



- 2.06 The Taith Board agreed to provide a regional response to the Draft NTP which was approved at the Strategic Directors Group meeting on the 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2015. **(Appendix 3)**
- 2.07 In addition to the regional response Flintshire County Council has prepared an individual County response, given its geographical position as one of the gateway authorities to North Wales. **(Appendix 2)** The response details the Councils view on the national transport priorities required to address the increasing local demands brought about by large scale development and the future projected economic growth in the County and the North Wales region.

### **3.00 CONSIDERATIONS**

- 3.01 This is a summary of the key issues and transport priorities Flintshire detailed in its consultation response.
- 3.02 The Draft NTP is supported in general however the Interventions to address network resilience in Flintshire and North East Wales in particular, do not carry enough significant national weighting, given that there are approximately 32,000 more vehicles using the key cross border roads in North East Wales than the core crossings in South East Wales.
- 3.03 Concerns were raised that if the NTP does not prioritise essential schemes for the Trunk Road Network gateway into North Wales, in order to ease capacity issues and safeguard the resilience of the network, this could impact on the regional, national and European economies.
- 3.04 It was noted that the Plan makes little reference to key findings from several studies undertaken for North East Wales and the consultation response highlights North Wales as representing 22% of the economy of Wales which is worth £10.4billion per annum and also refers to the projected employment growth for the area over the next 20 years at 45 - 55,000 jobs.
- 3.05 The consultation response details the issues facing Flintshire and North Wales if schemes are not included and prioritised in the 'short term' timescale.
- 3.06 The following specific comments have also been made:
- 1) A request to make specific reference to the alternative routing for the North Wales gateway i.e. Linking the A548 Dee Crossing to the A55 within the Interventions.
  - 2) To support an intervention to provide an upgraded interchange at Broughton to serve Broughton Retail Park and Airbus, providing

access to the Trunk Road Network.

3) Provide support to prioritise the proposed electrification of the North Wales coastal line to Holyhead along with any commitment given to the electrification of the Chester to Manchester line. Failure to achieve this would create an adverse effect for Flintshire as the neighbouring authority to Chester, with significant large commuter traffic journeying by private car on key roads to access the new high speed rail services which would become available from Chester, would result in an additional strain on the resilience of the local network.

4) A request to include the proposal for a Shotton Rail Chord as a priority in the Interventions. Shotton Rail Chord would allow freight paths to meet the needs of the whole of North Wales for the foreseeable future.

5) The proposal to develop a scheme for improvements to the A494/A55/A548 Deeside Corridor' with a short / medium term priority needs to be amended to place this scheme in the 'short term' timescale to meet future demand as a result in projected growth in the local economy. It would also provide some early mitigation works against the risk of failure to this key element of the network

6) The consultation response also seeks further clarification and support to the potential trunking of the A548.

### 3.07 **Access**

The plan recommends improving access to the public transport network to access employment and services and the need to focus on improving connectivity and accessibility between communities and key employment centres – particularly where both level of access and car ownership levels are low. In rural Flintshire poor access to public transport is generally mitigated by good access to a car. However this should not disguise the fact that there are some groups of the rural population that do not benefit from access to a car and the Plan needs to recognise this.

### 3.08 **Bus and Community Transport**

Flintshire CC supports the commitment in the plan to continue funding Bus and Community Transport Schemes and supports the priorities to achieve this and points out that future schemes should be developed on the basis of sound evidence and a proven need and a 'one size fits all' approach is not always appropriate for both urban and rural communities. The consultation response seeks the following in the NTP:

1) That the NTP takes into consideration the findings of a consultation carried out with service users in 2013/2014 through bus users' surgeries by FCC. The vast majority of over 60 concessionary pass

holders indicated that they would be prepared to either pay for their passes (i.e. one-off fee) or pay a small fee for their journeys (e.g. flat rate single fare).

2) That the NTP considers a review of the eligibility criteria or conditions of pass usage for concessionary Bus Passes.

3) That consideration be given to extending the age limit of the Youth Concessionary Fare Scheme for 16 and 17 year olds to include 18 year olds.

4) Clarity on whether any new services, enhanced services or taking over any existing routes will be part of the implementation of greater central management of TrawsCymru long distance bus services

3.09 The consultation response also supports:

1) Intervention BC T7 the production of an All Wales Bus Quality Standards for bus and community transport services in partnership with Local Authorities, operators and users.

2) The Plan's proposal to play a more prominent role in the planning and delivery of longer distance bus services across Wales through Quality Bus Partnership Schemes

3) The Plan's value of Community Transport services in terms of providing affordable and accessible transport for more socially or geographically isolated people

### 3.10 **Sustainable Transport Initiatives and Communities First**

The Plan makes a passing reference to Communities First but fails to recognise the significance of the links between transport and tackling poverty. A fuller assessment of transport barriers, particularly to areas of employment and learning, facing the residents of Communities First areas is recommended.

### 3.11 **Other**

Flintshire County Council received a number of responses from residents on the Draft Joint North Wales Local Transport Plan which relate to National Transport issues and as such have been included as bullet points in the response.

## 4.00 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.01 That Cabinet note Flintshire County Council's response to the Draft National Transport Plan.

## **5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.01 None

## **6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

6.01 None

## **7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

7.01 An improved and efficient transport network will have a positive effect on the environment

## **8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

8.01 Subject to individual assessment on specific schemes

## **9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.01 None

## **10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

10.01 None

## **11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

11.01 Highways Policy has consulted with Transportation, Planning and Regeneration service areas and their responses have been amalgamated together with the response by Highways Policy in the attached Draft National Transport Plan response questionnaire.

11.02 A press release was also issued in the Chester Chronicle on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> January, inviting members of the public to submit any comments for inclusion with Flintshire County Council's response by 6<sup>th</sup> February, 2015. Flintshire County Council did not receive any responses by the deadline date. A response was received on the 11<sup>th</sup> February, and is attached in the **Appendix 4**.

11.03 Flintshire County Council held a consultation event on the 15<sup>th</sup> December 2014 at Mold Town Hall on the Draft Joint Local Transport Plan. In addition to comments received on the day a press release was issued inviting comments by the closing date 5<sup>th</sup> January, 2015. A number of responses were received which related to issues appertaining to the National Transport Plan. Those comments were amalgamated and put into bullet points and have been added to Flintshire's formal response.

## **12.00 APPENDICES**

- 12.01 Draft National Transport Plan
- 12.02 Flintshire County Council's response
- 12.03 Taith Board Regional response
- 12.04 Response from member of the Public to Flintshire's press release on the consultation.

### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

**Contact Officer:** Steve Jones  
**Telephone:** 01352 704700  
**Email:** [Stephen.o.jones@flintshire.gov.uk](mailto:Stephen.o.jones@flintshire.gov.uk)