South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee

Cyd-bwyllgor corfforaethol De-Dwyrain Cymru

Report for:	ACTION
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	NO

For Consideration By	Regional Transport Sub-Committee
Report Title	Regional Transport Plan: Case for Change (Transport for CCR) and Scheme Prioritisation Tool
Report of	Kellie Beirne, Chief Executive Officer
Contact Details	kellie.beirne@cardiffcapitalregion.gov.uk
Date to be Considered	11July 2024
Implementation Date	11 July 2024
Affected Council Areas	All South East Wales local authority areas
Keywords / Index	Regional Transport; Regional Transport Plan; Case for Change; Criteria; Statutory Powers

Report Summary

This report provides an update to the Regional Transport Sub-Committee (RTSC) on progress against the Regional Transport Plan (RTP) and asks RTSC to recommend the draft Case for Change (Appendix 1) and draft Scheme Prioritisation Tool (Appendix 2) for approval by the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee (SEWCJC).

Recommendations

1. The RTSC is asked to:

   1.1. Note the progress made against the RTP;

   1.2. Recommend the draft Case for Change and draft Scheme Prioritisation Tool be endorsed by SEWCJC, and request that SEWCJC authorise officers to undertake consultation with relevant stakeholders and consultation bodies.

Reasons for Recommendations

2. Background & Context

2.1. Regulations made under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 impose upon Corporate Joint Committees statutory duties relating to regional economic wellbeing, spatial planning and transport planning.

2.2. The aim is to promote collaborative regional working to deliver more effective outcomes for communities by ensuring key issues, development and associated infrastructure is planned for in an integrated and comprehensive way across a wider geographical area. This represents a more joined-up approach than has previously been employed; aligned tightly to economic development ambitions and Welsh Government's (WG's) vision for a more strategic approach to both land-use and transport planning.

2.3. In respect of regional transport, the requirement for local authorities to produce a Local Transport Plan is set out in the Transport Act 2000, as amended by the Transport (Wales) Act 2006. This duty was transferred to CJCs on 30th June 2022 by the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. Statutory guidance is set out in the RTPs: guidance for CJCs. The Corporate Joint Committees (Transport Functions) (Wales) Regulations 2021 set out how CJCs should prepare RTPs.

2.4. Although the duty to produce a RTP sits with the CJCs, the duty to deliver the RTP sits with the local authorities. Despite this, it is expected that the local authorities in each CJC region will collaborate on a single collective delivery plan, a Regional Transport Delivery Plan (RTDP).

2.5. A CJC must develop policies for local authorities to implement the Wales Transport Strategy (WTS). These policies must include transport facilities and services that are:

- required to meet the needs of people living or working in the region, visiting or travelling through the region;
- required for the transportation of freight; and
- facilities and services for pedestrians.

2.6. Given this context, a paper was submitted to the SEWCJC on 9 October 2023 with a draft Implementation Plan, outlining a proposed approach to the development of the RTP. This secured funding of £225,000 from WG to support development.

2.7. The Implementation Plan highlighted the process and core components of the RTP, including a Case for Change and Scheme Prioritisation Tool. These were initially scheduled for delivery by end of quarter 1 2024-25 but, due to the pre-election period protocol, are now scheduled to be recommended for endorsement at the SEWCJC meeting on 26 July 2024.

2.8. Following discussion with WG and TfW, it has been decided that the Integrated Well-being Assessment (IWBA) submission will be aligned to the draft RTP submission milestone at end September 2024. This will allow the IWBA to be tested against the policies of the RTP.

2.9. Allied to regular meetings with transport officers, CCR has been meeting weekly with Transport for Wales (TfW), WG and other key stakeholders to ensure a collaborative approach to development of the RTP.

3. Transport for CCR: Regional Transport Plan Case for Change

3.1. The case for change is the first step in the development of the CCR RTP. It is intended to give a view of the region, our transport challenges and opportunities, and what we intend to achieve. It is tightly aligned to CCR's regional ambitions and core plans, such as the Regional Economic & Industrial Plan (REIP) (2023-28).

3.2. Transport for CCR aims to present a compelling ambition for transport in the region and how it can be used alongside new powers in strategic planning and economic wellbeing to address regional challenges around productivity, inclusivity and sustainability and thereby enhance the lives of our citizens.

3.3. It provides a view of transport as a means to achieve our strategic goals of being a Competitive, Connected and Resilient region, creating the conditions for inclusive growth and shared prosperity across the ten local authorities.

3.4. It is distinctly about our region in the national, UK and wider context. Whilst each CJC is required to produce a Case for Change, there is no template or prescribed route to do so, rather guidance on the content.

3.5. The document highlights various aspects that make our Region unique, including the productivity, inclusivity and sustainability challenges we face. Likewise, there is a recognition of inter-regional and cross-border transport dependencies.

3.6. A critical aspect of the Case for Change is identifying the transport opportunities and challenges across a number of domains, including highways; rail; public transport; active travel; air; and freight. Data and evidence are presented in each of these areas, allied to early identification of opportunities and challenges that the RTP could address.

3.7. Working in collaboration with key stakeholders, broad regional transport objectives have been drafted as a spur to engagement and consultation. A detailed engagement plan puts forward the approach to engaging with key stakeholders and, most importantly, the region's people.

3.8. If agreed by the SEWCJC, the Case for Change will be submitted to WG for formal feedback and, if appropriate, approval.

4. Scheme Prioritisation Tool (SPT)

4.1. Whilst the RTP is the overarching document that sets out the objectives for the region, the RTDP will present the list of schemes in prioritised order. A prioritisation tool is required to inform the prioritisation of schemes in the region.

4.2. To that end, TfW has been working with CCR and WG to develop a Scheme Prioritisation Tool (SPT). Several similar tools were assessed, including Metro Enhancements Framework; CCR Metro Programme Strategic Outline Case Appraisal; Active Transport Scheme; and Wales Rail Board Prioritisation.

4.3. However, the SPT needs to respond to CCR's objectives – both at a regional level and as articulated in the RTP. This requires a mix of qualitative and quantitative data, and Geographic Information System (GIS) analysis where possible.

4.4. There is also a requirement for flexibility, including the ability to use additional data or criteria where they emerge; qualitative justification and scores; and ability to use it across large scheme packages and the smaller schemes within those. The quantitative score should be used to supplement rather than dictate the overall score. A process flow for how the SPT could be used is highlighted in the Appendix 2.

4.5. The RTP objectives are the critical driver for the SPT and each of these have a number of measures that will be developed in parallel. These will relate to various data and evidence, including socio-economic data.

4.6. A number of criteria have been established for the Deliverability and Risk Appraisal, which includes environmental impact and issues; land issues, planning consent; stakeholder acceptability; and consultation.

4.7. The first iteration of the SPT has been developed and will be stress-tested to form the basis of consultation with stakeholders.

5. Forward Plan

5.1. CCR officers have updated the forward plan for delivery of the RTP and this is noted in the table below.

Action	Initial Date	Amended Dates as of June 2024
CJCs submit Implementation Plan to WG	31 October 2023	Complete
CJCs to submit RTP Case for Change	31 May 2024	28 June 2024 (draft) Formal confirmation following CJC meeting on 26 July 2024
CJCs to submit initial draft RTP, IWBA and RTDP to WG BEFORE public consultation	30 Sept 2024	30 Sept 2024
CJCs to submit final RTP, IWBA and RTDP to WG	29 March 2025	29 March 2025
WG decision on approval of RTPs	30 June 2025	30 June 2025

6. Comments of the Section 151 Officer

6.1 The costs arising from the recommendations set out in this report can be met from the CJC Functions - General Budget, approved by the CJC as part of its overall 2024/25 Revenue Budget. The General Budget includes a sum of £245,100 in respect of RTP Direct Costs. The report provides an update on progress made following the submission of the Implementation Plan to WG in 2023/24.

6.2 The CJC's budget report included details of an illustrative Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP), which set out details of how the CJC's budget requirement may need to increase over the medium term to meet its statutory duties, including the development and approval of its RTP. Detailed work on the CJC's MTFP will be undertaken later this year and included in its 2025/26 Budget, which will include details of the resources required to progress the future phases of the RTP, as set in the Forward Plan, outlined in this report, along with proposals on how this resource requirement is to be funded.

7. Comments of the Monitoring Officer

7.1 As set out in the body of the report, the requirement for local authorities to produce an LTP was transferred to CJCs on 30th June 2022 by the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021; and the Corporate Joint Committees (Transport Functions) (Wales) Regulations 2021 set out how CJCs should prepare RTPs.

7.2 CJCs have a legal duty to take account of the WG Guidance to Corporate Joint Committees on Regional Transport Plans in the preparation of RTPs. The Guidance makes clear that, before starting work on developing the RTP, the CJC should develop a 'Case for Change', setting out the aim of the RTP and core SMART objectives. As part of the Case for Change, CJCs should develop an Engagement Plan showing who will be involved in developing the RTP and how they will be involved, including details of the formal consultation process and other engagement and involvement mechanisms.

8. Staffing Implications

8.1 Funding secured from WG has ensured that sufficient resources can be in place to cover the development of the RTP.

8.2 However, to ensure the effective implementation of the RTP on an ongoing basis, the CJC will need to assign an appropriate level of staff and budget resources for future years.

9. Consultation

9.1. The implementation of the RTP process will be informed and shaped by extensive engagement with stakeholders and citizens. Extensive engagement has already taken place between a variety of groups, including local authority officer groups for economic development and regeneration, planning and transport. In particular, transport officers have been regularly and meaningfully engaged through the Regional Transport Collaboration Group.

9.2. Engagement will be driven by a continued focus on developing the evidence base and data, ensuring there is a functional feedback loop, appropriately informing the development of the RTP. Resources are currently being procured to support CCR in executing the proposed engagement with the wider stakeholder group and conducting public consultation.

9.3. The Engagement Plan in Appendix 1 identifies stakeholder groups, how and when we will engage with them, and how this will be used. Upon appointment of consultation and engagement resources, this will be further updated.

10. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

10.1 The Sub-Committee must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty arising under s.149 of the Equality Act 2010, and the need to: (1) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act; (2) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not; and (3) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not.

10.2 There are no specific equalities implications arising from this report.

11. Sustainability and Climate Considerations

11.1 There are no specific sustainability or climate change implications arising from this report. Any implications arising will be addressed as part of future reports.

12. Welsh Language Implications

12.1 In accordance with the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, and the CJC's statutory obligations, consideration has been given to the impact the recommendations made in this report may have on opportunities for people to use and promote the Welsh Language, whether the proposals treat the Welsh Language more or less favourably than the English Language, and opportunities for increasing the positive effects, or decreasing the negative effects, of the proposals on the Welsh Language. No negative impacts were identified which would prevent approval being sought to implement the proposal. In particular, consultees will be offered an equal opportunity to respond in either the Welsh or English language.

13. Well-being of Future Generations

13.1 In developing the Recommendations of this report, regard has been had to the well-being duty arising under the to the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 ('the Act'), and no negative impact has been identified.

Kellie Beirne, Chief Executive
11 July 2024

Appendices

Appendix 1: Transport for CCR: Regional Transport Plan Case for Change
Appendix 2: Scheme Prioritisation Tool

Background Papers

- Report to South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee, 'Regional Transport Plan & Strategic Development Plan', 9 October 2023
- Regional Economic and Industrial Plan, 2023-2028