

CABINET

Date of Meeting	Tuesday 19 January 2021
Report Subject	Flintshire County Council Response to Welsh Government's Transport Strategy Consultation
Cabinet Member	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Countryside
Report Author	Chief Officer - Streetscene & Transportation.
Type of Report	Strategic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Welsh Government's (WG) overarching Transport Strategy sets out the future direction for transport in Wales. The existing Transport Strategy has now expired and WG have now published their new draft Strategy entitled '*Llwybr Newydd – A New Wales Transport Strategy*', with a request for comments from any interested parties by the 25 January 2021.

The implementation of WG's revised overarching Strategy will require all Welsh authorities to revise their Joint Local Transport Plans (JLTP) in order to reflect WG's desired direction for transport over the next 5 years. This in turn will instigate the revision of the Council's own Integrated Transport Plan, which will define the Council's own aspirations for transport over the same period.

This report provides Cabinet with an overview of the content of WG's revised Transport Strategy whilst also sharing details of the Council's proposed response to the formal consultation process.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That Cabinet notes Welsh Government's revised draft Wales Transport Strategy – ' <i>Llwybr Newydd – A New Wales Transport Strategy</i> '.
2	That Cabinet consider and approve the Council's response to the formal consultation process, subject to the inclusion of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny comments from their meeting in January.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	BACKGROUND
1.01	<p>Responsibility for transport in Wales has been devolved to Welsh Government (WG) however, Welsh Councils, Transport for Wales, Network Rail, public and community transport operators and third sector organisations all have an interest and contribute to transport provisions and facilities across all modes of transport in Wales.</p>
1.02	<p>The WG Transport Strategy serves as the overarching document within the hierarchy of transport and sets the direction for transport in Wales in the coming years. Whilst the existing document is currently outdated, in November 2020, WG published the new draft Wales Transport Strategy entitled “<i>Llwybr Newydd – A New Wales Transport Strategy</i>” (WTS) which frames WG’s vision and long-term, 20-year ambitions for how transport can contribute to the wider social, environmental, economic and cultural well-being of people in Wales.</p>
1.03	<p>The WTS is a statutory document required by the Transport (Wales) Act 2006 (the Act), which places a duty on the Welsh Ministers to prepare and publish a WTS setting out its policies and how they will be discharged.</p> <p>Covering all modes of transport, the WTS sets WG’s strategic priorities and desired outcomes, providing a link to the wider priorities as well as plans at the local authority level. The Act requires the Welsh Ministers to keep the WTS under review and provides the powers to revise it from time to time.</p>
1.04	<p>The draft Strategy is currently at the consultation stage with responses being sought by WG by the 25 January 2021. A link enabling Members to view the draft strategy document has been enclosed within the accessible background documents for information.</p>
1.05	<p>Upon adoption of the revised Strategy, all Welsh authorities will have a statutory duty to revise their Joint Local Transport Plans (JLTP) in order to reflect WG’s desired direction for transport for the forthcoming 5 years. This in turn will instigate the subsequent revision of the Council’s own Integrated Transport Plan in which the Council’s own aspirations for transport will be defined.</p>
1.06	<p>WG’s revised Strategy aims to provide an accessible, sustainable transport system that is good for people and communities, good for the environment, good for the economy and places in Wales, and good for culture and the Welsh language, contributing to each of the seven national well-being goals set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.</p>
1.07	<p>In order for WG to deliver their vision and ambition for an accessible sustainable transport system, the following 5 year priorities have been defined;</p> <p><u>Priority 1:</u> Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by planning ahead for better physical and digital connectivity, more local services, more home</p>

	<p>and remote working and more active travel, so that fewer people need to use their cars on a daily basis.</p> <p>Priority 2: Grow public transport use in Wales by providing services that everyone can use, wants to use, and does use.</p> <p>Priority 3: Safe, accessible, well-maintained and managed transport infrastructure that is also future-proofed to support public transport and electrification especially walking and cycling.</p> <p>Priority 4: Making sustainable transport choices more attractive and affordable to more people and businesses, whilst respecting the fact that many people including those in rural areas or disabled people, may not have options, and</p> <p>Priority 5: Supporting innovations that help more people and businesses adopt more sustainable transport choices.</p>
1.08	<p>A selection of 'mini-plans' detailing WG's vision and priorities for each mode of travel has been detailed within section 7 of the new Strategy document. This section of the Strategy takes an integrated approach to transport by showing how individual transport sectors and modes can contribute to the shared ambitions and priorities.</p>
1.09	<p>Following the adoption of a revised Transport Strategy, many of WG's existing guidance and policy documents will need to be reviewed or updated to reflect the ambitions and priorities in Llwybr Newydd. These include TAN (Technical Advice Note) 18: Transport, which was last updated in 2007, as well as WG's guidance on biodiversity, trunk road maintenance standards, the Road Safety Framework and WG's approach to local speed limits.</p> <p>WG also propose to take forward wider reforms designed to improve transport services in Wales, including proposals to reform bus services, road user charging arrangements and practical measures to improve Active Travel, such as pavement parking and lowering local speed limits. It also proposes further devolution of transport powers to Wales.</p>
1.10	<p>Having reviewed the WTS document, it is evident that WG's approach to transport has evolved from a previously highway dominated focus to the prioritisation of greener, more sustainable modes of travel with an emphasis on Active Travel and Public Transport. This approach is strongly endorsed by the Council's own Integrated Transport Strategy which aims to provide long term sustainable transport solutions through the successful integration of all modes of transport, catering for the demands of each, whilst maintaining and promoting at its heart, a sustainable, affordable and environmentally friendly Public Transport Service, with links to all of Flintshire and the wider region.</p> <p>The Council's Strategy forms a key element of the North Wales Metro project and there is little doubt that the Council's holistic approach to integrated and progression of sustainable transport options has helped shape WG's revised Strategy and on this basis the Council welcomes the new Strategy and its amended priorities.</p>

1.11	In order to provide feedback on the current consultation, WG are inviting the views and suggestions of consultees (including local authorities) for which a specified Consultation Response Form has been included within the rear of the draft document. Having reviewed the document, the response form has subsequently been completed and has been enclosed within <u>Appendix 1</u> for information.
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2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
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2.01	Continued WG financial support to develop both the Council's own Integrated Transport Strategy and the North Wales Metro project will be necessary, if we are to achieve the aims and objectives of the new strategy.
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2.02	WG are undertaking a concurrent consultation exercise on their proposals to introduce Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs). One of the functions the new Committee will undertake is the preparation of the Regional Transport Plan that will replace the JLTP referenced in this report. The Council has prepared a response to these proposals.
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3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
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3.01	Long-term	Positive – The move to low carbon sustainable transport options (as specified within the WTS) aligns itself with the long term aspirations of The Environment (Wales) Act, The Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act & The Air Quality Standards (Wales) Regulations. The concept is also strongly endorsed within the Council's Council Plan under the priority of a 'Green Council' as well as aligning to the Council's Integrated Transport Strategy.
	Prevention	Positive – The development of sustainable transport options (as defined within the WTS) will reinforce the Council's commitment to climate change whilst also facilitating a vision for a zero carbon future as defined within WG legislation. Implementation of the required infrastructure will provide resilience to the County's highway network and also boost the Council's status as a 'key player' within the region thus reducing the risk of public abandonment in terms of tourism, residential and business growth.
	Integration	Positive – The continued development and delivery of multi-modal integrated

		transport options are key to the success of a sustainable, integrated transport network.
	Collaboration	Positive – The continual development of a fit for purpose Integrated Transport Strategy (as defined within the WTS) will enable FCC to work with local authorities across the region in order to standardise the provision of infrastructure. The nature of this approach recognises the importance of strategic cross-border movements to the local economy in terms of commuter movements, business and tourism.
	Involvement	Positive – Within the WTS, WG set out the importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals and ensuring that those people reflect the area which the body serves. As part of WG’s wider commitment to equality WG are committed to meaningful engagement, involvement and co-production. By means of the Consultation, WG are actively engaging with a wide range of people in order to understand their experiences of travel, and why they choose particular transport options.
Well-being Goals Impact		
	Prosperous Wales	Positive – The continual development of greener, sustainable transport options within a fit for purpose Integrated Transport Strategy (as defined within the WTS) will boost the Council’s status as a ‘key player’ within the region thus reducing the risk of public abandonment in terms of tourism, residential and business growth.
	Resilient Wales	Positive – Adoption of the revised WTS will support the progression of the Council’s Integrated Transport Strategy and ability to deliver required infrastructure improvement works (as defined within the Active Travel Act / Road Safety Framework) which is key to the success of a sustainable, integrated transport network and a low carbon future.
	Healthier Wales	Positive – The promotion and utilisation of active and sustainable transport modes will

		provide obvious benefits to air quality through the reduction of Co2 emissions. This will also greatly assist the Council to achieve decarbonisation targets set within Central and WG legislation.
	More Equal Wales	Positive – Improved connectivity through the implementation of required infrastructure (as defined within the WTS) will benefit tourism, residential and business growth. Health benefits obtained from improved air quality and increased levels of exercise will benefit the Council's most deprived communities, often associated with densely populated areas.
	Cohesive Wales	Positive – The visible presence of active and sustainable transport options within the County will have a positive effect on public awareness whilst displaying the Council's outward commitment to climate change.
	Vibrant Wales	Positive – The continued development and implementation of active and sustainable transport modes will improve the quality and sustainability of the natural environment whilst providing benefits to the local and regional economy in terms of tourism, residential and business growth.
	Globally Responsible Wales	Positive – The continual development of Active and sustainable transport options (as defined within the WTS) will reinforce the Council's commitment to climate change whilst also striving to achieve a zero carbon future as defined within Central and WG legislation.

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	With Cabinet Member (Streetscene and Countryside).
4.02	With Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1: Flintshire County Council's Consultation Response Form.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	Welsh Governments 'A New Wales Transport Strategy' (WTS): https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2020-12/consultation-document-llwybr-newydd.pdf
7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	Contact Officer: Stephen O Jones, Chief Officer, Streetscene and Transportation Telephone: 01352 704700 E-mail: stephen.o.jones@flintshire.gov.uk
8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS These are provided corporately on the Infonet (link) and maintained by the Executive Office
8.01	<p>(1) The Wales Transport Strategy: A statutory document required by the Transport (Wales) Act 2006 (The Act). The Act places a duty on the Welsh Ministers to prepare and publish a WTS setting out its policies and how they will be discharged.</p> <p>(2) National Transport Plan: A statutory document detailing how WG propose to deliver the outcomes set out in the Wales Transport Strategy from 2015 and beyond. The Plan includes all transport interventions financed by the WG.</p> <p>(3) North Wales Joint Local Transport Plan: A statutory document that will sit alongside the Local Development Plans and other policies and plans of each of the local authorities, once adopted. The plan sets out all of the six North Wales local authorities vision to 'remove barriers to economic growth, prosperity and well-being by delivering safe, sustainable, affordable and effective transport networks' and details this Council's specific transport interventions and projects to achieve this aim.</p> <p>(4) Flintshire County Council Integrated Transport Strategy: An integrated strategy aiming to provide long term sustainable transport solutions through the successful integration of all modes of transport, which links to all of Flintshire and the wider region.</p> <p>(5) North East Wales Metro: North East Wales Metro is an investment in all modes to deliver a modern, high quality transport system that is fundamental to achieving sustainability and climate change objectives and delivering economic growth across North Wales.</p> <p>(6) Active Travel (Wales) Act: A statutory document introduced in 2013, its purpose is to enable more people to undertake active travel for short journeys instead of using motorised vehicles where it is suitable for them to do so. An Active Travel route must be within a designated locality in a local authority area.</p>

<p>(7) Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015: This act is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. It requires public bodies listed in the Act think more about the long-term; work better with people, communities and each other; look to prevent problems and take a more joined-up approach.</p>
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Consultation Response Form

Your name: -

Organisation (if applicable): Flintshire County Council

E-mail / telephone number: stephen.o.jones@flintshire.gov.uk

Your address: Streetscene & Transportation, Alltami Depot, Mold Road, Alltami,
Mold. CH7 6LG

Q1). Do you agree with our long-term vision?

Strongly agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Agree	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>
No Opinion	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Please provide your comments:

Welsh Government's long term vision for an accessible, sustainable transport system that is good for people and communities, good for the environment, good for the economy and places in Wales, and good for culture and the Welsh language very much aligns to Flintshire County Council's future vision for transport. This approach is strongly endorsed within the Council's own Integrated Transport Plan which aims to provide long term sustainable transport solutions through the successful integration of all modes of transport, catering for the demands of each, whilst maintaining and promoting at its heart, a sustainable, affordable and environmentally friendly Public Transport Service with links to all of Flintshire and the wider region.

The stated aim should include 'affordable' to ensure the transport network remains accessible to everyone. It should also include 'in every area of the Country' to ensure the Strategy delivers in rural areas as well as in our towns and cities.

Suggested Aim 'An accessible, sustainable and affordable transport system in every area of the Country'.

Q2). Do you agree with our 20-year ambitions?

Strongly agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Agree	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>
No Opinion	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Please provide your comments:

It is evident that Welsh Government's long term ambitions for transport has evolved from a previously highway dominated focus to the prioritisation of greener, more sustainable modes of travel with an emphasis on Active Travel and Public Transport.

As above, this approach is strongly endorsed by the Council's own Integrated Transport Strategy which aims to provide long term sustainable transport solutions through the successful integration of all modes of transport (walking, cycling, bus and rail), in order to enhance access to employment and services, improve connectivity between communities and key destinations whilst minimising the impact on the environment

The Council's Strategy also forms a key element of the North Wales Metro project for which innovative projects with a clear focus on prioritising Active and sustainable modes of travel have been successfully introduced.

Flintshire County Council are also actively developing their own Electric Charging network, implementing a number of electric buses powered by 'home grown' sustainable energy sources as well as investigating the potential for the use of Hydrogen. As above, the Council's development and investment in greener transport solutions strongly supports Welsh Government's aspirations for a more equal, better connected, healthier and globally responsible Wales.

Q3A). Do you agree with our 5 year priorities?

Strongly agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Agree	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>
No Opinion	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Please provide your comments:

Flintshire County Council fully support the 5 year priorities and 'sustainable travel hierarchy' contained within the New Wales Transport Strategy with priority being given to walking and cycling, public transport and ultra-low emission vehicles.

Public Transport needs to be reliable and affordable and this should be stated in the priority statement

The development of the Council's electric charging network, implementation of electric buses and the investigation in to the use of Hydrogen, strongly support the concept of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and indicate the Council's commitment to climate change and the need to achieve a zero carbon future. A single, easy to use and consistent charging arrangement across Wales needs to be a priority.

In conjunction with the technological developments stated above, Flintshire also support the development of low emission public transport services whilst also recognising the need to provide safe, sustainable and affordable access to key transport hubs through the provision of active and sustainable travel infrastructure.

The development of key infrastructure to enable the undertaking of seamless multi-modal transport journeys is essential in providing the traveling public with a viable alternative to single vehicle car journeys, thus positively raising the profile of active and sustainable modes of travel.

Welsh Government's 'sustainable travel hierarchy' is engrained within the Council's approach to integrated transport with priority being given to the development and integration of the County's Strategic Core Cycle Network, Core Bus Network and key Rail improvements.

Q3B). Do you think that we have the right number of priorities or should these be further refined? If so, do you agree with the following three priorities?

1. We will reduce the need to travel.
2. We will encourage modal shift – when people need to travel we will encourage them to take fewer car journeys and use sustainable forms instead through supply of better services, and stimulating demand for them through behaviour change measures.

3. We will adapt our infrastructure to meet the challenge of climate change, and ensure our transport system is well-maintained, safe and accessible.

Please provide your comments:

As stated above, Flintshire County Council support the priorities put forward within the New Wales Strategy. The concept of reducing the need to travel should be promoted further with an emphasis placed on working from home wherever possible, thus negating the need to travel.

Q4). We have identified high level measures to aid us to capture our overall progress. Are these the right measures?

Yes No

Can you suggest others?

No further measures identified.

Q5). Do you think we should include specific targets for more people to travel by sustainable transport?

Yes No

Do you have any suggestions for how we should do this?

This may only be appropriate once the required infrastructure is in place as this will be the key driver for behavioral change.

Q6). We have identified a set of actions to deliver the draft strategy. Are they the right Actions?

Yes No

Are there others that you can suggest?

No further actions identified.

Q7). We have set out mini plans for each transport mode and sector. Have we identified the key issues for each of these?

Yes No

Do you have any comments on these?

In respect of Active Travel, there should be an emphasis of the development of strategic cycle links both within county and cross border rather than shorter / more localised routes with poor / irregular connectivity. By enabling the undertaking of 'whole journeys' via cycle to access both employment hubs and key services, will positively raise the profile of active travel as a 'viable alternative' to the single occupancy vehicle journeys, thus achieving the behavioral change that is required.

Consideration should also be given to the development of Quality Bus Partnerships (QBP) across the identified core bus network in order to encourage patronage growth through the provision of a high-quality public transport service along key transport / movement corridors. This will enable the successful integration of local bus services with the strategic bus network and national rail services at key hubs through the provision of integrated timetables and integrated ticketing to key destinations.

A standardised approach to electric vehicle charging infrastructure also needs to be prioritised in order to stimulate electric vehicle uptake and to encourage cross boundary movements in terms of tourism, leisure and business. Initiatives should also be explored to encourage the uptake of electric vehicles for taxi operators and private hire vehicles.

Q8). We have shown how transport will use the 5 ways of working set out in the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. Do you agree with this approach?

Yes No

Do you have any comments?

As stated above, the ideology of WG's New Wales Transport Strategy is deeply rooted within Flintshire County Council's Integrated Transport Plan which is also built upon the 5 ways of working set out in the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Q9). If charges for road use were to be introduced to help meet the goals for cleaner air, a safe climate and better health, how can this be done in a way that is fair for everyone?

Yes

No

Do you have any comments on these?

This question needs to be clear as to whether it is referring to charging for road use or specifically car usage?

If the purpose of this question is relating to road usage in the wider context, then any charges will of course have a detrimental effect on the affordability and viability of public transport.

Should the question be relating to specifically car usage, then the introduction of charging would only be ethical provided that the required infrastructure is in place to ensure there are viable alternatives to meet the demands of public need. If not, then this could exacerbate instances of social deprivation with car travel only available to benefit the wealthy in society.

Question on the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal

We have also published an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA). The aim of this is to ensure that the Wales transport strategy has considered the impact of transport on the environment, health, equalities, Welsh language, rural issues, children and young people, economic development as well as wider sustainability issues, within the context of the national well-being goals in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Q10A: Do you think the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal Report identifies the most important sustainability effects for transport?

Yes

No

Do you have any comments on these?

No further comments.

Q10B: Are there any gaps?

No gaps identified.

Q10C: Do you have any comments on the findings of the report?

No further comments.

Question A: We are under a duty to consider the effects of our policy decisions on the Welsh language, under the requirements of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

We would like to know your views on the effects that draft strategy would have on the Welsh language, specifically on opportunities for people to use Welsh and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English.

What effects do you think there would be? How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated

Flintshire County Council endorse the approach of The New Wales Transport Strategy which positively promotes the use of the Welsh Language. Ensuring the equal usage of Welsh and English for purposes of transport information and digital services will effectively promote the Welsh language and culture without being of detriment to non-Welsh speakers.

Question B: Please also explain how you believe the draft strategy could be formulated or changed so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities

As above.

for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favorably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favorably than the English language.

Question C: We have a duty to consider the impact of our policies on people or groups who share protected characteristics.

Do you think this draft strategy will deliver positive benefits for people who share protected characteristics? If so, which are the most important?

Yes, the effective delivery of an accessible, sustainable transport system that is good for people and communities, good for the environment, good for the economy and places in Wales, and good for culture and the Welsh language will by definition provide positive benefits for people who share protected characteristics.

Question D: Do you think the draft Strategy could have a negative impact on some people or groups who share protected characteristics? If so, what are they and how can we prevent those?

None identified.

Question E: Are there any further comments that you would like to make on Llwybr Newydd: a new Wales transport strategy?

Please enter here:

No further comments.

Responses to consultations are likely to be made public, on the internet or in a report. If you would prefer your response to remain anonymous, please tick here: