

## **ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE**

**Date:** 29 November 2000

**Time:** 12.30pm to 4.00pm

**Title:** Outline of the draft Transport Framework for Wales

### **Purpose**

1. The purpose of this paper is to:
  - set out the proposed structure of the Assembly's transport framework.
  - explain what it is for and how we are setting about it.
  - seek the Committee's views on:
    - the approach we are taking to developing it;
    - the values and objectives we should incorporate in it.

### **Timing**

2. To enable the Assembly to develop its own transport programmes for trunk roads. For transport grant and for others to develop their programmes, an agreed Framework is needed early in 2001.

### **Background**

3. The purpose of the framework is:
  - to give a vision of the integrated transport system we want;
  - to translate into transport policy the Assembly's overriding aims as set out in *BetterWales* and the Sustainable Development Scheme;

- to enable the Assembly and others to take coherent joined-up transport decisions;
- to inform other strategies and policies including, for example, the Spatial Planning Framework and the National Economic Development Strategy; and
- to include long-term programmes of action eg on road and public transport capital investment.

4. The core of the framework will be some maps and objectives that set out where we want to get to. There is a range of approaches we could use to achieve that. At one extreme we could undertake an extensive data-gathering and analysis of all the principal routes and modes to develop a model which could test various scenarios. Given where we start from a comprehensive exercise of that kind could take years.

5. On the other hand we could take a more intuitive approach and design some visions of a future system which we would test for public appeal. The drawback here is that hard facts might prove the visions unrealistic.

6. Our current approach is based on a hybrid. We propose to set out a broad vision, informed by the data we have, which can be tested and refined over time. We would particularly value the Committee's views on whether the values and assumptions we are using for this are the right ones.

7. The diagram at **Annex 1** shows the structure of the framework in schematic form, and **Annex 2** provides further details. We can explain this further at the meeting. We start from the Assembly's overall values. We take account of the position we start from and data on present trends and forecasts. We take account of the range of related strategies and policies of the Assembly - and of the UK and EU. From all this we generate our overall transport objectives. Informed by these we produce a map (or maps) setting out a vision of the future network; and a set of decision criteria which should be applied consistently to our transport investments. We can then draw on the full range of relevant budgets, ensuring that they are applied to best effect, meeting these criteria and contributing to delivering the future map. We thus generate a set of long term programmes of expenditure, investment and action.
8. Please note that the two sets of maps referred to in **Annex 2** will be available in hard copy only.

## The Next Steps

9. In the light of the Committee's views we will work up this outline into a fuller draft, in co-operation with the Transport Forum, on which we will consult widely. We would expect the final version to be a concise document including maps, text and forward programmes.

### **Action for the Committee**

10. The Committee's views are invited on:

- the approach - is it the right one? Is the overall emphasis correct?
- The Assembly values and what should be included in our transport objectives.

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## **STRUCTURE OF THE TRANSPORT FRAMEWORK**

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**ANNEX 2**

**THE TRANSPORT FRAMEWORK FOR WALES - AN OUTLINE**

**THE ASSEMBLY'S VALUES**

**BETTERWALES**

1. There are 3 main themes;

- tackling social disadvantage
- promoting equal opportunities and,
- sustainable development (overarching theme), aiming for social progress which recognises the needs of everyone, effective protection of the environment, maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth.

2. Three of the five key action areas are particularly relevant:

- Better quality of life
- A better, stronger economy, and
- Promoting better health and well-being.
- The overall transport target set in *BetterWales* is to 'Develop a better co-ordinated and sustainable transport system to support local communities and the creation of a prosperous economy' by:
  - reducing the pressure on the environment by improving public transport and offering alternatives to travel by car;
  - to enable about a quarter of commuting to work to take place by means other than by car compared to about a fifth in the late 1990s [under review to identify suitable indicators, possibly on regional basis];
  - to facilitate a higher proportion of freight being carried by rail.

## **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SCHEME**

4. The scheme as now adopted by the Assembly will need to be reflected in full in the values, criteria and programmes of the Transport Framework.

## **RELATED STRATEGIES**

1. The framework will need to be compatible with:

- National Economic Development Strategy
- Spatial Planning Framework
- Single Programming Document
- Better Health/Better Wales
- Climate Change Strategy
- Air Quality Strategy
- Waste Strategy
- Communities First
- EPT Committee Public Transport Review

## OTHER POLICIES

1. **United Kingdom** government - notably Department of the Environment Transport and the Regions (DETR)
  - responsibility for regulation and major developments on
  - UK rail, sea and air networks
  - the English road network with its many connections to Wales
  - recently published 'Transport 2010 - The 10 Year Plan' in which there are implications for Wales.

## European Union

- Funding programmes on Trans European Networks (TEN, TERN, INTERREG).
- Other policy areas including
- noise abatement
- environmental assessments.

## THE CHALLENGE: FACTS AND TRENDS

- Total traffic in UK forecast to grow by 22% by 2010, urban congestion by 15% and inter-urban trunk road traffic by 28% (DETR-*Transport 2010*). Past growth in SE and NE Wales has been higher than national forecasts.
- About 45% of all journeys are under two miles; and 35% of journeys under two miles are now made by car, compared with 26% just 15 years ago (Commission for Integrated Transport).
- Public transport does not offer an attractive alternative to those who currently use their cars for journeys to work or school.
- Public transport if any in rural areas is very limited; those without access to a car socially excluded. About only 36% of households in rural areas are within a ten minute walk of a regular bus service (DETR *Transport 2010*).
- Rail demand in Great Britain is forecast to grow by 34% by 2010. Only 41% of users feel rail services offer value for money (DETR *Transport 2010*).
- Congestion adversely affects movement of goods and services and the economic well being of business.
- Welsh GDP is 80% of the EU average; significantly lower than this in some areas.
- Targets to reduce road accident casualties, particularly among children and young people.
- Transport generated air and noise pollution levels.
- Kyoto targets – UK greenhouse gas emissions reduced to 12.5% below 1990 levels by

2008-2012 and move towards a domestic goal of 20% reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 2010.

## **THE CHALLENGE: THE PRESENT SPATIAL PICTURE**

**[See maps - available in hard copy only]**

The main messages of the maps are:

- Vast majority of movements are East/West on the North and South coastal regions.
- Roads meet the vast majority of the transport needs.
- Movement in the South Wales Valleys is of significant proportions.
- Constraints from topography, environmental designations, heritage sites are significant.
- Need for better economic performance is widespread and mainly in the areas with the greatest constraints and poor infrastructure or services.
- Links to adjacent regions in England, the remainder of the UK and Europe are vital.
- Safety in rural areas is an equivalent problem to more heavily trafficked areas because of poor infrastructure or inappropriate speed.
- There are significant gaps in public transport infrastructure and services in Mid, West and North Wales.
- Wales has an improving network of long distance cycle routes so the principal issue is functional cycling requirements.
- Wales long distance bus services are widely spaced and poorly structured.

## **TRANSPORT OBJECTIVES**

1. The objectives of the transport system in Wales should be:

- to improve accessibility to a better co-ordinated transport system that is safe, efficient, clean and fair. One that delivers good integration between different types of transport, with the environment and land use planning.

2. To achieve this we believe a future strategy will include:

- an emphasis on improvements to public transport on all modes, its availability and the quality of interchanges to provide:
- links to all major settlements in Wales
- an attractive alternative to the car
- a consistent quality
- operation on a clockface timetable with guaranteed interchange
- easy access by public transport and the car
- support for local authorities and the various local transport consortia to achieve the overall aims at local and regional level;
- measures to grow cycling and walking as modes for short journeys, especially those to school, work or other transport interchanges;
- adequate maintenance of the existing road network;
- a targeted roads programme at strategic and local level addressing the need to relieve communities from the environmental effects of traffic and tackling congestion where appropriate;
- a range of measures to improve safety, health and environmental
- conditions on all roads;
- facilitate movement of greater proportion of freight by rail;
- to fully utilise the benefits offered through the Objective One programme and to make the best use of resources generally.

## THE FUTURE VISION

1. The overall vision should comprise:

### Transport system that:

I delivers consistent adequate levels of accessibility

I changes travel patterns and transport usage

I provides strategic mobility

I is consistent with real needs

<p>I for regeneration and other economic aims</p>	<p>I reflects the full total social cost</p>
<p>I within environmental benchmarks</p>	

**Within 5 years Wales will have:**

<p>I a much improved public transport system with more frequent and better quality services</p>	<p>I safer and easier cycling and walking</p>
<p>I better links and interchange with other means of transport</p>	<p>I greater access for those who do not have a car</p>
<p>● better information on all modes to encourage use of the public transport system.</p>	<p>I less dependence on the car</p>

**Greater emphasis on transport in communities:**

- |   |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● safety and the environment on roads</li> </ul> |
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1. The following maps are a first step towards translating this vision into a specific framework. They show:



- i. the main multi-modal transport corridors
- ii. external links
- iii. the rail network identifying centres which do not have direct access
- iv. strategic roads
- v. regional transport consortia
- vi. ideas on filling in the gaps.

**[See maps - available in hard copy only]**

## **DECISION CRITERIA**

1. In order to translate the spatial aims and transport objectives in the Framework into action (Programmes) decision criteria are needed to test the relative costs and benefits.
2. Delivery of the programmes will inevitably result in competing demands for the scarce resources of the Assembly and other key organisations. The guiding principle will be that the programmes should provide overall value. These programmes will be developed and prioritised using the conventional transport assessment criteria of accessibility, economy, environment, safety and integration. These criteria can be used to determine the overall value of projects in meeting the wider aims of the Assembly.
3. Wales has an **accessibility** problem. This relates not only to remoteness but also to transport services which do not offer a reasonable level of service and equal opportunities to all people including the socially disadvantaged. There are other social parameters associated with transport, eg health which appear under other headings.
4. The **economic** aspirations of Wales rely on an efficient transport system which has adequate capacity and services to enable a sustainable level of regeneration, new development and maintenance of existing economic activity, and better access to markets in Wales and beyond.
5. Wales' **environment**, one of its greatest assets, is severely degraded in parts. Whilst safeguarding or mitigating the effects on the environment where possible, overall sustainability can be improved by taking opportunities to enhance the environment where opportunities are present. Environmental issues in transport such as air quality and noise impinge on the health aspirations for Wales as do cycling and walking strategies. Wider actions to promote use of cleaner fuels and enforce vehicle emission standards are likely to produce significant improvements in these areas.

6. **Safety** is of particular importance in transport and connects with the economic and health agendas. Whilst not a devolved issue for public transport the Assembly will press transport operators, and Central Government, to ensure proper investment in safe transport. The UK Government has set challenging road casualty reduction targets for 2010, shared by the Assembly. There is to be a particular focus on reducing child casualties.

7. **Integration** cuts across several areas and we must identify and take opportunities to improve integration within transport, with the environment and land-use planning. Local authority partners and consortia need an integrated approach to transport including across boundaries.

8. The process is one which selects key features under each of the above criteria and tests the project's performance to establish its relative overall value. The criteria should, preferably, be common to all transport projects.

## PROGRAMMES

1. The main tools to deliver this strategy are existing programmes, adjusted and developed to reflect the target outputs. They will need to be developed at 3 distinct levels:

I long distance (strategic, national, international)

I regional/sub-regional

I local.

2. The components for each of these categories are as follows:

- long distance/strategic:
  - rail network and services
  - long distance coach services
  - ports
  - airports
  - strategic roads
- regional/sub-regional:
  - local authority consortia strategies (SWIFT, TIGER, SWITCH etc)
  - regional/sub-regional rail service strategies to support journey to work and school
  - bus and coach strategies at regional/sub-regional level
- local:

- local transport plans and in particular
- bus services and local bus strategies
- community transport and other flexible transport provision
- local cycling and walking strategies
- local road safety strategies
- other local authority initiatives
- safer communities
- promotion of employers' travel plans

3. The National Assembly has a direct role to play in the long distance/strategic component of the framework and will support where appropriate the programmes at regional, sub-regional and local levels. The programmes will be flexible and will evolve with time.

## Background

1. The Transport White Paper "A New Deal for Transport – Better for Everyone", published in July 1998, sets out the UK policy framework. This was supplemented in Wales by publication in the same month of the Welsh Transport Policy Statement "Transporting Wales into the Future", which draws out issues of particular relevance and importance for all modes of transport in Wales and the report on the review of the Welsh trunk road programme "Driving Wales Forward" which includes details of key criteria to be used in assessing options for addressing the problems on the road network in the overall context of the delivery of an integrated approach to transport.

2. The various themes set out in the policy documents are expanded in the following documents.

- *"Breaking the Logjam – the Government's consultation paper on fighting traffic congestion and pollution through road user and workplace parking charges".*
- *"Keeping Wales Moving" – making better use of the existing trunk road network in Wales.*
- *"From Workhorse to Thoroughbred" – DETR policy document on bus travel.*
- *"Sustainable Distribution" – DETR policy document on freight.*
- *"The National Cycling Strategy" – DETR.*
- *"School Travel; Strategies and Plans" – DETR and DfEE.*
- *"Stepping Out: Strategy to encourage Walking" – will be issued by DETR before the end of the year.*
- *"Tomorrow's Roads – Safer for Everyone" – The Government's Road*
- *safety strategy and casualty reduction targets for 2010 – DETR and*

- *National Assembly.*

3. Three overviews of transport policy, have been published which identify agendas for the Assembly:

- *"The Transport Legacy in Wales" – the final report of the Welsh Transport Advisory Group.*
- *"Integrated Transport: the Local Government Agenda in Wales" – produced by the Welsh Local Government Association.*
- *"Travelling Light": Delivering Sustainable Transport in Wales" – produced by Sustrans.*

4. The Assembly requested all unitary authorities in Wales to produce by August 2000 Local Transport Plans to set strategies and targets for transport in their areas. These Plans are the cornerstone of implementation of the Framework through local authorities.

5. The Comprehensive Spending Review of Government this year and the Assembly's ensuring budget planning are now complete. The overall transport budget for 2001-02: 2002-03:2003-04 is £206m: £247m: £266m respectively which provides an uplift of £21m: £61m: £80m.

6. In July 2000 the Department of Environment Transport and the Regions published *Transport 2010* setting down a 10 year plan, to deliver the scale of resources required to put integrated transport into practice in England.