



**Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru
The National Assembly for Wales**

**Y Pwyllgor Menter a Dysgu
The Enterprise and Learning Committee**

**Dydd Mercher, 21 Hydref 2009
Wednesday, 21 October 2009**

Cynnwys
Contents

- 4 Cyflwyniad, Ymddiheuriadau a Dirprwyon
Introduction, Apologies and Substitutions
- 4 Seilwaith Rheilffyrdd Cymru ar gyfer y Dyfodol
The Future Railway Infrastructure in Wales
- 32 Cynnig Trefniadol
Procedural Motion

Cofnodir y trafodion hyn yn yr iaith y llefarwyd hwy ynddi yn y pwyllgor. Yn ogystal,
cynhwysir cyfieithiad Saesneg o gyfraniadau yn y Gymraeg.

These proceedings are reported in the language in which they were spoken in the committee.
In addition, an English translation of Welsh speeches is included.

Aelodau'r pwyllgor yn bresennol
Committee members in attendance

Christine Chapman	Llafur Labour
Jeff Cuthbert	Llafur Labour
Paul Davies	Ceidwadwyr Cymreig Welsh Conservatives
Nerys Evans	Plaid Cymru The Party of Wales
Gareth Jones	Plaid Cymru (Cadeirydd y Pwyllgor) The Party of Wales (Committee Chair)
David Melding	Ceidwadwyr Cymreig Welsh Conservatives
Sandy Mewies	Llafur Labour
Jenny Randerson	Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru Welsh Liberal Democrats

Eraill yn bresennol
Others in attendance

Yr Athro/Professor Stuart Cole	Cadeirydd, grŵp strategaeth drafnidiaeth Cymru Chair, Wales transport strategy group
Tim James	Cyfarwyddwr yr Is-Adran Trafnidiaeth Integredig, Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru Director, Integrated Transport Division, Welsh Assembly Government
Ieuan Wyn Jones	Y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog a'r Gweinidog dros yr Economi a Thrafnidiaeth The Deputy First Minister and Minister for the Economy and Transport
Rowland Pittard	Ysgrifennydd Cangen De Cymru a Swyddog Cyswllt ar gyfer Materion y Cynulliad, Railfuture Secretary, South Wales Branch and Liaison Officer for Assembly Matters, Railfuture
James Price	Cyfarwyddwr, Trafnidiaeth ac Adfywio Strategol, Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru Director, Transport and Strategic Regeneration, Welsh Assembly Government

Swyddogion Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru yn bresennol
National Assembly for Wales officials in attendance

Dan Collier	Dirprwy Glerc Deputy Clerk
Joanest Jackson	Uwch-gynghorydd Cyfreithiol Senior Legal Adviser
Siân Phipps	Clerc Clerk
Graham Winter	Gwasanaeth Ymchwil yr Aelodau Members' Research Service

*Dechreuodd y cyfarfod am 9.31 a.m.
The meeting began at 9.31 a.m.*

Cyflwyniad, Ymddiheuriadau a Dirprwyon Introduction, Apologies and Substitutions

[1] **Gareth Jones:** Estynnaf groeso cynnes ichi i gyd i gyfarfod y Pwyllgor Menter a Dysgu. Dechreuaf gyda'r cyhoeddiadau arferol. Atgoffaf bawb i ddiffodd eu ffonau symudol ac unrhyw ddyfais electronig arall, ac i beidio â chyffwrdd â'r meicroffonau. Nid ydym yn disgwyl ymarfer tân, felly, os bydd argyfwng, rhaid inni adael yr ystafell ac efallai yr adeilad dan gyfarwyddyd y tywyswyr. Cynhelir y cyfarfod yn ddwyieithog. Mae clustffonau ar gael i glywed y gwasanaeth cyfieithu ar y pryd o'r Gymraeg i'r Saesneg ar sianel 1, a gellir chwyddleisio'r sain ar sianel 0. Bydd cofnod o'r cyfan a ddywedir yn gyhoeddus.

Gareth Jones: I extend a warm welcome to you all to the Enterprise and Learning Committee meeting. I will start with the usual announcements. I remind everyone to switch off their mobile phones and any other electronic devices, and not to touch the microphones. We are not expecting a fire drill, so, in the event of an emergency, we will have to leave the room and perhaps the building following the ushers' directions. The meeting will be held bilingually. Headsets are available to hear the simultaneous translation from Welsh into English on channel 1, and the amplified sound is on channel 0. There will be a record of all that is said publicly.

[2] Yr ydym wedi cael ymddiheuriad gan Huw Lewis, ond nid oes dirprwyon.

We have received an apology from Huw Lewis, but there are no substitutions.

9.32 a.m.

Seilwaith Rheilffyrdd Cymru ar gyfer y Dyfodol The Future Railway Infrastructure in Wales

[3] **Gareth Jones:** Dechreuaf gyda gair byr o gefndir am yr ymchwiliad i seilwaith rheilffyrdd Cymru ar gyfer y dyfodol. Hon yw sesiwn gyntaf yr ymchwiliad hwnnw. Mae cylch gorchwyl yr ymchwiliad ar gael ar y we. Yr ydym yn canolbwyntio ein hystyriaethau ar y strategaeth hirdymor, ac ar ddyllanwadu ar y blaenoriaethau a'r dulliau o gynllunio dyfodol seilwaith rheilffyrdd Cymru dros yr 20 i'r 30 blynedd nesaf.

Gareth Jones: I will start by briefly describing the background to the inquiry into the future railway infrastructure in Wales. This is the first session of that inquiry. The terms of reference of the inquiry are available on the internet. We are focusing our deliberations on the long-term strategy, and on influencing the priorities and ways of planning the future of Wales's railway infrastructure over the next 20 to 30 years.

[4] Byddwn yn dechrau'r ymchwiliad gyda grŵp strategaeth drafnidiaeth Cymru. Estynnwn groeso cynnes i'r Athro Stuart Cole, sef cadeirydd y grŵp. Ar ran y pwyllgor, diolchaf yn fawr iddo am y papur y mae eisoes wedi'i gyflwyno inni. Cafodd ei ddsbarthu i aelodau'r pwyllgor, ac yr ydym wedi cael cyfle i'w ddarllen. Yr Athro Cole, a fyddech mor garedig â gwneud cyflwyniad byr o ryw dair munud am y prif bwyntiau? Cawn gyfle wedyn i ofyn cwestiynau, ac yr ydym yn awyddus i wneud.

We will start the inquiry with the Wales transport strategy group. We extend a warm welcome to Professor Stuart Cole, who is its chair. On behalf of the committee, I thank him for the paper that he has submitted to us. It has been circulated to committee members, and we have had a chance to read it. Professor Cole, would you be so kind as to give a short presentation of around three minutes on the salient points? We will then have an opportunity to ask you questions, which we are keen to do.

[5] **Yr Athro Cole:** Mae grŵp strategaeth drafnidiaeth Cymru yn cynnwys sefydliadau proffesiynol y byd trafndiaeth yng Nghymru, sef y Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (UK) Cymru-Wales, yr Institution of Highways and Transportation, a'r Institution of Civil Engineers Wales Cymru. Mae'r tri ohonynt wedi dod at ei gilydd i sefydlu'r grŵp hwn ac i baratoi adroddiadau fel yr un yr ydych wedi'i gael.

Professor Cole: The Wales transport strategy group comprises the professional organisations in the field of transport in Wales, namely the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (UK) Cymru-Wales, the Institution of Highways and Transportation, and the Institution of Civil Engineers Wales Cymru. Those three have come together to set up this group and to prepare reports, like the one that you have had.

[6] I will just set the scene briefly. Siân asked me to get involved in the discussion today by setting the scene on rail infrastructure in the short term, up to, say, 2014, which is the current financial period of Network Rail, and then to consider the longer-term possibilities and developments. The paper that I have submitted has supplemented the report that we prepared earlier this year, of which I was one of the two editors. The alternative options for new stations is one area that I have looked at in the new paper, along with the possibility of a new development of TrawsCambria, with which some of you may be familiar. We have also looked at governance, which we did not look at in the infrastructure report, because that was not then part of the brief, and how railways and railway investment fit into an integrated transport policy. Those are the general areas that Siân asked me to look at, but I am more than happy to answer questions on other areas, both in English and Welsh.

[7] **Jenny Randerson:** I found your paper fascinating and I could ask you about 20 questions, but I know that my colleagues will not put up with that. I will start with the issue of whether, in your view, the Welsh Assembly Government has enough power over the railways. In your paper, you say that there should be a new transport Bill for Wales. In 2005, it was not considered appropriate to have control over the infrastructure, but Scotland has that control. Will you give us a taste of the experience in Scotland and whether it would work here in Wales? The second question is on whether the links that exist between the Welsh Assembly Government and the Department for Transport are effective, or whether they need to be beefed up. My particular concern is that Wales seems to have been sold a pup in Arriva Trains. The Assembly Government is spending a great deal of money filling gaps in the franchise, which are a result of the fact that the Department for Transport did it on the cheap for Wales.

[8] **Professor Cole:** First, on whether the Welsh Assembly Government has enough powers, the simple answer is 'no'. What it has is the power to deal, through the franchise, and through subsequent contracts, with Arriva Trains Wales or any other supplier in the market that, maybe under a tendering process, would get the job of running certain trains in Wales. It has the power to do that, but there is no more power, and therefore no element in the Barnett formula, which is a key issue and the key difference between Wales and Scotland. Scotland is able to spend several hundred million pounds in its investment programme because it has an allocation in its block grant for sums of money to do with rail investment. The Welsh Assembly Government does not have that luxury. What it has is the power to spend money on just about anything to do with the railways, but it only has, as regards funding from Westminster, the original deal between the Strategic Rail Authority, as it then was, and subsequently the Department for Transport, and the company running the franchise, namely Arriva Trains Wales.

9.40 a.m.

[9] So, what you have is a relatively small sum of money, this year down to something

like £110 million, in the settlement for the franchise. All the other funding that the Welsh Assembly Government is putting into the railways and rail infrastructure has to come from within the block grant. Therefore, there is no specific allocation for rail infrastructure investment. That is one of the biggest differences between Wales and Scotland. It is the funding rather than the power. As you probably know, the Assembly Government is investing in several major schemes, such as the doubling of the track between Chester and Wrexham and between Gowerton and Llanelli, and major works, which are costing nearly £50 million, in the Cardiff area. The power is there to spend the money but the allocation of funding is very limited. That is the big difference between us and Scotland.

[10] This links in with Jenny's other question about being sold a pup. It was not Arriva Trains Wales, in particular, it was the Wales and Borders franchise. The Department for Transport gave us a franchise that involved no new trains, no additional train sets and no investment in stations. In fact, nothing other than what was there five years ago. So, we had a base franchise that was inadequate before it even started. The Department for Transport was expecting that, somehow, the pacer trains that were already 30 years old would last for another 15 years—for the length of the franchise—by which time, some of them would be 50 years old. That was clearly going to be unacceptable. They will not last that long—well, they will if you keep patching them up with engineering, but they were never designed to last that long and they were never designed to do the job that they are doing.

[11] The pacer trains that we have are the lightweight trains that make awful noises when they go around corners; the fixed-axle trains. They were designed for country routes and they are being used for heavy-duty commuter operations into Cardiff. The class 150s, the trains with the sliding doors, are much better and were designed for that purpose. However, there is no doubt that we were given an inadequate franchise right from the beginning, hence the Assembly Government having to spend an extra £30 million or £40 million just to meet the demand over the last few years. We are seeing no reduction in that increase in demand. Every seven years, we are doubling the number of people travelling on lines in general in Wales, but particularly the number of those travelling on the commuter lines into Cardiff.

[12] **Gareth Jones:** There was another question on the links with the Department for Transport.

[13] **Professor Cole:** I am sorry, yes; you asked whether it is effective. It is effective in that officials from the Welsh Government talk to officials from the Department for Transport. I am not 100 per cent sure what kind of reaction they get. The Department for Transport is a strange department. I worked for it in England for around 25 years and found it to be a reluctant department. Although the civil servants change, there seems to be an ethos in the Department for Transport that does not allow them to let things go. The fight to transfer the Wales and Borders franchise to the Welsh Government stretched over something like eight years, as I recall. The Welsh Affairs Committee of the House of Commons made proposals over three or four reports and, each time, the department refused to budge and hand over the franchise to the Assembly Government. It was only in the final report before the Transport (Wales) Act 2006 and the Railways Act 2005 were passed that it eventually gave in. There is a coincidence there that Kim Howells was the Minister for Transport at the time. I am not suggesting that there was any relationship between those two things, but it was a happy coincidence, perhaps.

[14] **Jenny Randerson:** Do you think that there is any scope, therefore, given the scenario that you paint, in the Assembly Government attempting to renegotiate that franchise and asking the Government to review it?

[15] **Professor Cole:** There are two aspects. The first is that funding is increasing in order to match demand. The franchise that was given out in the first place is not fit for purpose. It

was not even fit for purpose when it was handed out, for the reasons that we have just discussed in relation to the Department for Transport. There are two options, one of which is for the Assembly Government to look at the legal position of the existing franchise. However, that might be expensive. I am not aware that anyone has worked out the cost of doing that, because Arriva Trains Wales would be looking for compensation for its loss of business over the remaining four or five years of the franchise. It is certainly true that Arriva could genuinely, if another operator was given any of the additional routes, ask for compensation for revenue abstraction—that is, a reduction in its revenue compared with that given to another company.

[16] **The Gerallt Gymro** is a case in point. That might have been given to another company other than Arriva Trains Wales. If it had, I have no doubt that Arriva would have asked for compensation for loss of revenue. So, the Government is rather stuck with a long-term franchise that was never fit for purpose or with having to pay additional sums of money over and above the franchise out of the block grant, which is not in the settlement.

[17] **David Melding:** May I ask for clarification on Professor Cole's first answer?

[18] **Gareth Jones:** On the block grant?

[19] **David Melding:** Indeed.

[20] **Gareth Jones:** I want to ask a question on that too: to be clear, are you saying that Scotland not only has its Barnett share, but an allocation over and above that, which it can spend on transport, or is it that it can spend within its limits?

[21] **David Melding:** My question is slightly different. Shall I ask it separately?

[22] **Gareth Jones:** No, go on, David.

[23] **David Melding:** It is important that the committee understands this: are you saying that funding for rail infrastructure is given to Scotland on a Barnett basis whereas Network Rail's policy—as I understood it when its representatives gave evidence to this committee—is to give Wales an appropriate share that reflects track mileage and passenger journeys? That is a different principle. We need to know whether that is what you are saying.

[24] **Professor Cole:** As I understand it, the Scottish Government's powers on rail infrastructure are specific to that and would, therefore, attract funding based on the Barnett formula, because the Department for Transport is doing the same job in England. A separate issue relates to Network Rail, because it has its own means of determining how much money it will put into Wales. Indeed, the three projects that I mentioned, which the Welsh Assembly Government is part funding, are also part funded by Network Rail. The amount of money spent is negotiated between the Welsh Assembly Government and Network Rail. So, there is a base allocation in the block grant, as I understand it. However, because Wales does not have the same powers as Scotland on rail infrastructure, the Welsh Assembly Government has decided that it will take money from the block grant to fund the railways.

[25] **Gareth Jones:** Thank you. We have to move on, because other Members wish to come in on this.

[26] **Nerys Evans:** Yn dilyn y pwynt nad oes gan y Cynulliad ddigon o bwerau yn y maes hwn, beth yw eich barn ar farn Llywodraeth Llundain y byddai datganoli mwy o bwerau yn anodd ar lefel ymarferol **Nerys Evans:** Following the point that the Assembly does not have enough powers in this area, what is your view on the London Government's opinion that, because such a mix of agencies share the rail infrastructure

gan fod cymysgedd o asiantaethau yn rhannu seilwaith y rheilffyrdd yng Nghymru? Ar ben hynny, mae eich papur yn cyfeirio at linell rheilffordd rhwng y gogledd a'r de yn y gorllewin. Pa mor ymarferol yw hynny a pham y byddai gwasanaeth bws TrawsCambria yn opsiwn gwell, yn eich barn chi?

[27] Ar gael trenau cyflymder uchel i'r gorllewin, pa mor bell i'r gorllewin y gallai gwasanaeth o'r fath fynd? O ran gwasanaethau yn sir Gaerfyrddin a sir Benfro, a yw'r seilwaith cyfredol yn ddigonol ynteu a yw'n fater syml o wella gwasanaethau ar y seilwaith?

[28] **Yr Athro Cole:** Ar y seilwaith, a ydych yn gofyn sut mae'r gwaith rhwng yr Adran Drafnidiaeth yn Lloegr a Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru yn mynd yn ei flaen? Ar y dechrau, nid oedd yr Adran Drafnidiaeth yn Llundain yn rhan o'r fasnachfaint i ddatblygu'r seilwaith, felly talwyd am yr holl waith a wnaed, er enghraifft, ar y llinellau rhwng Wrecsam a Chaer a rhwng y Tre-gŵyr a Llanelli gan Lywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru. Y rheswm am hynny yw bod yr Adran Drafnidiaeth yn Llundain yn dweud nad oedd rhaid inni ddatblygu rheilffordd o gwbl yng Nghymru.

9.50 a.m.

[29] Dyna oedd y sefyllfa pan ddechreuodd y fasnachfaint. Yr ydym yn gwybod bod hynny wedi newid a bod mwy o arian wedi cael ei fuddsoddi yn y cledrau a'r gwasanaethau eu hunain—nifer y trenau a maint y trenau hynny. Felly, dyna'r sefyllfa ar hyn o bryd. O ran cael gwasanaeth o'r gogledd i'r de yn y gorllewin, nid oes digon o bobl yn byw yn yr ardal; dyna'r rheswm pam y caewyd y gwasanaeth o Gaerfyrddin i Aberystwyth. Hefyd, nid oedd y gwasanaeth yn un cyflym; cymerai rhyw ddwy awr a hanner ar y trê. Nid yw'n gwneud synnwyr ailagor yr hen lein. Bydd yn rhaid ailedrych ar bethau os ydym am wneud hynny. Hefyd, mae llawer o'r tir wedi diflannu. Mae digon o'r trac ar ôl, ond o ran y lleoedd pwysig, lle yr arferai gorsafoedd fod a lle yr oedd tipyn o dir i adeiladu arno, mae pethau wedi cael eu hadeiladu yno, er enghraifft, tai hen bobl yn Llanybydder. Felly bydd rhaid inni ailfeddwl,

in Wales, devolving more powers to Wales would be difficult on a practical level? Furthermore, your paper refers to a north-south rail route in west Wales. How feasible is that and why would the TrawsCambria coach service be a better option, in your view?

On getting high-speed trains to west Wales, how far west could such a service go? On services to Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire, is the current infrastructure adequate or is it simply a matter of improving services on the infrastructure?

Professor Cole: On the infrastructure, are you asking how work between the Department for Transport in England and the Welsh Assembly Government is going? At the beginning, the Department for Transport in London was not part of the franchise to develop the infrastructure, so all of the work that has been done, for example, on the lines between Wrexham and Chester and between Gowerton and Llanelli was paid for by the Welsh Assembly Government. The reason for that is that the Department for Transport in London was saying that we did not need to develop a railway in Wales at all.

That was the situation when the franchise began. We know that that has changed and that more money has been invested in the tracks and the services themselves—the number and size of those trains. So, that is the current situation. On having a north-south service in west Wales, there are not enough people living in the area; that is the reason why the service from Carmarthen to Aberystwyth closed down. Also, the service was not a high-speed one; it took two and a half hours on the train. It does not make sense to reopen the old line. We will need to look again at the situation if we are going to undertake that work. Also, a great proportion of the land has gone. There is enough track left, but with regard to the important places, where stations used to be and where there was some land to build on, things have been built there, for example, homes for the elderly in Llanybydder. We need to rethink

ond mae'n bosibl.

[30] Efallai bod rhai ohonoch wedi gweld cynllun y Tad Deiniol i gael rheilffordd o'r Rhyl i Ruthun ac yn y blaen. Byddai hynny'n gostus dros ben gan y byddai'n rhaid adeiladu cledrau newydd, twneli ac y blaen. Os edrychwn ar y gorllewin efallai y gallem gael rhywbeth tebyg i'r hyn y mae Llywodraeth Iwerddon yn ei adeiladu yng ngorllewin Iwerddon. Mae'r trac ar gael yn Iwerddon ac mae'r prosiect rywbeth yn debyg i brosiect Glynabwy, lle mae'r cledrau yn dal i fodoli. Mae'n bosibl ailagor y trac—nid o Fangor yn union—o'r brif lein yn y gogledd i Gaernarfon, ac wedyn efallai ddatblygu trac newydd ar ochr rheilffordd Eryri i lawr i Borthmadog.

[31] Cynhaliwyd seminar yn y brifysgol rhyw flwyddyn yn ôl i edrych ar ailagor y lein rhwng cyffordd Moat Lane ar bwys Caersws, drwy Lanidloes ac i lawr i orsaf BUILT Road. Mae hynny'n bosibl. Mae gwaith adeiladu yn cael ei wneud ar ran o'r trac, ond nid yw'r trac wedi'i werthu, er bod pobl wedi rhoi pethau lle'r arferai'r cledrau fod. Fodd bynnag, rhaid sicrhau bod achos busnes ar gyfer unrhyw ddatblygiad yma. Rhyw 10 mlynedd yn ôl yr oedd cost lein newydd o Gaerfyrddin i Aberystwyth tua £250 miliwn. Mae'n ddrwg gennyf ddweud, o ystyried y ffordd y mae costau adeiladu ac yn y blaen wedi cynyddu dros y 10 mlynedd diwethaf, byddai'r ffigur hwnnw'n nes at £400 miliwn heddiw. Nid oes digon o bobl i gyfiawnhau'r gost honno.

[32] Mae'r Llywodraeth yn datblygu cynllun ar hyn o bryd i gael gwasanaethau bysys pellter mawr i redeg o Gaerfyrddin i Aberystwyth. Ar hyn o bryd, mae gwasanaeth TrawsCambria yn bodoli, ond bydd y gwasanaeth newydd yn hollol wahanol. Bydd National Express Coaches yn rhedeg, er enghraifft, o Ferthyr i Drenwydd, Abermo i Wrecsam ac yn y blaen, ac yn dod yn rhan o'r system reilffordd. Bydd y ddau yn cael eu brandio yn yr un modd. Bydd y rhai ohonoch sy'n darllen atodiad busnes y *Western Mail* yn gwybod bod gennyf golofn ynddo lle yr wyf wedi sôn am sut y gallwn frandio a pherswadio pobl mai yr un gwasanaeth ydyw. Ni allaf weld y bydd y Llywodraeth yn gallu dod o hyd i £400 miliwn i ddatblygu

that, but it is possible.

Some of you may have seen Father Deiniol's scheme for a railway from Rhyl to Ruthin and so on. That would be extremely expensive because new tracks, tunnels and so on would have to be built. If you look at west Wales, perhaps we could have something similar to what the Irish Government is building in the west of Ireland. The track is available in Ireland and the project is similar to the Ebbw Vale project, where the tracks still exist. It is possible to reopen the track—not quite from Bangor—from the main line in north Wales to Caernarfon, and then maybe develop a new track alongside the Welsh Highland Railway down to Porthmadog.

We held a seminar in the university around a year ago to look at reopening the line between Moat Lane junction near Caersws, through Lanidloes and down to BUILT Road station. That is possible. Some of the track has been built upon but it has not been sold, although people have put things where the tracks used to be. However, there must be a business case for any development. Around 10 years ago the cost of the new line from Carmarthen to Aberystwyth was around £250 million. I am sorry to say that because of the way in which construction costs and so on have increased over the past 10 years, that figure would be close to £400 million today. There are not enough people to justify that cost.

The Government is developing a plan at present to provide long-distance coach services from Carmarthen to Aberystwyth. At present, the TrawsCambria service exists, but the new service will be totally different. National Express Coaches will run, for example, from Merthyr to Newtown, from Barmouth to Wrexham and so on, and will become part of the railway system. The branding of both will be the same. Those of you who read the business supplement of the *Western Mail* will know that I have a column in it where I have mentioned the way in which we can brand and persuade people that it is a single service. I cannot see that the Government will be able to find £400 million to develop a new railway in that area, but the

rheilffordd newydd yn yr ardal honno, ond gall y gwasanaeth TrawsCambria newydd wneud y gwaith oherwydd bydd y daith o Aberystwyth i Gaerfyrddin yn cymryd ychydig dros ddwy awr. Bydd hefyd yn darparu gwasanaethau i leoedd ar y ffordd fel Llanbedr Pont Steffan.

[33] **Nerys Evans:** Beth am y cwestiwn ynglŷn â gwasanaethau i'r de-orllewin? A yw'n fater o wella gwasanaethau sydd ar y seilwaith rheilffyrdd ar hyn o bryd, neu wella'r seilwaith ei hun? Pa mor bell y dylai trenau cyflymder uchel gyrraedd yn y gorllewin?

[34] **Yr Athro Cole:** I sir Benfro, er enghraifft?

[35] **Nerys Evans:** Ie.

[36] **Yr Athro Cole:** Mae dau ateb i hynny. Yr oedd problem o ran y trac sengl rhwng Tre-gŵyr a Llanelli. Mae'r trac hwnnw yn cael ei ddyblu ac mae'n rhan o'r cynllun sy'n cael ei ddatblygu ar hyn o bryd. Bydd hynny wedi cael ei orffen cyn 2014, ac mae'r Llywodraeth yn talu amdano. O ran y gwasanaeth ei hun, yr wyf yn deall bod y Llywodraeth yn edrych ar y cynllun sydd gan SWITCH, sef y consortiwm rheilffyrdd yn y de-orllewin, i ddatblygu'r gwasanaeth i Abergwaun. Beth bynnag a wneir gyda'r gwasanaeth, o ran ei ddatblygiad, nifer y trenau ac amledd y gwasanaethau, ac yn y blaen, rhaid inni edrych ar barcio a theithio hefyd. Mae hynny'n bwysig er mwyn cael y bobl sy'n defnyddio ceir ar hyn o bryd i ddefnyddio trenau. Oherwydd y modd y gall y gwasanaeth ddatblygu ar hyn o bryd, bydd mwy o drenau yn gallu rhedeg i'r gorllewin oherwydd mae'r trac yn cael ei ddyblu rhwng Tre-gŵyr a Llanelli. Byddai'n bosibl darparu rhyw fath o wasanaeth gwennol rhwng Caerfyrddin ac Abergwaun, er enghraifft, ond mae'n rhaid gwneud dipyn o waith ar orsaf Caerfyrddin i wella'r plattform i safon addas. Mae un ochr i'r orsaf yn braf iawn, ond nid yw'r ochr arall cystal, felly mae'n rhaid datblygu hynny. Hefyd, rhaid inni edrych ar rywle fel Hendy-gwyn ar Daf er mwyn datblygu gwasanaeth parcio a theithio yno. Gall Hendy-gwyn fod yn ganolfan dda i fysics, trenau a pharcio a theithio. Mae'r trenau sydd yn mynd i sir Benfro ar hyn o

new TrawsCambria service could do the work because the journey from Aberystwyth to Carmarthen will take just over two hours. It will also provide a service to places en route, such as Lampeter.

Nerys Evans: What about the question on services to the south-west? Is it a case of improving services which are currently on the rail infrastructure, or improving the infrastructure itself? How far should high-speed trains extend in west Wales?

Professor Cole: To Pembrokeshire, for instance?

Nerys Evans: Yes.

Professor Cole: There are two answers to that. There was a problem with regard to the single track between Gowerton and Llanelli. That track is now being doubled and it is part of the scheme that is currently being developed. It will be completed by 2014, and the Government is paying for it. On the service itself, I understand that the Government is looking at the SWITCH scheme, which is the rail consortium in south-west Wales, to develop the service to Fishguard. Whatever is done with the service, and its development, the number of trains and the frequency of the service and so on, we must also look at park and ride. That is important so that we get the people who currently use cars to use trains. Due to the way in which the service can develop currently, more trains will be able to run to west Wales because the track is being doubled between Gowerton and Llanelli. It would be possible to provide some sort of shuttle service between Carmarthen and Fishguard, for instance, but much work needs to be done on Carmarthen station to improve the platform to a suitable standard. One side of the station is very nice, but the other side is not as nice, so that must be developed. We must look at somewhere such as Whitland to develop a park and ride service there. Whitland could be a good hub for buses, trains and park and ride. The trains that currently go to Pembrokeshire go through Whitland, so it is a good place in which to have a park and

bryd yn mynd drwy Hendy-gwyn, felly ride service. That is important, because the mae'n lle da i gael gwasanaeth parcio a evidence shows that we should persuade theithio. Mae hynny'n bwysig, oherwydd people to use the train for part of their mae'r dystiolaeth yn dangos y dylem journey. berswadio pobl i ddefnyddio'r trên am ran o'u siwrnai.

[37] **Gareth Jones:** We are up against it this morning, and we are running out of time. We only have a few minutes left, and quite a few Members want to come in. I appeal for short questions and short answers—I am sorry to have to say that.

[38] **David Melding:** How important is high-speed rail as opposed to just electrifying the route? Can electrification and high-speed rail go together, and how worried are you that the likes of Greengauge21, a public interest group that has come together on high-speed rail, says that south Wales is not the highest priority, although there is an economic case for it, which is somewhat contradictory? You said that we are on the slower track at the moment, but we will have a witness that will say that electrification is important as opposed to high-speed rail, which will only make the service between Cardiff and London as quick as it was in 1979, when the current structure was first developed for higher speed trains.

[39] **Sandy Mewies:** Chair, one of my questions is similar.

[40] **Gareth Jones:** Yes, if you could expand on that.

[41] **Sandy Mewies:** It is on high-speed rail between north and south Wales. I am from north Wales, and rail talk tends to be weighted sometimes towards south Wales. What would be the economic impact of not having some sort of high-speed service between north and south?

10.00 a.m.

[42] **Professor Cole:** If I may, I will deal with David's question first. There are two stages in the development of the track of, for example, the Great Western main line between south Wales and London. Some people have suggested that electrification will significantly reduce the journey time by about 20 minutes. So, instead of being two hours and five minutes, as it is at the moment, it might come down to one hour and 45 minutes. A high-speed train of the TGV type produced by the French, which is what the high-speed concept being put forward by Greengauge21 is about, would bring the journey time down to one hour and 10 minutes. The reason why there was a service in 1979 of one hour and 40 minutes is that it did not stop after Newport. Each station stop takes up something like six minutes. So, taking out Bristol Parkway, which I am pretty sure that the Department for Transport and First Great Western would not do because it is a big money-spinner, along with Swindon, Didcot and Reading could further reduce the journey time. Electrification plus a reduction of another 15 minutes or so might get you down to one hour 30 minutes, even one hour 25 minutes, on certain business trains in the morning and evening.

[43] The question is whether it is worth the cost of what will undoubtedly be high speed 3, and this may also answer David's question. Is it worth spending something like £9 billion or more when it is built to save 15 minutes? That will be the issue under discussion. Electrification is a bird in the hand, essentially, rather than being high-speed rail in 20 or 25 years' time in the bush. If all the promises about electrification are fulfilled, which includes those not only by the Welsh Government, but, more significantly, by the Department for Transport, and even more significantly, if the UK Treasury funds the scheme in the timescale of eight years or so, when the new trains come in by 2014-15 or thereabouts, we will have a substantially improved service. As I said, the way to reduce that further is to avoid stopping at

some of the stations, such as Swindon.

[44] On whether they go together, the answer is ‘yes, they do’, because electrification is a prerequisite for a high-speed operation. If a high-speed operation is to work successfully, as in the French TGV model, it would work on the basis of high-speed, 300 kmh trains on the track as far as Slough, simply because it is almost impossible to find land to build a high-speed track from Slough to Paddington. It would then go on to brand-new track, with some two or three out-of-town stations. That is the secret. Once you start bringing high-speed trains into the centres of towns, you put them on an ordinary, comparatively slow track. So, if the thinking is that these high-speed trains would go into the centre of Cardiff, that would defeat the objective. I would see station locations in Wales on such a track in the Severn Tunnel Junction area, because it is adjacent to the existing main line and the motorway, somewhere like Miskin, at junction 34, again because the existing track and the motorway are there. That gives you the hub and the park and ride facility and it allows people to change from the existing line onto high speed lines. Those are essential elements for developing high-speed trains. Have I answered that question satisfactorily?

[45] **David Melding:** I could go into this in much more detail, but we do not have the time for that; perhaps we can follow it up through other means.

[46] **Professor Cole:** On the north-south links, you are talking about a different kind of train operation altogether. We are not talking about a TGV; we are talking about reducing the journey time. There are two reasons for that, one of which, one could argue, is an economic reason, and the second is a nation-building reason. I would suggest that the solution for this is not dissimilar to that presented for us at the moment by the Gerallt Gymro service. At the moment, there is a two-hourly service from Bangor to Cardiff. That journey time has a stopping train, which stops at a lot of stations on the way. It is the same principle that I mentioned about speeding up the existing services, or with electrification to London speeding up those services and reducing the journey time. That would not be on the existing trains, because, clearly, there are stations that need to be served—the service should be left as it is—but subsequent to that, in the alternate hour, a limited-stop service should be introduced, which might start at Holyhead, stop at Bangor, Llandudno Junction, and possibly Rhyl. It would have to go into Chester—

[47] **Sandy Mewies:** Would it stop at Flintshire?

[48] **Professor Cole:** Oh, that is right; it must stop at Flintshire, which is another six minutes. It has to go into Chester at the moment because the market is there and many people in north Wales want to shop at Chester anyway. It would then reverse out of Chester, down to Wrexham, Shrewsbury and not stop anywhere then until Abergavenny or Cwmbran. You would then get a service that would cut probably a good half an hour, maybe more, off the existing service, depending on how much investment was put into the track to increase the line speed. Those are the two issues—limited stops and line speeds.

[49] **Gareth Jones:** Thank you for that. I will try and bring everyone in best I can. Jeff, do you have a specific question?

[50] **Jeff Cuthbert:** Yes. You reminded me, Chair, of the issue of pacer trains versus sprinters. What was the name of that lady Prime Minister who insisted in the early 1980s that British Rail bought the pacer trains? I cannot remember. Anyway, we know that the Valley lines, in which I have a particular interest, are characterised by tight bends and that stress that was put on the tracks, which cost millions of pounds to replace. However, my specific question is on the section in your paper on light rail. I have a particular interest in this and think that it would bring enormous benefits. Am I right in assuming that you seem to be suggesting that although it would have a considerable capital cost—there is no doubt about

that—in the longer term, it could produce benefits, particularly in Cardiff? You also mentioned Newport and Swansea, but I stress Cardiff for obvious reasons. Am I interpreting this correctly? Do you think that light rail has a viable future if we are prepared to invest the sums involved?

[51] **Professor Cole:** On your premise that we are prepared to invest the sums, yes. Light rail is faster, acceleration is better, journey times would be reduced and we would get the kind of patronage generation that Manchester received. Manchester carried out a similar kind of scheme, for example with the line from Bury town to the north of Manchester and Altrincham town to the south. Both those lines were heavy rail, operated by British Rail, and they were transferred into the Manchester Metrolink. The same is now being done with the line to Oldham and this is the development that Manchester has decided to do, namely to take existing track, simply because there is a route available and it is known that it can take trams. Also, the engineering work is substantially less than to think the whole thing through again. Then, when it gets to the centre of the city, on-street operation would be developed, which would give people a number of stops at which they could get off rather than being restricted to Cathays Park, Queen Street and Cardiff Central.

[52] It also means that places like Cardiff bay can be served, and the major commuter areas, which would include the airport, Barry, Penarth, and as far as Taff's Well, certainly. Beyond that, you start to wonder whether trams are the answer, although the Dutch have a long-distance tram system running through Rotterdam and Amsterdam, so the technology is there to be examined. I believe that most of the land between Taff's Well and the centre of Cardiff is in public ownership. There is land on either side of the track that should be preserved. Some of it is owned by Cardiff University and other bits are owned by other public authorities, but there is the opportunity to run from Taff's Well. The line from Taff's Well was always four track—two for coal and two for passengers—so the width was there right from the start. So we could certainly look at heavy rail going into Cardiff. The light rail would then turn off at somewhere like Cathays and then go street running into Cardiff Central and then rejoin the rail network just south of Cardiff.

10.10 a.m.

[53] One thing that might prevent that in the short term is that we have a major piece of investment in Cardiff Central. Until the decision is made to invest hundreds of millions of pounds—because that is what we are talking about—in a new tram system, what is being done now is probably the only way forward in the short term.

[54] **Jeff Cuthbert:** Do you think that we need a third span over the Queen Street bridge?

[55] **Professor Cole:** No.

[56] **Gareth Jones:** Thank you.

[57] **Professor Cole:** There is congestion into Queen Street station, and that is being sorted out.

[58] **Gareth Jones:** Two more people would like to come in on this point: Paul and then Christine.

[59] **Paul Davies:** In your paper, you state that consideration should be given to the effect of transport policies on the environment and that the most environmentally friendly solution should be selected whenever possible. You go on to say that there should be integration with land use planning. Do you believe that Government policy is currently travelling in the right direction when considering these issues?

[60] Secondly, you advocate park and ride facilities to support the opening of new stations or the reopening of old ones. Could you tell us where schemes such as this operate successfully at present? What research have you carried out on the way in which such schemes would work in certain locations?

[61] Finally, following on from Nerys Evans's question, is it possible, is it not, to increase train frequencies to the west, to Pembrokeshire, without redoubling between Gowerton and Llanelli?

[62] **Professor Cole:** I could give you 'yes' or 'no' answers, but I am not going to. On integration with land use planning, there are powers in place to integrate any development with a requirement to provide adequate public transport. Sadly, that does not apply terribly often. Local authorities have development powers, whereby they can prevent, for example, out of town shopping centres. They are a problem when it comes to providing public transport, no matter how hard the operators try. I will not pick on Carmarthenshire County Council again, but the development outside Llanelli was a development that fitted in with current retail practices. People, for some reason, like to go to out of town shopping centres rather than the market. That is their choice and that is what people want to do. However, serving those areas with public transport becomes very difficult.

[63] In the Netherlands, regulations require any developer to provide whatever kind of public transport is required under the equivalent of a section 106 agreement. We do not enforce that enough. That needs to be dealt with, not just by the Welsh Assembly Government, but also by the local authorities. So, Government policy at the national and the local level needs to be toughened up in order to enforce the regulations that are available to authorities.

[64] There have been a number of successes in the area of park and ride. Bradford and Sheffield, by introducing tram systems with high frequencies and high capacity, have generated a lot of new business and moved traffic from the road onto the trams. Similarly, park and ride has been very successful in Bordeaux and has removed 80 per cent of its peak-period traffic, with four new routes into the centre of the city, which were introduced about three years ago. That has been one of the great success stories.

[65] It has been successful on the Valleys lines. Where park and ride car parks have been built, they fill up pretty well straight away, because people are now fed up of spending a long time on the A470. It has been more successful north of Cardiff than to the south, because there are more facilities to the north. However, it will be successful as facilities are developed to the south of Cardiff where you are guaranteed a space, not because you book it or you pay for it, but because you know that there will be adequate capacity. That is the key. No-one wants to turn up at a railway station, thinking that he or she can park and ride, but then not be able to do so and have to find somewhere else to park. People do not want to do that. So, we have to develop those kinds of car parks.

[66] To put that into context, our students at the University of Glamorgan were accused of filling up the park and ride car park at Treforest. That could not have been true, because it was full at 8.15 a.m. No university's students are up at 8.15 a.m. So, it has been successful on Valley lines.

[67] Your third question was about services to west Wales. It is possible to run a shuttle service between Carmarthen and the three potential destinations: Fishguard, Milford Haven and Pembroke Dock. That could increase the frequency of services west of Carmarthen. I know that people in Pembrokeshire like to have a direct service, and there are a limited number of direct services from Milford Haven through to Manchester, and therefore through

to Cardiff. So, it is possible to increase the frequency of service, using something like a shuttle from Carmarthen to the west, without redoubling. The doubling of the track at Llanelli involves two things: it would enable more trains to go through but it would also increase the reliability of those trains as you would not have to wait for late-running trains in the opposite direction.

[68] **Christine Chapman:** Could you comment on what is needed for the Heads of the Valleys area, particularly in relation to rail? The Deputy First Minister has talked about a study to look at reopening the Aberdare to Hirwaun line, which I know would be very welcome. That seems a long way off, but it would be very popular. The difficulty, particularly in my constituency, is that there is a huge amount of congestion. The Heads of the Valleys is a strategic area, and there are real problems at the top end of my constituency. Sometimes you get an unreliable bus service, and that would have to service passengers without cars who cannot use park and ride facilities. I was interested in Paul's question about park and ride facilities, because I am not convinced that good practice is always followed. Are there enough of them? If you cannot get a space, you will not use the trains. This all needs to be looked at holistically as opposed to just the railway service being looked at. In our area, particularly, in the Heads of the Valleys, we are badly served in the main.

[69] **Professor Cole:** There are a few points there. I will deal with park and ride first. You are absolutely right. The essence of park and ride is that you can always park there, and there needs to be a clear assessment of the potential of the park and ride facility so that it is built not only for the existing traffic but also for the traffic growth, which, hopefully, there would be. There have been improvements in the service to Merthyr, for example, with a half-hourly service instead of an hourly service, which was always quite unacceptable. Hourly services do not attract commuters or shoppers, because people do not want to wait an hour or only have the option of an hourly service. The same issue applies to the airport and Llantwit Major. When that service is pushed up to, say, two or three trains an hour, the demand will go up, and that has happened with Valley lines services to the north of Cardiff.

[70] On whether the Aberdare to Hirwaun line will be relaid, you must ask the Minister, as Sir Humphrey would say. I do not know what the current financial plan for that is. It depends on the kinds of developments that take place. If there are going to be housing developments in that area and the housing is likely to be for commuters, the Assembly Government and local authorities then start looking at part payments by the developers. We have had massive developments of land to the north-west of Cardiff, towards Creigiau and Llantrisant, and yet no attempt was made to reopen the line from Danescourt, more or less, to Creigiau and to get the developers to part-pay for it. That is the kind of potential that there is, if that is affordable. As I say, the Minister will have more of an idea than I do of what his budget is.

10.20 a.m.

[71] On what else you put in, it depends on what the flow is and where people want to go to. If it is a matter of people wanting to come into Cardiff from places like the Heads of the Valleys, clearly rail is key to that because the roads in the southern part of that funnel just cannot cope. Improving the frequency and the size of the trains is important in that respect. If it is about people wanting to go northwards out into the country, we hope that within the next 18 months there will be a new TrawsCambria service in place, and one of those services will run from Merthyr through to Brecon and Newtown. That will provide the necessary high-quality coach service going northbound.

[72] **Gareth Jones:** Diolch yn fawr iawn **Gareth Jones:** Thank you very much, ichi, yr Athro Cole, am eich atebion. Mae'r Professor Cole, for your answers. The cwestiynau wedi bod yn dreiddgar a'r atebion questions have been trenchant and the yn werthfawr ac yn ddi-ddorol. Bydd hyn yn answers valuable and interesting. That will

rhoi cychwyn cadarn i ni ar y gwaith hwn. Diolch i chi am eich amser. Mae'n ddrwg gennyf eich bod hefyd wedi bod o dan bwysau amser, ond yr ydym yn gwerthfawrogi eich cyfraniad yn fawr iawn. Dymunwn yn dda i chi gyda'r gwaith pwysig hwn yr ydych yn ymgymryd ag ef ar ran pobl Cymru.

[73] **Athro Cole:** Diolch yn fawr, Gadeirydd, a diolch am y gwahoddiad. Os oes unrhyw gwestiynau eraill yr hoffai'r Aelodau gael atebion iddynt, gall Siân ysgrifennu ataf.

[74] **Gareth Jones:** Diolch yn fawr iawn. Symudwn ymlaen yn awr, braidd yn hwyr yn anffodus, ond yr wyf yn siŵr y buasech yn cytuno nad oedd dewis gennym o ran hynny. Yr oedd y sesiwn honno yn hynod o werthfawr.

[75] Trown yn awr at gynrychiolydd Railfuture. Estynnwn groeso cynnes iawn i Rowland Pittard, ysgrifennydd cangen de Cymru a'r swyddog cyswllt ar gyfer materion sy'n ymwneud â'r Cynulliad. Diolch am eich tystiolaeth ysgrifenedig, sydd eisoes wedi ei ddosbarthu i'r Aelodau. Yr wyf yn eich gwahodd, Mr Pittard, i wneud cyflwyniad o ryw dair munud o hyd. Ar ôl hynny, cawn gyfle i ofyn cwestiynau.

[76] **Mr Pittard:** The first thing I would say about the infrastructure of the rail network in Wales is that it must be well integrated not only between the train services themselves, but with other modes of transport, including bus services and people walking or cycling to the stations. For integrated transport, it is important to have a good transport infrastructure in Wales and there are a number of things that can be done both locally on a small scale and nationally on a large scale to achieve a much better integrated transport system in Wales than we have at present.

[77] The second thing that I feel very strongly about is the limited, but not lack of, control that the Welsh Assembly Government appears to have over the rail infrastructure and the rail franchise in Wales. I feel that there should be more finance coming to Wales. The franchise was given to Wales with no development money at all—there was no finance for improving the stock, for example, during the time of the franchise. I think that we are owed money for the franchise. More money should be coming from central Government through the block grant, for the franchise and also for the infrastructure, when we see the work that is being done in other parts of the country. I think that, at one stage, Professor Cole mentioned light rail. Light rail is being developed in Scotland, Ireland and England, but not in Wales.

[78] The third thing that we want from a rail infrastructure is for it to be a railway for all, not only a railway to get businessmen quickly to London. It has to be about getting people around on their local journeys in Wales, including tourists, and to get them to facilities, to hospitals, to shops and so on. We want to have a railway system for all. We must bear that in

give us a firm basis for this work. Thank you for giving of your time. I am sorry that you were subject to some time constraints, but we greatly appreciate your contribution. We wish you well with this important work that you are undertaking on behalf of the people of Wales.

Professor Cole: Thank you very much, Chair, and thanks for the invitation. If there are any other questions to which the Members would like answers, Siân can write to me.

Gareth Jones: Thank you very much. We will now move on, rather late unfortunately, but I am sure that you would agree that we did not have a choice in that. That session was extremely valuable.

We now turn to the representative from Railfuture. We extend a very warm welcome to Rowland Pittard, the secretary of the south Wales branch and the liaison officer for Assembly matters. Thank you for your written evidence, which has been distributed to Members. I invite you, Mr Pittard, to make a presentation of some three minutes in length. After that, we will have an opportunity to ask questions.

mind. There are a lot of people in Wales who do not make long journeys, but shorter journeys. In some parts of Wales, that is well catered for, while in others it is not. I have done a lot of work with the Youth Hostel Association, and it is a pleasure to see young people and tourists from abroad travelling on the Welsh railways and making use of them, but again, compared with some of the systems in Europe, there are improvements that could still be made.

[79] The fourth point to remember is that greater use of the railways can help us to relieve our concerns and some of the problems of climate change that are beginning to become apparent. Those are the main points as regards the results we would like from a good railway infrastructure in Wales.

[80] **Gareth Jones:** Thank you very much for that introduction, and for presenting the points to us. David Melding has the first question.

[81] **David Melding:** The committee would like to hear your views on high-speed rail services, because the previous witness stated that these are important. Organisations such as Greengauge21 are emphasising how crucial high-speed services are to economic development. It is not just about business people having quicker trips to London; the people who want to invest in Wales need to see greater connectivity. An article in yesterday's edition of *The Wall Street Journal* noted that most European countries are following high-speed rail as a way of regenerating peripheral areas. Why do you think that it is not a priority? It seems to combine so naturally with electrification. I know that we could have electrification only, but it seems that you would take both together if you have high aspirations. Why are you not pushing for that?

[82] **Mr Pittard:** The central focus of Railfuture is to welcome the development of high-speed lines. The difficulty is that high-speed lines could abstract traffic from existing lines. We have seen this happen in France, which has focal points that are well served by the high-speed lines that have been developed. However, the traditional lines are now used less in France, and the communities whose stations are on the traditional lines have seen their services reduced, which means having to travel considerable distances by car to access the central hubs that have been developed for the TGV.

[83] The second aspect of this provision in France is that some of these hubs have been developed away from the main centres of population and the other modes of transport. Professor Cole mentioned Miskin as the compromise serving a whole raft of communities in south Wales. The question would be: how would people get to that hub? What would be the time penalty for them in getting to that hub against using their local station on the main line to travel to London? Also, would the demand in Wales for a high-speed service be enough to maintain the half-hourly service that we currently have on the south Wales main line? Would the service be reduced to an hourly one? You could have this situation: you are in London and want to catch a train home, but you have to wait three-quarters of an hour for your high-speed train, and, when you eventually catch it, you have not saved any time compared with travelling on a conventional train that would have left half an hour earlier.

[84] What journey do you want the high-speed service to serve? Is it just Cardiff to London, with no other stops at all? Stops on high-speed lines on the continent are spaced at between 70 miles and 100 miles, but you would exclude a lot of communities by introducing it here, as well as a lot of connectional opportunities. I think that I mentioned in my paper the connectional opportunities at Bristol Parkway. I feel that conditions for those interchanges could be developed far better at Bristol Parkway. A lot of people from west of Cardiff see Bristol Parkway as a goal on their way to the rest of England or Scotland. There have been many studies on high-speed rail and how to implement it, but there have not been any studies on the movement of people associated with the use of high-speed lines. More study and more

work need to be done. Would the Welsh Assembly Government's aspiration be for such a service to go just to London, or London airports? Should we perhaps think in a different context? Should there be high-speed links to the communities of Manchester, Liverpool, Sheffield, Leeds and, possibly, Scotland? How much demand is there from those directions, to attract tourists and income to improve the Welsh economy?

10.30 a.m.

[85] Much more research needs to be done, but in looking at the present situation, the best that we can hope for is to have a good electrified system with good efficient trains coming here. I do not see the need for combined diesel-electric trains—we should have electric trains all the way to Swansea with good services to west Wales, rather than the trains having to carry redundant diesel capacity, which will slow them down. I have done the journey from Cardiff to London in an hour and 26 minutes on a high-speed train when it went non-stop. So, the infrastructure is there and it can be speeded-up if station stops are reduced and there is possibly one less coach on the train, because trains are quite a lot heavier with the new seats and additional coaches. We could have realistic journey times from south Wales to London, and those trains could start the journey from Swansea or even further west if the facilities are there to allow that to take place.

[86] **Sandy Mewies:** Going back to what the previous witness said, I asked him about improvements to the north-south railway link. I know that everyone says that it is the south-north link, but it is the north-south link for me. He said that the service could be improved by removing station stops—at the moment, the train stops at practically every station—but I think that you are saying that that is something you should approach with care because of the impact it can have. I do not know whether I have got that correct or not. The previous witness suggested that there could be alternate hours when the commuter trains could run, and that the high-speed line could miss out stations. Could you avoid a negative impact on commuter stations by introducing a pricing mechanism that would slightly weight the high-speed journey but decrease the price of others? Could that be considered?

[87] I thought that your paper was very interesting and thoughtful, by the way. You look at the case for new stations and reopened lines. Can you expand on why Queensferry, Connah's Quay, Bagillt and Greenfield stations would benefit from new stations? What research have you done?

[88] On the provision of freight grants, should they be expanded? Is it time to take a decision on moving freight from road to rail for the future? Have you thought about the mini-terminals that could be created in north Wales?

[89] **Mr Pittard:** Thank you for those questions. Pricing is a difficult issue, because when you look at the research from Passenger Focus, rail fares are quite difficult to understand as far as the public is concerned. So, I would not like to see a different pricing structure being introduced—that is one of the dangers of introducing high-speed rail, in that there would inevitably be higher prices, which might make the railways less accessible for some people.

[90] Five or six years ago, about four trains a day did the journey from Manchester to Cardiff in three hours. I see no reason why a similar pattern could not come back between Chester, at least, and Cardiff, on a limited stop basis to connect north and south Wales. I find difficulty with the term 'north to south' because most of the services from north Wales finish at Cardiff, but a quarter of the Welsh population lives west of Cardiff. Why are we thinking of Holyhead to Cardiff rather than Holyhead to Carmarthen? I know that people would make the full journey because there would be alternative travel provision, such as the TrawsCambria service or something of that nature, from Carmarthen to Bangor. However, we should be thinking further. The connections to the Holyhead trains from west of Cardiff involve a wait

of half an hour, so what is the point of speeding up the trains? For someone going from Swansea to Llandudno by rail, it would be far better for the train to start at Swansea than to have to wait at Cardiff for half an hour. Yes, the trains could be speeded up with a new infrastructure between Wrexham and Chester. A two-hourly express service could possibly be introduced, either between Swansea and Bangor or between Cardiff and Chester, with suitable connections for the rest of the journey. That is essential, and would certainly enable us to get from north to south Wales much faster than at present, with improved journey times and improved connections.

[91] **Sandy Mewies:** I will add a point on that, Chair, if you do not mind. I accept the point that you might have to extend the route further west, but in that case the rolling stock would be totally inadequate. It is inadequate for the service now. People on the longer journey to Holyhead are often unable to sit down until they have passed the main commuter stations. So, how would a longer route work with a two-carriage train? What would you do? You would have to make it longer and improve the rolling stock, surely.

[92] **Mr Pittard:** The rolling stock that is being used at present consists of class 175s. There was an opportunity to invest in the class 180 units that came from Great Western and split those up to make them all three-coach trains, possibly with some four-coach trains. However, as Professor Cole explained, the franchise had no money to expand. If Department for Transport money had been available to invest in that, we could have had more class 175s, which are becoming more reliable now. That would have given a good-quality service between north and south Wales. They can travel at 100 mph and we are not using them to their full capability, so the rolling stock is an issue that the Welsh Assembly Government has to look at for the end of the Arriva Trains Wales franchise in 2018. That has to be at the forefront of Welsh Assembly thinking—or the thinking of whoever is providing the funding for that. That has to be the catalyst for the replacement of older stock, the electrification of the Cardiff Valley lines, and the acquisition of newer stock for journeys between north and south Wales. It is difficult to work within the franchise at present, because it is so confined.

[93] Your second question was about stations. You will note that the ones that have been suggested for reopening are those in the commuter areas serving the large towns either in Wales or, in this case, Chester. These reopened stations would relieve much of the traffic on the north Wales roads and in that area around Chester. Likewise, there are suggestions that, with the extra capacity between Wrexham and Chester, we could provide extra services and stations. It might be possible to create a service between Wrexham and Rhyl for local stations, superimposed on the existing services, and therefore you could cut down the number of station stops and speed up other services on that route.

[94] You also mentioned the freight grant. It is a pity, because industry can change. Some industry is good, and freight grant investment in such industry is good as it helps it to develop. There are other industries to which the freight grant has been offered, and it has been useful in the short term but not in the long term. I could give examples of the freight grant not being used to its full extent. It might be better to use it to create bases for the Assembly Government, perhaps to have its own freight stations. Then, you could encourage hauliers to take traffic in, and negotiate with one of the freight companies to operate the freight services between those terminals, rather than use the grant for industrial sites. If it is to go to an industrial site, the best are the dockland sites, which then become available to all users as well as the industry on that site. I do not know whether you have seen our development plan, but the mini-terminals that we suggest throughout Wales are included in that.

[95] **Jeff Cuthbert:** Thank you. On the high-speed rail link, we can only wish that Brunel had won his argument against George Stephenson all those years ago. If we had his 7 foot gauge instead of the 4 foot 8 gauge that we have at present, we might have had some very fast trains indeed. However, that is history.

10.40 a.m.

[96] My view on the high-speed link is that it is not so much about speed as about electrification, and the benefits that that would bring to the environment. I want to focus, as I did with Stuart Cole before you, on light rail. There is a section in your paper on light rail, and I want to test your views on how beneficial you think it could be, particularly for Cardiff, Swansea and Newport. What lessons can be learned from the Manchester Metrolink, Tramlink in Croydon and the Sheffield Supertram? Indeed, what lessons can be learned from the Docklands Light Railway? It still frightens me because there are no drivers on those trains. What lessons can we learn from the existing light rail infrastructures?

[97] **Mr Pittard:** The first thing is to define a limited area for tramways to operate in. That is important. If you are thinking of inter-urban tramways, you are thinking of a different type of travelling. There are possibilities for those to develop. We do not want to compromise our existing heavy rail system, as I fear is happening with the Manchester expansion. We do not want to lose that. In Nottingham, the tram system runs parallel to the existing rail service, going out to Hucknall alongside the Worksop line, for example, for the first part of the journey. That is good because the inner commuting area is served by trams and the outer commuting area is served by heavy rail, with an interchange place on the periphery of the major urban areas. For Cardiff, for example, that could well be Taff's Well, where people who wanted to go north from Cardiff would transfer from tram to rail. That would speed up the last part of the train journey into Cardiff by reducing the number of stops. We see light rail as compatible with heavy rail, but it should not replace heavy rail. We should not lose any of that heavy rail infrastructure in Wales.

[98] You talked about Brunel and the broad gauge, and the Severn tunnel can be electrified because of its dimensions, as it was built to accommodate the broad gauge. Similarly, in the Cardiff area, we are lucky that a great deal of the track bed is the width of four tracks, so you could put a light rail system down alongside the heavy rail. In Swansea, the dedicated bus route was put on railway land, alongside the main railway line for the last section coming in to Swansea High Street. Would that have been a lot better had planners thought further ahead and had a tramway system coming down from Morriston to Swansea High Street station and connecting with heavy rail?

[99] The other ingredient needed is for light rail to connect with the heavy rail stations. They must be in close proximity. In some places on the continent, the light railway station is underneath the heavy rail station, in a tunnel. That takes me back to the need for integration. Light rail has its uses in getting people into the city centres. It also has its uses in relieving heavy rail in urban areas to allow people commuting from more distant parts to travel faster into the city centre.

[100] Our development plan includes detailed plans for Cardiff and Swansea, and we think that there is an opportunity for Newport. It is one of those cities in which light rail could be developed.

[101] **Jenny Randerson:** In your report, 'On Track for the 21st Century', you identify a number of service improvements, particularly new stations and new lines. Have you presented that to the Assembly Government and the regional transport consortia? If so, what has their reaction been? What criteria should we use for the reopening of stations?

[102] **Mr Pittard:** One national criterion that has been quite widely put about is that you must have a catchment area of at least 10,000 people to justify a station. Some people say 20,000, but, if you have an existing rail route, you are talking about 10,000. If you are talking about developing a new rail route, you are talking about 20,000 people to justify a new

station. So, you are looking at that sort of size. All our reports have been sent to the regional transport consortia and the Welsh Assembly Government, to whichever Minister was responsible for transport at the time. In fact, I note that one or two of our suggestions are in the paper that the Minister will present to you later.

[103] When looking at these developments, it is important to consider whether the transport consortia are the right bodies to do that, because so many of the railway lines considered for reopening go across the border. So, we must ensure that communities that are on the borders of these transport consortia are not short-changed because of their location. The developments tend to take place in the heartlands of the transport consortia, rather than on the periphery. There is a greater need for the Welsh Assembly Government centrally to look at what is needed and at the priorities for reopening the lines that are presently being put forward by the transport consortia to the Welsh Assembly Government. So, there is a need to look at how transport is arranged in Wales and at its governance, to get the best out of it, so that we can get a true integrated transport system in Wales.

[104] **Christine Chapman:** I think that you have partly answered this follow-up question. You talk about the catchment area and the numbers required. If there are strategic sites in Wales, such as the Heads of the Valleys, where there is an encouragement for more housing given the shift in population, do you feel that the potential for more people to live in a specific area is not being considered?

[105] **Mr Pittard:** Development should be geared towards the transport facilities that we have. To gear developments away from rail or bus services is disadvantaging some people. Therefore, greater needs must be considered at the planning stage. For example, the developments announced for junction 33 of the M4 are not compatible with the thinking of Railfuture. Putting a development there, where there are no bus or rail services, will mean that transport services have to be generated. Why can the present network and planning officials not get together to make the best possible use of the network? I was in a country last week where people live in the centre of cities, and therefore there was very little need for a transport system. That does not seem to be how things are organised in Britain, where people travel greater distances to get to work. So, the planning of transport needs should be considered more closely.

[106] **Gareth Jones:** Thank you. That has to be the final question and answer. Thank you very much for the written and oral evidence that you have given to us. I found it very interesting, as did other committee members. We will be in touch with Railfuture, because we agree with some of your exciting ideas. I thank you for your presentation and wish you all the best.

[107] **Mr Pittard:** Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak to you.

[108] **Gareth Jones:** Symudwn ymlaen at drydedd ran yr eitem hon yn awr. Estynnaf groeso i Ieuan Wyn Jones, y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog a Gweinidog dros yr Economi a Thrafnidiaeth, ac ymddiheuraf ar ran y pwyllgor am ei fod wedi gorfod aros. Gydag ef y bore yma y mae James Price, y cyfarwyddwr trafndiaeth ac adfywio strategol, a Tim James, cyfarwyddwr yr is-adran trafndiaeth integredig.

Gareth Jones: We now move on to the third part of this item. I extend a welcome to Ieuan Wyn Jones, the Deputy First Minister and Minister for the Economy and Transport, and I apologise on behalf of the committee for the delay. With him this morning is James Price, the director of transport and strategic regeneration, and Tim James, the director of the integrated transport division.

10.50 a.m.

[109] Diolchaf yn fawr iawn ichi am y dystiolaeth ysgrifenedig yr ydym eisoes wedi'i derbyn a'i dosbarthu i'r Aelodau. A fyddech mor garedig â gwneud cyflwyniad byr o ryw bum munud, ac yna cawn ni, fel Aelodau, gyfle i ofyn rhai cwestiynau?

I thank you very much for the written evidence, which we have already received and have circulated to Members. Would you be so kind as to make a brief presentation of some five minutes, and then we, as Members, will have the opportunity to ask some questions?

[110] **Y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog a'r Gweinidog dros yr Economi a Thrafnidiaeth (Ieuan Wyn Jones):** Diolch am y cyflwyniad, Gadeirydd. Gan fod amser yn brin y bore yma, a sylweddolaf eich bod wedi gofyn cwestiynau a oedd yn amlwg yn ddiddorol i'r tystion blaenorol, efallai mai'r peth gorau yw i mi hepgor gwneud cyflwyniad y bore yma gan y bydd yn rhaid i mi adael am 11.30 a.m..

The Deputy First Minister and Minister for the Economy and Transport (Ieuan Wyn Jones): Thank you for those words of welcome, Chair. As we are pressed for time this morning, and I realise that you have already asked evidently interesting questions to the previous witnesses, perhaps it is best if I do not make a presentation this morning, as I will have to leave at 11.30 a.m..

[111] **Gareth Jones:** Yr ydym yn gwerthfawrogi hynny.

Gareth Jones: We appreciate that.

[112] **Y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog:** Yr wyf am dynnu eich sylw at un camgymeriad yn y dystiolaeth. Ym mharagraff 30, mae ail ran y frawddeg yn sôn am:

The Deputy First Minister: I should draw your attention to one error in the evidence. In paragraph 30, the second part of the sentence mentions:

[113] 'removing 5.8 million lorries annually.'

[114] Dylai hynny fod yn '5.8 million lorry miles'.

That should be '5.8 lorry miles'.

[115] Have I obviated the need for your question, Jeff? [*Laughter.*]

[116] **Gareth Jones:** Trown at y cwestiynau. Mae nifer o Aelodau wedi datgan eu bod am ofyn cwestiynau.

Gareth Jones: We will turn to the questions. A number of Members have indicated that they have questions to ask.

[117] **Paul Davies:** Yn eich papur, yr ydych yn nodi efallai y bydd yn rhaid i chi fel Llywodraeth ystyried edrych ar drosglwyddo pwerau ychwanegol ar reilffyrdd o San Steffan. A allwch chi ehangu ar hynny a dweud wrthym ym mha ardaloedd y byddech yn ystyried gwneud hynny?

Paul Davies: In your paper, you note that you, as a Government, may have to consider looking at the transfer of further powers over railways from Westminster. Can you expand on that and tell us in which areas you would consider transferring further powers?

[118] Yn ail, yn eich papur, yr ydych hefyd yn sôn am,

Secondly, in your paper, you also mention,

[119] 'archwilio'r cyfleoedd i wella rhagor ar y seilwaith rheilffyrdd...a...gosod traciau cyflym newydd yng Nghymru ac edrych ar y cyfle i ailagor hen reilffyrdd neu reilffyrdd segur lle mae gwely'r trac yn dal ar y llawr'.

'exploring opportunities to further enhance the existing railway infrastructure...and...the building of new high-speed rail lines for Wales and exploring the opportunity of reopening old/disused railway lines where track bed still exists'.

[120] A allwch chi ehangu ar hynny a bod yn fwy penodol?

Can you expand upon that and be more specific?

[121] Yn drydydd, sylwaf hefyd eich bod yn comisiynu astudiaeth ddichonoldeb gan Network Rail ar ailagor nifer o reilffyrdd segur yng Nghymru, gan cynnwys y rheilffyrdd rhwng Bangor a Llangefni ac Aberdâr a Hirwaun. A allwch gadarnhau a ydych yn edrych ar reilffyrdd eraill? Er enghraifft, a ydych yn edrych ar reilffyrdd segur yn y gorllewin?

Thirdly, I also note that you are commissioning a feasibility study by Network Rail on reopening a number of disused railways in Wales, including the line between Bangor and Llangefni and Aberdare and Hirwaun. Can you confirm whether you are looking at other lines? For example, are you looking at disused lines in west Wales?

[122] Yn olaf, mae'r grant cyfleusterau cludo nwyddau yn helpu i dalu'r costau ychwanegol a allai fod ynghlwm â chludo nwyddau ar y rheilffyrdd. Deallaf eich bod yn gweithio ar nifer o brosiectau cludo nwyddau ar hyn o bryd. A allwch fanylu ar ba fath o brosiectau yw'r rhain a beth yw'r cyllid ar gyfer y grant hwn yn y flwyddyn ariannol nesaf?

Finally, the freight facilities grant helps to pay the additional costs that could be linked to transporting freight on the railways. I understand that you are working on a number of freight projects at present. Can you give us a little more detail on what kind of projects these are and what funding is available for this grant in the next financial year?

[123] **Y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog:** Yr oedd gennych nifer o gwestiynau. I ddelio gyda'r cwestiwn cyntaf, mae pethau eithaf manwl yma, a byddaf yn gofyn i Tim ateb ar y materion technegol ac ar y grantiau penodol. Fodd bynnag, cyn belled ag y bo pwerau ychwanegol yn y cwestiwn, fel y mae'n siŵr y bydd Tim yn ychwanegu mewn eiliad, nid oes gennym y pwerau llawn i sicrhau rhai o'r cynlluniau mwyaf arloesol. Gall Tim egluro beth yn union yw'r rheini, ond maent yn cynnwys rheilffyrdd ysgafn, gwasanaethau metro a phethau tebyg. Wedi trafod hyn gyda swyddogion, er mwyn cael eglurdeb manwl ar hyn, yr wyf yn meddwl byddai'n syniad da inni anfon nodyn bach at y pwyllgor ynglŷn â lle mae gennym bwerau ond mae arnom angen deddfwriaeth—mae ambell faes lle mae gennym y pŵer ond mae arnom angen is-ddeddfwriaeth i gyflawni—a'r ardaloedd lle mae arnom angen pŵer cyfan gwbl newydd. Mae gwahaniaeth, yn naturiol, rhwng y ddau. Gofynnaf i Tim egluro hynny'n fanylach ac yna byddwn yn anfon nodyn bach atoch ar hynny.

The Deputy First Minister: There were a number of questions there. To deal with the first question, there are some detailed issues here, and I will ask Tim to respond on the technical matters and on the specific grants. However, insofar as additional powers are concerned, as I am sure that Tim will elaborate upon in a moment, we do not have the full powers required to ensure that we can put in place some of the most innovative schemes. Tim can explain what exactly those are, but they include light rail, metro services and similar schemes. Having discussed this with officials, so that there is clarity on this, I think that it would be a good idea for us to send a short note to the committee regarding where we have powers but require legislation—because there are some areas in which we have the power, but require subordinate legislation to deliver schemes—and the areas where we need a completely new power. Naturally, there is a difference between the two. I will ask Tim to explain that in more detail and then we can send you a short note on that.

[124] Bu i chi gyfeirio at y ffaith ein bod yn ystyried adroddiadau dichonoldeb ar ailagor rheilffyrdd lle mae'r trac yn bodoli ond nad oes gwasanaethau, neu hyd yn oed lle mae gwasanaethau nwyddau yn unig. Fel

You referred to the fact that we are considering feasibility studies on reopening railways where the track exists but there are no services, or where there are only freight services. As you saw in our paper, at present,

y gwelsoch yn ein papur, ar hyn o bryd, mae ystyriaeth yn cael ei rhoi i ddwy ardal, sef Bangor-Llangefni ac Aberdâr-Hirwaun. Yr hyn yr ydym yn ei wneud yma yw, yn hytrach na meddwl am ardaloedd—ar hyn o bryd, beth bynnag—lle bo'r trac wedi'i godi, ein bod yn edrych ar ardaloedd lle bo trac yn dal i fodoli, lle mae'n haws cyflwyno gwasanaethau newydd i mewn. Efallai bod ardaloedd eraill yng Nghymru lle credwn, ar ryw bwynt, bod gwerth edrych arnynt, lle bo trac yn bodoli ond heb wasanaethau. Nid wyf yn ymwybodol bod llawer ohonynt. Efallai y gall Tim ddweud. Nid wyf yn ymwybodol o rai yn y gorllewin, fel y mae'n digwydd, ond efallai y gallwn anfon nodyn atoch ar hynny.

consideration is being given to two areas, namely Bangor-Llangefni and Aberdare-Hirwaun. What we are doing here is, rather than thinking—at present, anyway—about areas where the track has been removed, we are looking at areas where the track is still in place and it is easier to introduce new services. There may be other areas in Wales where we might feel, at some point, that it is worth looking at such services, where a track is in existence but where there are no services. I am not sure that there are many such areas. Perhaps Tim could tell us. I am not aware of any in west Wales, as it happens, but perhaps we could send you a note on that.

[125] Tim, a wnewch chi ymdrin â'r busnes pwerau a'r busnes ynglŷn â rheilffyrdd segur?

Tim, could you deal with the issue of powers and the issue of unused railway lines?

[126] **Mr James:** Wrth gwrs.

Mr James: Of course.

[127] **Y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog:** Yr unig beth a ddywedwn ynglŷn â rheilffyrdd segur yw nad yw'r ffaith bod rhywun yn edrych ar adroddiad dichonoldeb, fel mae Network Rail yn ei wneud, yn golygu y bydd gwasanaethau newydd yn dod, oherwydd bydd yn rhaid inni wedyn edrych ar yr achos busnes a'r adroddiad dichonoldeb pan y'i cyflwynir. Yn naturiol, os bydd achos cryf a bod y cyllid ar gael, byddwn yn dymuno ei ystyried yn ffafriol.

The Deputy First Minister: All that I would say about unused railway lines is that giving consideration to feasibility studies, as Network Rail is doing, does not mean that there will be new services in place, because we will then have to look at the business case and the feasibility study when it is submitted. Naturally, if there is a strong case and the funding is available, we would wish to consider it favourably.

[128] **Mr James:** Yes, Mr Davies, just to pick up on some of the points—

[129] **Gareth Jones:** Before you go on, I think that Christine wants to come in on the specific point.

[130] **Christine Chapman:** What is the timescale for the feasibility study? When is the report likely to come back to you?

[131] **The Deputy First Minister:** I do not know precisely. Perhaps Tim will know. You may be able to judge, from the rail forward programme, that what we are trying to do is expand the opportunities for rail travel. The easiest way to do that is to look at where we have got track but no services as the easiest way of reintroducing the services. Clearly, there will have to be a business case and so on, but as soon as Network Rail has completed the feasibility study, which will look in outline to see what the likely costs are, I will be very happy to share that with the committee. Tim, do you know the answer to that particular question?

[132] **Mr James:** On that particular point, Ms Chapman, we have commissioned Network Rail to undertake studies. We expect a report to be completed next year. The first activity is for Network Rail to do some devegetation work on some of those lines to understand the

basic condition, which is currently happening. I was in Llangefni last week looking at some of the work that needs to be done. So, we are progressing it very quickly.

[133] To respond to Mr Davies's points, we have the powers to do what we already do, and we are making good strides. As we attempt to push the boundaries to work quicker and smarter, looking at new technology, the paper acknowledges that there may be some additional powers that may be needed as we move forward to the future. So, we are just recognising that fact. We thought that it was right to put in the paper that we acknowledge that there may be additional powers that could be needed, if necessary, for things like light rail and tramways. At present, a lot can be taken through Transport and Works Act Orders, but we are aware that we may need to have additional powers where necessary.

[134] On new tracks, the reason why we have chosen the Llangefni and Hirwaun lines is because they are current railway lines. The Hirwaun line is still a freight line, so there is an opportunity there quickly to look at how we can convert it to passenger use. The Llangefni to Amlwch line officially closed last year. The track structure is there, as was the case with Ebbw Vale, where we reopened the line. Yesterday, we had the millionth passenger, which was a good milestone for that service.

[135] **Paul Davies:** Beth am y grant cyfleusterau cludo nwyddau?

Paul Davies: What about the freight transport grant?

[136] **Y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog:** Mae cais wedi'i gyflwyno ar hyn o bryd, ond nid wyf yn siŵr a yw'n briodol inni sôn am gais penodol. Byddai angen cyngor arnaf i wybod a fyddwn yn gallu datgelu pwy sy'n gwneud y cais cyn iddo gael ei gyhoeddi. Serch hynny, mae bwriad i ehangu hwnnw.

The Deputy First Minister: A bid is in at present, but I am not sure whether it is appropriate for us to discuss a specific bid. I would need to seek advice as to whether I could actually give you the details of who is involved until that is made public. However, there is an intention to expand that.

[137] Mae'n rhaid inni gydnabod bod y Llywodraeth yn dymuno gweld llawer iawn mwy o nwyddau yn cael eu cario ar y trenau. Yr ydym yn ymwybodol iawn nad yw llawer o gwmnïau logisteg yn ystyried bod hynny'n gost-effeithiol dros siwrneiau byr, ac maent felly yn edrych am siwrneiau hir. Lle bo cwmnïau yn gwneud ceisiadau i ni am y grant mae Paul wedi sôn amdano, ac oherwydd, yn naturiol, ein bod am weld hyn yn digwydd, byddwn yn ymwybodol iawn mai dyna'r llwybr yr ydym yn dymuno ei gymryd. Hoffech chi ddweud mwy am hynny, Tim?

We must acknowledge that the Government wants to see far more goods carried on the railways. We are very aware that a number of logistics companies do not see that as being cost-effective over shorter journeys, so they are looking at lengthier journeys. Where companies do make bids for the grant that Paul has mentioned, and as we would, naturally, wish to see this happening, we would be very aware that that is the route that we wish to take. Would you like to say more about that, Tim?

11.00 a.m.

[138] **Mr James:** Several applications have been made. They are commercially sensitive, because we are currently processing them, but they involve working in co-operation with other Government agencies. Most of the flows that we see are not just within Wales; they cross into England and, in some cases, Scotland too. It would be premature to talk about those today.

[139] **The Deputy First Minister:** We can say that there is a lot of interest in the grant.

[140] **Paul Davies:** A fydddech yn edrych i **Paul Davies:** Would you be looking to

ehangu'r grant hwnnw, felly?

expand that grant, then?

[141] **Y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog: The Deputy First Minister:** We would, yes. Byddem.

[142] **Jenny Randerson:** I have two or three questions, which I will ask quickly. Scotland has gone beyond what you are planning with regard to reopening lines. It is reopening lines where the infrastructure has been removed and is replacing that. Are you planning to move to that stage following the report's publication next year?

[143] I am very pleased to see that you emphasise the importance of freight being transported by rail. How will the powers work out? I noticed a network change proposal for the sale of the Malefant yard in Swansea. If Network Rail sells off its sidings for its own commercial gain, it is selling off the family silver, is it not? Do you have any powers to stop that happening? Did you put in an adverse comment on that sale? Do you have any role in that at all?

[144] On connections on the Cambrian line, people tell me that the connections between Aberystwyth and the northern part of the Cambrian system are hopelessly out of sync. At what level do you get involved with Arriva on how it synchronises its connections? What is your policy on this? If the connections are poor, people do not use the railways.

[145] **The Deputy First Minister:** We have tried to start at our feet with rail infrastructure and see what the pinch points are that stop us from being able to deliver the service that we think people need. There are three clear pinch points. In Cardiff, there is a major constraint in the infrastructure, at Queen Street station and at Cardiff Central station, where a big investment of hundreds of millions of pounds is being made. Services coming from the Valleys are very popular, as I witnessed on the train from Ebbw Vale yesterday, and passenger numbers are going up, so we have to remove those constraints. The first priority is to move the constraints in those areas where the need is greatest and, therefore, on the Valleys lines. Substantial investment is going ahead at Queen Street station and in other areas so that we can have more frequent services going to the Valleys. That is the first and most obvious one. The two others for which we have secured funding from the strategic capital investment fund are the single line between Wrexham and Chester and, if we can dual part of that line and complete it with passing loops, we will be able to have more frequent services in north Wales and express services will be able to go through Wrexham rather than Crewe. The third area of constraint is the Llŵchwr viaduct, which prevents us from having good access to west Wales. Those are the three key areas where we are investing.

[146] We have also recognised that, because of the popularity of trains and because we want to get people out of their cars and using more public transport, the easiest route for us to take is to look at the success of the Ebbw Vale line and at whether there are other tracks that are not being used. The next stage is to look at reopening disused lines. Going beyond that would go beyond the current spending round and, at this stage, would be aspirational.

[147] Clearly, we want to have an integrated transport system, and I am sure that a future government will want to look at that. We have decided that using our current resources in this way with Network Rail means that we will be improving our infrastructure. That does not mean that we are against the principle of opening lines where there are no current tracks, but the financial reality is that we are not able to do it currently. I am being as honest as I can be.

[148] **Jenny Randerson:** What about freight?

[149] **The Deputy First Minister:** The issue of freight is quite detailed. I am afraid I do not know the answer to that question; I do not know whether Tim knows the answer to it. I

suspect that we would not have any power to tell Network Rail not to do it.

[150] **Mr James:** On that question about the Malefant sidings, we had objected to that, as part of the network change process. The ultimate power lies with the regulator, but I am pleased to say that there is a way of working around the sale. We objected to the sale of infrastructure, as we were concerned that it might take away tracks that would be needed for high-speed, electrified trains to Swansea and that that would weaken the case for electrification to Swansea and south Wales. Our objection was taken on board. The local authority wanted to buy the land for a rural development scheme. We have worked with it, and there is a solution that meets everyone's aspirations. So, we have worked around that one. We have had the opportunity to comment on network change, and we have a history of doing so to protect our infrastructure, where appropriate.

[151] **The Deputy First Minister:** On the question about the Cambrian Coast line, I am aware of that issue. Any passenger who travels on the line will be aware that you can travel down from Pwllheli to Machynlleth quite easily, but the issue is how you get to Aberystwyth. Primarily, Arriva Trains Wales has to deliver as part of its franchise, and its current franchise would not necessarily mean that it would have to change those services. Having said that, we always work with Arriva Trains Wales; there are regular meetings between us to see whether we can have services that are outside the franchise, which would mean that we would have to come to an agreement with Arriva Trains Wales on the provision of those services. Where we think it is necessary to have greater synchronisation, we will do so.

[152] The corridors there make it a little difficult, because the services from Aberystwyth go primarily across mid Wales to Shrewsbury and Birmingham. The tendency is for the Cambrian Coast line to be the service from Pwllheli to Machynlleth. Can you give us some more detail, Tim?

[153] **Mr James:** One current issue with the timetable, which is quite timely for this meeting, is that it is constrained by the infrastructure, in the sense that there are long single lines with very few passing loops. We are investing with Network Rail in order to provide additional capacity on that railway line, which will mean that the timetable will work better in the future, and therefore there will be better connections. That work is due to finish next year. A key part of that issue was the unreliability of the timetable due to the flooding at Dyfi Junction, where the track can flood twice a day. The work that we have funded has lifted Dyfi Junction station by almost a metre, and out of the flood plain, which means more reliable services going forward.

[154] **The Deputy First Minister:** It is an important point to make that the improvements in infrastructure will, hopefully, deliver better services. Arriva Trains Wales did tell me that its worst-performing service with regard to punctuality was the Cambrian Coast line. There have already been improvements in delivering services on time. Next year, when the full works have been concluded, we will have the option of increasing the number of services, particularly at peak times, which will enable us to have an enhanced service for people in that area.

[155] **Nerys Evans:** Diolch am y dystiolaeth. Hoffwn holi am faterion ychydig yn fwy eang, sy'n ymwneud â'r pwerau sydd gennych. Yn amlwg, mae'r cynlluniau ynghylch gwella'r seilwaith a gwasanaethau rheilffyrdd o fewn pwerau Llywodraeth Cymru ar hyn o bryd. Soniodd Tim James am y posibilrwydd o ofyn am fwy o bwerau yn y dyfodol i wneud cynlluniau arbennig.

Nerys Evans: Thank you for the evidence. I would like to question you on some wider issues, which relate to the powers that you have. Clearly, proposals relating to improving rail services and rail infrastructure are within the powers of the Government of Wales at present. Tim James mentioned the possibility of asking for more powers in future to make specific plans. The two

Dyweddod y ddau dyst blaenorol fod angen datganoli mwy o bwerau i Gymru yn awr, er mwyn gallu gwneud mwy yng Nghymru. Cyfeiriasant at yr Alban, sy'n derbyn mwy o gyllid drwy fformiwla Barnett. Mae mwy o opsiynau gan yr Alban oherwydd bod ganddi fwy o bwerau.

previous witnesses said that more powers need to be devolved to Wales now, in order to be able to do more in Wales. They referred to Scotland, which receives more finance because of the Barnett formula. Scotland has more options because it has more powers.

11.10 a.m.

[156] Felly, a ydych yn rhagweithiol wrth ofyn am ddatganoli mwy o bwerau i Gymru yn y maes hwn? A oes cyfyngiadau ar hyn o bryd ar yr hyn y gallwch gynllunio, ac a oes cyfyngiadau cyllido oherwydd ariennir eich cynlluniau ar hyn o bryd drwy'r bloc grant a dderbyniwn, sy'n golygu nad oes arian ychwanegol am gynlluniau arbennig? A ydych yn delio gyda hyn mewn ffordd rhagweithiol ac yn ceisio cael mwy o bwerau, a beth yw'r cyfyngiadau sy'n eich wynebu ar hyn o bryd?

So, are you being proactive in requesting further powers for Wales in this area? Are there limitations on what you can plan at present, and are there funding limitations because your current schemes are funded through the block grant that we receive, which means that there is no additional funding for special schemes? Are you dealing with this proactively and trying to get more powers, and what limitations do you face at present?

[157] **Y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog:** Yn naturiol, mae cyfyngiadau. O ran gwariant, mae cyfyngiadau oherwydd y gyllideb, ond yr ydym yn gymharol ffodus o ran y ceisiadau yr ydym wedi'u gwneud am arian ychwanegol. Gan fod y Llywodraeth wedi rhoi pwyslais ar wella trafnidiaeth integredig, yr ydym wedi buddsoddi mwy o arian yn y sector hwn. Mae £40 miliwn er enghraifft wedi dod drwy'r gronfa buddsoddi cyfalaf strategol ar gyfer gwella isadeiledd rheilffyrdd. Yr ydym hefyd yn gallu gwneud ceisiadau am arian Ewropeaidd i helpu'r broses honno, felly yr ydym yn ceisio ychwanegu at y gronfa sydd gennym drwy arian Ewropeaidd ac arian SCIF. Ar hyn o bryd, wedi trafod y mater yn eithaf manwl gyda Network Rail, nid y prinder cyllid ynddo'i hun sy'n rhwystro cyflymu'r gwaith, ond rhaglen waith Network Rail ei hunan. Mae ganddo raglen waith ar hyd a lled Prydain, ac yr ydym yn teimlo weithiau y dylai pethau symud tipyn cyflymach yma. Mae Network Rail yn dweud bod ganddo raglenni yng Nghymru, ei fod wedi cytuno i wneud pethau ac y byddai'n dymuno i bethau ddigwydd yn gyflymach, ond nid yw hynny bob amser yn bosibl oherwydd ei raglen waith. Nid ydym yn rheoli cyllid na rhaglen waith Network Rail, ond yr ydym yn gorfod trafod y peth wrth gwrs. Hoffwn weld mwy o gyllid, ond, ar hyn o bryd, credwn y gallwn

The Deputy First Minister: Naturally, there are limitations. With regard to finance, there are limitations in the budget, but we are relatively fortunate in the bids that we have made for additional funding. Given that the Government has emphasised the improvement of integrated transport, we have invested more funding in this particular sector. A total of £40 million has been made available through the strategic capital investment fund for the improvement of rail infrastructure. We are also able to make bids for European funding to assist with that process, so we are endeavouring to increase the funds available to us through European funding and SCIF funding. At present, having discussed this issue in some detail with Network Rail, it is not the shortage of money in and of itself that is preventing the speeding up of the work, but Network Rail's own work programme. It has a work programme in place the length and breadth of Britain, and we feel on occasion that things should move more quickly here. Network Rail says that it has programmes in Wales, that it has agreed to do things and that it would wish to see things happening more quickly, but that that is not always possible because of its work programme. We do not control Network Rail's funding or its work programme, but we must discuss the issue of course. I would like to see more funding, but,

weithredu o fewn y gyllideb sydd gennym.

at present, we feel that we can work within the budget available to us.

[158] O safbwynt pwerau, mae hwn yn faes eithaf anodd. Yn y gorffennol—ac nid wyf yn sôn am reilffyrdd yn benodol—yr ydym wedi gweld bod angen mwy o bwerau arnom, er enghraifft yng nghyswllt y Mesur ynghylch Teithio gan Ddysgwyr (Cymru) 2008. Gwnaethom gais ychwanegol am y pwerau hynny ac, erbyn hyn, yr ydym wedi cyflwyno hynny fel rhan o raglen y Llywodraeth. Pe baem yn gweld—fel y cyfeiriodd Tim—fod angen mwy o bwerau i weithredu ym maes trafnidiaeth integredig, pan fyddem yn teimlo bod modd inni symud ymlaen i gynlluniau arloesol, byddem yn ddigon hapus i drafod gyda'r Adran Drafnidiaeth i weld a fyddai'n fodlon trosglwyddo'r pwerau hynny i ni. Nid ydym wedi gwneud cais ar y pwynt yma gan nad oes gennym gynlluniau penodol, ond unwaith y bydd y gwaith hwn yn symud ymlaen at y cam nesaf, byddwn yn ystyried a fyddai'n briodol gwneud y cais hwnnw.

On powers, this is a relatively complex area. In the past—and I am not talking about railways specifically—we have realised that we require further powers, and I refer to the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 as an example. We made a bid for those powers and, by now, we have tabled that as part of the Government's programme. If we identified—as Tim referred—that further powers were needed to deliver on integrated transport, at the point when we feel could move on with innovative schemes, then we would be more than happy to discuss with the Department for Transport to see whether it would be willing to transfer those powers to us. We have not made any bids at this point because we do not have specific schemes in place, but once this work progresses to the next step, we will consider whether it would be appropriate to make that bid.

[159] **David Melding:** I will turn to high-speed rail, where you have a big lobbying job to do if we are going to see this great project coming to south Wales, as far as Swansea, let us hope. It links to electrification as well, so you can combine them to some extent, but there is a big lobbying job to be done with central Government and Network Rail. I believe that you have a meeting scheduled in December with the head of HR2, so you are clearly doing some work there. Will you take us a bit further with regard to some of the detail? It strikes me that if we are not, we might see some sort of partnership with Bristol. Bristol will obviously be part of this if we get a high-speed service and electrification of this main line, and the Bristol economy and south-west England are a significant lobbying force as well. Have any of your officials been involved with organisations such as Greengauge21, which is leading the charge for high-speed rail? It strikes me that it has looked at Wales, and there are some relatively good references, but they are a bit mixed. On the one hand, they say that the route down through Bristol to south Wales is a feasible one in the next stage, but that it is not as high a priority. However, the economic development potential is recognised. I am not saying that we are not doing any work, but we need to do more to make our case to these UK organisations that may well determine the policy with regard to the direction that the UK Government will take. What thought has been given to a more general campaign?

[160] **The Deputy First Minister:** As far as I am concerned, this will be one of the most important decisions made by the UK Government in relation to rail. Wales has to be a part of this. My fear is that high-speed rail will be seen, in the early days, as a way of linking some of the major cities in England and Scotland and that it will exclude Wales. That would be bad for us. I make no bones about that. So, it is a very important issue for us.

[161] Electrification is extremely important. Our lobbying worked there. Many people were sceptical about whether we could deliver a programme with the Department for Transport to electrify the track to Swansea. A lot of lobbying was done through the work of the officials and meetings that I had with Andrew Adonis. A lot of hard work was done by officials behind the scenes. That was a great announcement for us.

[162] High-speed rail is a much longer term project. I have been discussing this with the consultants that have been engaged, and with Network Rail, and, as you indicated, I will be meeting the chair of the organisation charged with looking at the planning. So, we are doing that at our level. I would suggest that the work of the committee could be extremely helpful. We need as much ammunition as possible in the discussions that we have. I will ask Tim to clarify this point, but we have agreed with Network Rail that there should be a feasibility study that looks at delivering it to Wales.

[163] **Mr James:** Yes, we have. Network Rail has undertaken new line studies and has agreed to do one for us for high-speed rail between London and south Wales by January 2010. It is currently in place. It has also done them for routes between London and the west midlands and London and Scotland, so it will mirror that format. It is still conceptual, but it puts the case on a different plain. We have worked closely with Greengauge21 and Jim Steer, which has informed our approach. However, Greengauge21 is a public interest group whose role is to lobby Governments. We cannot be a member of that group, because we would effectively be lobbying ourselves, but we have taken its advice.

[164] **The Deputy First Minister:** James, do you want to say something?

[165] **Mr Price:** We have been engaging heavily with Greengauge21. We have given it a small amount of funding to do some work. So, when you see it making references to Wales, that is the reason. However, we have been careful not to engage with it formally, because of that role. That does not mean that, for example, local councils, the Confederation of British Industry, and Bristol should not be campaigning. That is what we need. However, we wanted to take this in phases, with electrification being done first and then moving forward.

[166] **David Melding:** I would like to draw out that point further. We have not really formed connections yet. I do not know what the bodies in Bristol and the south-west of England—

[167] **Mr Price:** I think that we have, but we need to have a clear plan.

[168] **The Deputy First Minister:** First, we need to ensure that Wales is on the agenda. We have established that through the work that we have done with Network Rail and with the Department for Transport. We have put Wales on the map. We want to be engaged in this. As soon as we have the results of this initial feasibility study, then we need to step it up further.

[169] **David Melding:** I think that that is a helpful answer. I suggest that we need to join forces with bodies the other side of the Severn as we are very much in this together, are we not? I believe that it is highly unlikely that the UK Government would stop the process at Bristol, although we have to bear that in mind as a horrible possibility. Bristol is the key to this.

[170] **The Deputy First Minister:** The danger for us was that electrification stopped at Bristol, and that would have been an even more damaging decision for us, not only in relation to electrification, but in respect of high-speed rail. So, the decision to take it to Swansea is an opening for us. We can say that, if the line is to be electrified to Swansea, when the next investment comes, that should go to Swansea as well. We cannot afford not to be a part of this debate.

[171] **Mr Price:** One other thing that should be mentioned, which is partly technical, but quite important, is that the way in which transport schemes are normally appraised is not really applicable to high-speed rail. If you just do it in that way, the shorter high-speed rail services will not stack up on time savings. However, it is not necessarily about time savings; it is about connectivity, regeneration and having the capital city on the map. So, it is that

bigger, wider, regeneration and economic development aspect that we need to push as much as the incremental time savings. If we just look at the incremental time savings, that is not a good enough argument.

11.20 a.m.

[172] **Jeff Cuthbert:** I have two brief questions, which will not come as a surprise to you as I have raised these matters before. As you say, the Valley lines are becoming increasingly popular and the number of passengers is rising. Do you know if we are any nearer to Arriva Trains putting on six-car trains on the Valley lines, particularly during peak times? You know about the investment in longer platforms and better infrastructure—it is all there—but we still have relatively short trains.

[173] My second question is on Access for All funding. Could you let us have the criteria for the funding? Perhaps you could send us a note on that. I have previously raised the issue of wheelchair-bound passengers, for example, who want to go from Ystrad Mynach to Cardiff. They cannot access the platform. It seems to me that that is a crying example of a station that is very well used otherwise, by able-bodied people, but which is not really fit for purpose. I just use that as an example. What criteria apply to the Access for All funding? If you do have any information about the likelihood of Ystrad Mynach qualifying for that funding, I would be grateful for it.

[174] My main question, which I have raised with the two previous presenters, is about light rail and how you think that light rail might have a future in Wales, particularly for Cardiff, Swansea and Newport. What is the thinking on that? What lessons have been learned from existing light rail systems elsewhere in the UK, such as those in Croydon, Sheffield and Manchester, and, I understand, Nottingham? Where does light rail sit in the long-term picture? Do you have any feel for the likely costs and benefits?

[175] **The Deputy First Minister:** I will deal with the question on trains first, Jeff, and then ask Tim to deal with the criteria for Access for All funding. I am not quite sure where we are in relation to six-car trains, but I understand the need to increase the amount of space available for passengers because these services are very successful. When I was on the train coming down from Ebbw Vale, people were explaining to me that the service is so popular that, at peak times, more carriages are needed. That is a general plea and we are discussing several options with Arriva Trains. One option that I think that we are prepared to take up is that perhaps we, as a Government, need to purchase or lease rolling stock. That would mean that we would not need a constant revenue stream for extra carriages. That is an opportunity. The constraint on rolling stock is a difficult issue for us as things stand at the moment. However, we are working with Arriva Trains to try to improve that.

[176] On light rail and lessons learned from others, we are in the process of evaluating a lot of other schemes. I do not have a firm view on which innovative solutions are the right ones. I think that you would expect me as Minister, and the officials within the department, to look at a whole host of opportunities and then come to a decision about what might be appropriate. Frankly, there might be different solutions for different places. We will not necessarily have the same solution everywhere because of constraints and so on and the fact that, in certain areas, certain services would be easier to deliver. We are prepared to look at a whole range of innovative schemes, of which light rail will be one. I gather that there are some issues around light rail. In certain areas, there have been problems with it, but in other areas it has worked extremely well. It is a bit of a mixed picture, I understand, but I am happy to give you an assurance that we will look at all innovative solutions, whether light rail, metro buses or guided buses. Whatever it is, we are prepared to have a look at it. Tim, would you like to deal with the criteria for the Access for All programme funding and how we might take some things forward through sustainable travel towns?

[177] **Mr James:** Of course. On sustainable travel centres, we have announced Cardiff as being the first and we will look to make further announcements on other locations. We see this as an opportunity to showcase the best available technology and the best in modern transport. As part of the Cardiff scheme, we are looking at several options, including light rail, guided buses or buses like the FTR metro in Swansea, which look like trams, but have more flexibility because they run on rubber wheels. So, those are some of the options that we are currently considering.

[178] Access for All is a Department for Transport scheme. It is predicated on footfall, so the more passengers there are at a station, the greater the likelihood of getting funding. Wales has had some success, but has not been successful every time, which is why we are developing a separate programme called NSIP—the national stations improvement programme—which is outlined in paragraphs 23 and 24 of the paper. We are using European funding to lever in additional investment to Wales in order to make accessibility improvements to other stations where Access for All would not be considered because the footfall is too low.

[179] There is a good example in what is, interestingly, called the ‘Harrington Hump’, which is an innovative solution to improve stepping distances at stations, where platforms were designed for old rolling stock with coaches and slam doors and you have to step down around 2.5 feet to get off the train. This solution is a first for Wales and will remove that physical impediment to people travelling. So, we are trying to be innovative in how we find solutions and the money in order to provide them.

[180] **Jeff Cuthbert:** So this is just a matter of time then, is it? Not too long a time, I trust.

[181] **The Deputy First Minister:** Part of the problem is that, with the Dyfi example, we put in bids three times and only succeeded on the third occasion. We do not control that budget. However, it is an interesting solution that we would like to roll out in other stations.

[182] **Gareth Jones:** Ar y nodyn gobeithiol hwnnw, diolchaf i'r Gweinidog a'i swyddogion am ymuno â ni unwaith eto. Ymddiheuraf am yr oedi cyn inni ddechrau'r sesiwn, ond yr ydym yn ddiolchgar ichi am eich presenoldeb ac am ateb ein cwestiynau a rhannu eich safbwyntiau y bore yma.

Gareth Jones: On that hopeful note, I thank the Minister and his officials for joining us once again. I apologise for the delay before we began the session, but we are grateful for you attendance and for answering our questions and for sharing your opinions this morning.

[183] Gobeithiaf y gallwn orffen ar amser. Mae'n rhaid inni nodi cofnodion y cyfarfodydd blaenorol.

I hope to conclude on time. We need to note the minutes of the previous meetings.

11.28 a.m.

Cynnig Trefniadol Procedural Motion

[184] **Gareth Jones:** Gofynnaf i rywun **Gareth Jones:** I ask someone to move the motion.

[185] **Nerys Evans:** Cynigiaf fod **Nerys Evans:** I move that

y pwyllgor yn penderfynu gwahardd y the committee resolves to exclude the public

