requires investment. Sometimes it needs to smarten up the image and the service quality. Often, because of long term under-investment, a more radical and more expensive expenditure programme is needed.

The argument that as the transport industry is in the private sector then public funding should not be forthcoming is now recognised as unrealistic and the product of political dogma rather than rational thought. Public funding on a large scale is however the answer to improved quality and reliability; but in a business context where a financial commitment has been made over a longer term than that provided by the UK Treasury. The National Assembly's five-year financial commitment provides the way ahead for long term funding.

"Provide and Promote" is mentioned elsewhere in this submission. It revolves around the issue of adequate funding for the effective implementation of any policy. So how far are we along the road to providing a sustainable service which we can promote