



## SWWITCH JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING

The Beacon – Centre for Enterprise – Dafen, Llanelli, SA14 8LQ

Friday 28th March 2014 at 1330hrs

### AGENDA

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# Agenda Item 2a

## Minutes of the Meeting of the SWWITCH Joint Committee held at Llanelli Town Hall, Carmarthenshire - Friday 6 December 2013

**PRESENT:** Councillor Colin Evans (Chair) (Carmarthenshire County Council)  
presided

### **Voting Councillors:**

Robert Lewis - Pembrokeshire County Council  
Sandra Miller - Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council  
Paul Lloyd (Pro tem) - City and County of Swansea

### **Non-voting Councillors:**

Paul Meara - City and County of Swansea

### **Officers:**

Steve Pilliner - Carmarthenshire County Council  
Simon Charles - Carmarthenshire County Council  
John Flower - Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council  
Brian Biscoe - Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council  
Cath Swain - City and County of Swansea  
Ben George - City and County of Swansea  
Ceri Rees - Pembrokeshire County Council  
Sue Miles - SWWITCH Co-ordinator  
Jeremy Parkhouse - City and County of Swansea

### **Partners:**

Justin Davies - First Cymru Buses Ltd  
Margaret Everson - Bus Users UK Cymru  
Barclay Davies - Bus Users UK Cymru

### **Also present:**

Hatti Woakes (observer) - North Pembrokeshire Transport Forum  
Craig Bell - AECOM  
Ian Mobbs - AECOM

## 1. **WELCOME**

The Chair welcomed all attendees to Llanelli Town Hall and commenced proceedings.

## 2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor June Burtonshaw (City and County of Swansea), Councillor Ted Latham (Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council), Councillor David Williams (Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council), Richard Workman (Carmarthenshire County Council), Ian Westley (Pembrokeshire County Council), John Pockett (CPT and First Great Western), Mike Vaughan (Arriva Trains Wales), Tim Peppin (WLGA), David Beer (Passenger Focus), Betsan Caldwell (CTA Cymru), Lyndsey Curtis (Sustrans) and Chris Vinestock (City and County of Swansea).

3. **MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the SWWITCH Joint Committee Meeting held on 6 September 2013 and the Special SWWITCH Joint Committee Meeting held on 8 November 2013 be agreed as correct records.

4. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

There were none.

5. **PRESENTATION - SWWITCH RAIL STRATEGY**

Ian Mobbs and Craig Bell of AECOM provided a detailed presentation and responded to questions on the SWWITCH Rail Strategy. Details included in the presentation were as follows:

- Background to the Study.
- Current Problems and Issues - Timetable Characteristics/ Supplementary Topics/Freight.
- Understanding Future Growth.
- GWML Electrification - Understanding the Impact.
- Short Term Interventions (to 2018).
- Medium Term Interventions (2018-23) - Timetable Framework.
- Long term interventions (2023 onwards).
- Aspirational but Achievable Strategy.

Discussions followed in relation to the content of the presentation and questions were responded to accordingly.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (1) the Rail Strategy be approved;
- (2) the final strategy be circulated to all relevant parties.

6. **CITY REGIONS AND THE FUTURE ROLE OF SWWITCH**

John Flower, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council reported that since the last meeting there had been two major events associated with the Swansea Bay City Region. These including the Conference on Highlighting the Growth Potential of the City Region on Friday 18 October 2013 and a workshop on the Development and Prioritisation of Projects and Actions for the Swansea Bay City Region held on 3 December 2013. Membership of the City Region Board was also provided and some of the issues surrounding governance of the Board were highlighted.

The possible future of SWWITCH and potential options available were discussed. It was added that the WLGA had organised a meeting with the Minister, Edwina Hart AM and two Council Leaders from each region. The meeting had been scheduled for 20 January 2014 and Councillors Jamie Adams (Pembrokeshire

County Council) and Ali Thomas (Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council) will represent the SWWITCH Region. It was proposed that SWWITCH prepare a briefing note for the two Leaders prior to their attendance at the meeting.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (1) the continuing development of the Swansea Bay City Region be noted and supported;
- (2) a briefing note be prepared for the Leaders attending the ministerial meeting on 20 January 2014;
- (3) a further report on the future options for SWWITCH be discussed at the next Joint Committee meeting, by which time there should be more clarity on the City Regions Governance Structure.

## 7. **BUS SERVICES FUNDING REVIEW AND REGIONAL NETWORK STRATEGY**

Steve Pilliner, Carmarthenshire County Council provided an update on the 2013/14 Regional Transport Services Grant distribution and the progress of the final draft Regional Network Strategy. He also provided information on changes to All Wales Concessionary Fare Scheme Reimbursement of Bus Operators from April 2014 onwards.

It was explained that SWWITCH had received the third tranche of Regional Transport Services Grant (RTSG) from the Welsh Government in October and the payment of £959,378 was equivalent to 18.75% of the total annual SWWITCH allocation. The payment had enabled SWWITCH to meet commitments to bus operators to make third quarter payments by the middle of November 2013. It was added that all payments were now based on actual mileage (including reductions for lost mileage where applicable) and all except one operator had submitted claims and invoices for Quarter 3 funding. Community transport organisations had been slower to claim funding and some were yet to claim funding due from Quarter 2 (July-September 2013) and only half of operators had claimed the Quarter 3 funding to date.

A full time (fixed term) Regional Transport Support Grant Officer had been appointed and the post holder will be to help ensure that RTSG claims are closely monitored and kept up to date.

It was confirmed that all four Councils had approved the Regional Network Strategy thus allowing the SWWITCH adoption of the Regional Network Strategy in time for submission to the Welsh Government by 17 January 2014.

It was outlined that there was likely to be a significant reduction in the reimbursement paid to bus operators with regards to the All Wales Concessionary Fare Scheme. Discussions between the Welsh Government, Bus Operators and consortia are ongoing and at the time papers were written it appeared that the modifying factor for reimbursements to operators would be moving from 73.6% to 56.3%. In practice it would result in a reduction of approximately £17m

in the concessionary fares reimbursement across Wales from the next financial year which will have a significant impact on the bus network of Wales. However, it does appear as if there may be some flexibility and discussions are still continuing.

Members discussed the information contained within the report and expressed concern, particularly in relation to the All Wales Concessionary Fare Scheme proposals.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (1) the ongoing progress in the management of the Regional Transport Services Grant Funding be noted;
- (2) the SWWITCH Regional Network Strategy is adopted and submitted to the Welsh Government by 17 January 2014;
- (3) the reduction in the overall concessionary fare reimbursement rate and the potential impact on the bus network in SWWITCH be noted;
- (4) a further report be made to the next scheduled Joint Committee Meeting.

## 8. **SWWITCH WALKING AND CYCLING GROUP**

Simon Charles, Carmarthenshire County Council provided an update report on the work of the SWWITCH Walking and Cycling Group. It was stated that the quick wins proposed in the outline business case and summarised at Appendix A of the report were achieved, except to note that the mapping of processes for safer routes were superseded by the project terms being broadened to focus on walking and cycling in the round.

Outcomes achieved on the quick wins were detailed as follows:

- Regional map of walking and cycling routes had been produced.
- Support was provided by the Group to the 2013/14 SWWITCH Delivery Plan.
- The Group were able to advise on contribution towards consultations on the Active Travel Bill followed by proposals for a SWWITCH Prioritisation Process were being developed.
- A view on baseline data had been produced.
- A view on standards had been taken, with recommendations provided.

It was added that the Group had learned valuable lessons from cross-boundary working and collaboration and had produced a number of recommendations on longer term improvements. It was proposed that in order to recognise the work of the Group to date, that it be formally accepted as a sub-group within the "SWWITCH family".

**RESOLVED** that:

- (1) the work of the Walking and Cycling Group to date be noted and the recommendations of the Walking and Cycling Group report be supported;
- (2) a SWWITCH Walking and Cycling Group be formally established.

## 9. **SWWITCH PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT**

Sue Miles reported on the progress on spend and delivery of the Regional Transport Consortia Grant to date and looked at forward planning for the 2014/15 financial year. SWWITCH expenditure to 31 October 2013 was provided at Table 1 of the report and it was outlined that the SWWITCH Programme Management Group had confidence that full spend and delivery as proposed will be achieved and the Programme Management Group continued to meet monthly in order to ensure ongoing scrutiny of the Regional Programme. The Programme Management Group also monitors progress of projects flagged as “amber” or “red” by Programme Managers in each Council which provides help and support on specific issues and also minimises the risk to the overall programme.

The new procedures introduced for virement by the Welsh Government were outlined and to date three requests for virement from SWWITCH had been forwarded to the Minister for approval and these were provided at Table 2 of the report.

It was explained that to date no confirmation from Welsh Government had been received as to whether there is going to be any Regional Transport Consortia Grant allocation for the next financial year and if there is, when guidance and indicative allocations might be shared with consortia. At the last All Wales Programme Management Group Meeting in October 2013, Welsh Government officials could give no indication on either issue and neither could they share with Consortia when they might be able to share any intelligence on proposals for 2014/15.

SWWITCH Management Group has therefore charged the Programme Management Group with proposing a delivery plan programme for 2014/15 based on the City Regions principle, as approved at last Joint Committee Meeting. Work is therefore ongoing and the assumption that the likely budget for the region will be approximately £5m to £6m in total (across all elements) and also that there may be some ring-fencing for Active Travel Bill schemes, but not to the same extent as for the current financial year, where 30% was ring-fenced. As deadlines for submission were likely to be prior to the next Joint Committee Meeting, it was proposed that the final decision on the projects to be included in the 2014/15 Delivery Plan be delegated to the SWWITCH Management Group.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (1) progress made to date on delivering the 2013/14 Delivery Plan be noted;
- (2) the virements proposed by the Programme Management Group be approved;
- (3) responsibility to approve the 2014/15 Delivery Plan be delegated to SWWITCH Management Group.

## 10. **CONSULTATIONS**

Ceri Rees, Pembrokeshire County Council reported that since the last Joint Committee Meeting a number of responses had been approved by the Management Group, submitted on behalf of the region.

The following consultations had been responded to since September 2013:

- Wales Road Casualty Reduction Partnership.
- Draft Noise Action Plan for Wales.
- Llandeilo Air Quality Management Area Draft Action Plan.

Details of these responses were provided at Appendices A to C of the report.

Furthermore, it was reported that the Welsh Government is currently consulting on the M4 corridor around Newport and a copy of the consultation leaflet was provided at Appendix D of the report. This is the second consultation on the M4 this year and SWWITCH responded to the original consultation in July 2012 and a copy was provided at Appendix E of the report.

The SWWITCH Officer Working Group had prepared a draft response on the M4 corridor consultation for consideration by Joint Committee and was provided at Appendix F of the report.

Furthermore, a further consultation on where the Active Travel Bill will apply in Wales was issued in November 2013. The consultation document was provided at Appendix G of the report with a closing date of 28 January 2014. It was proposed that Joint Committee delegates responsibility to the Management Group to approve a response to this consultation.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (1) the responses to consultations submitted on behalf of SWWITCH be noted and endorsed;
- (2) a response to the M4 consultation be approved;
- (3) responsibility be delegated to SWWITCH Management Group to approve a response the Active Travel consultation.

## 11. **PARTNER UPDATES**

Joint Committee received updates from the following partner organisations:

- Arriva Trains Wales.
- Welsh Local Government Association.
- Passenger Focus.
- Bus Users Cymru.
- First Cymru Buses.
- First Great Western.

12. **FORWARD MEETING DATES**

**RESOLVED** that the forward meeting dates by approved as follows:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Lead Authority</b>	<b>Venue</b>
Friday 28 March 2014	Carmarthenshire County Council	Llanelli Town Hall
Friday 13 June 2014	Carmarthenshire County Council / City and County of Swansea	To be confirmed
Friday 12 September 2014	City and County of Swansea	To be confirmed
Friday 12 December 2014	City and County of Swansea	To be confirmed
Friday 27 March 2015	City and County of Swansea	To be confirmed
Friday 12 June 2015	City and County of Swansea / Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council	To be confirmed

13. **SWWITCH NEWSLETTER**

The SWWITCH Newsletter for December 2013 was provided for information.

14. **SWWITCH ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT**

The SWWITCH Annual Progress Report 2012/13 was provided for information.

15. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**Date, time and venue for next meeting**

**RESOLVED** that the next Joint Committee Meeting be scheduled for 1.30 p.m. on Friday 28 March 2014 at Llanelli Town Hall, Llanelli, Carmarthenshire.

**PTI Cymru Limited**

It was reported that proposals had been circulated regarding a change in the corporate structure for PTI Cymru Limited.

**Bus Users UK Cymru**

Margaret Everson reported that Bus Users UK Cymru would be launching their awards early in the new year and categories will be circulated.

**SWWITCH Sub-Committee**

It was proposed that a SWWITCH Sub-Committee be formulated to discuss the SWWITCH Capital and Revenue Funding. Membership would include elected



Members from each Authority and Officers from each Authority, and the Sub-Group would meet immediately following closure of the Joint Committee Meeting.

**RESOLVED** that the SWWITCH Sub-Committee be formulated as proposed.

The meeting ended at 3.30 p.m.

**CHAIR**

S: SWWITCH Joint Committee - 6 December 2013  
(JEP/KL)

# Agenda Item 2b

## CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SWITCH SUB-COMMITTEE

#### HELD AT LLANELLI TOWN HALL ON FRIDAY 6 DECEMBER 2013 AT 3.30 P.M.

#### **PRESENT:**

#### **Voting Councillors:**

Colin Evans - Carmarthenshire County Council  
Robert Lewis - Pembrokeshire County Council  
Sandra Miller - Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council  
Paul Lloyd (pro-tem) - City and County of Swansea

#### **Non-voting Councillors:**

Paul Meara - City and County of Swansea

#### **Officers:**

John Flower - Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council  
Brian Biscoe - Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council  
Simon Charles - Carmarthenshire County Council  
Ceri Rees - Pembrokeshire County Council  
Cath Swain - City and County of Swansea  
Ben George - City and County of Swansea  
Jeremy Parkhouse - City and County of Swansea

#### 1. **ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR**

**RESOLVED** that the Chair and Vice-Chair of the SWITCH Joint Committee be elected Chair and Vice-Chair of the Sub-Committee.

(COUNCILLOR COLIN EVANS PRESIDED)

#### 2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Ian Westley and Richard Workman.

#### 3. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

The Sub-Committee were requested to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the items of business identified in the recommendations to the report on the grounds that it involved the likely

Minutes of the Meeting of the SWWITCH Sub-Committee  
(06.12.2013) Cont'd

disclosure of exempt information as set out in the Exclusion Paragraph of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007 relevant to the items of business set out in the report.

The Sub-Committee considered the Public Interest Test in deciding whether to exclude the public from the meeting for the items of business where the Public Interest Test was relevant as set out in the report.

It was **RESOLVED** that the public be excluded for the following items of business.

**(CLOSED SESSION)**

4. **SWWITCH CAPITAL AND REVENUE FUNDING**

The Sub-Committee were presented with a report regarding SWWITCH Capital and Revenue Funding.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (1) the utilisation of the Capital Receipts for the projects identified in Table 2 of the report be approved;
- (2) the Authority to determine the best way to use the finite revenue income over the next year be delegated to the SWWITCH Management Group;
- (3) the Minutes of the Sub-Committee be reported to the next scheduled SWWITCH Joint Committee Meeting in March 2014.

The meeting ended at 3.55 p.m.

**CHAIR**

## **Matters Arising from Last Meeting**

### **ITEM 5 – SWWITCH RAIL STRATEGY**

Joint Committee resolved that the approved strategy be circulated to relevant parties. As well as each individual Local Authority receiving hard and electronic copies of the strategy, copies have been forwarded to:

- Welsh Government
- Network Rail
- Passenger Focus
- Arriva Trains Wales
- First Great Western

The Executive Summary is also available from the SWWITCH website.

### **ITEM 6 - CITY REGIONS AND THE ROLE OF SWWITCH**

Joint Committee resolved that a briefing note be prepared for Leaders attending the Ministerial meeting planned for 20<sup>th</sup> January 2014. The Briefing note was completed and forwarded, however, early in January the Minister's office cancelled the meeting.

### **ITEM 10 – CONSULTATIONS**

Joint Committee resolved that the draft response to the M4 consultation be approved and submitted. That action was completed prior to the closing date for responses.

Joint Committee also delegated to Management Group responsibility to approve a response to the Active Travel consultation. That action was completed and a copy of the SWWITCH response as submitted is shown overleaf.

**SWWITCH Response to Active Travel consultation**

**Consultation Response Form**

Your Name: Sue Miles – SWWITCH Co-ordinator

Organisation (if applicable): SWWITCH

Email/telephone number: [sue.miles@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:sue.miles@swansea.gov.uk) 01792 637760

Your address: Room 202, Penllergaer Civic Centre, Penllergaer, Swansea, SA4 9GJ

**Q1. Do you agree that the Direction should list designated localities by name, or should the Direction specify a description of a designated locality?**

SWWITCH agrees that the Direction listing designation of localities by name is simple and transparent. However, by its very nature it is also prescriptive, and this could introduce some inflexibility into dealing with Active Travel issues, especially, as it is noted in the consultation document, that there had already been some concerns around smaller settlements across Wales that are considerably below the population threshold, but are located very near to a larger settlement. As is noted, these settlements would benefit from improved active travel links between them and the larger settlement, enabling better access to services and facilities.

It is also noted that WG have attempted to deal with this flaw by a review of the 2011 census data, allowing WG to propose resolving the difficulty by the designation of settlements that are located very near to a larger settlement. Notwithstanding this, there still appear to be some potential anomalies, such as some settlements not identified (e.g.: in Pembrokeshire - Johnston, St Davids, & Crymych).

In addition, links with potential major employment sites are not identified. In some cases these can provide for significant "populations" which might benefit Active Travel measures. Examples include: Energy sites in West Wales, or Swansea University's Bay Campus.

The designation of localities by name may also fail to take into account some seasonal variations, such as the impact of additional population on tourist areas during holiday periods; the latter is not necessarily about recreational cycling, but the encouragement of workers and visitors to use Active Travel measures when accessing centres of recreation.

**Q2. If a description is more appropriate, what description should be used?**

SWWITCH suggests that the use of designation by name is retained, but that LAs have the flexibility to include communities which fall below the threshold and are not named, or to exclude communities which are named, where there is an informed and auditable decision process justifying that decision.

This could be managed by regional W&C groups and managed at a national level by an All Wales W&C group.

**Q3. Do you agree that the designated localities listed in Annex 1 are the best ones to sue? Are there any that should be left out of the Direction, or more that should be added?**

As noted earlier, the designated localities are restricted strictly to individual communities, and do not take into account other potential major generators of Active Travel usage, such as major employment sites which may be more remote from the communities identified. SWWITCH therefore consider it important that the Direction takes into consideration those people who wish to commute work and the integrated network should stretch as far as people are willing to make journeys: in terms of commuting this will clearly include centres of employment and not just settlements.

For example, Swansea / NPT are close to introducing the Swansea Bay Integrated Commuter Route initiative. This provides a map that aims to identify routes for anyone living within a broad area likely to want to access towns and employment sites rather than any particular named community above a certain size.

This approach is trans-boundary, so not affected by administrative lines, is supported by the local community and other stakeholders, so has a better chance of being useful

**Q4. We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them:**

# Agenda Item 3

## THE FUTURE OF SWWITCH AND THE SWANSEA BAY CITY REGION

### 1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Joint Committee has debated the future of SWWITCH over the last few meetings, in the context of both the Minister's stated views on the value of the consortia and also the development and emergence of the Swansea Bay City Region Board as a focus for delivering change in South West Wales.
- 1.2 SWWITCH has been supportive of the reasons for, and the development of, the City Region and has taken action in the last six months to more closely align the Regional Transport Plan programme with the City Region and the Economic Regeneration Strategy that underpins it.
- 1.3 This paper provides an update of actions since the last meeting and seeks Members views on an appropriate way forward.

### 2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 On 17<sup>th</sup> January 2014, the Minister wrote to the Chairs of each transport consortium and to All Council Leaders and also issued a statement on the future of transport planning in Wales. A copy of the Minister's letter to the SWWITCH Chair and her statement are attached as Appendix A and B for information.
- 2.2 In summary, the Minister confirmed that:
  - Regional Transport Consortia Grant (capital funding for RTP projects) would cease and be replaced by new Local Transport Fund and Road Safety Grant funding which would be paid via Local Authorities
  - Regional Transport Services Grant (revenue funding for bus and community transport support) would cease and be replaced by Bus Services Support Grant which would be paid via Local Authorities
  - Revenue funding for consortium staff (with the exception of the Travel Plan Co-ordinator post which is retained) will cease at the end of March 2014
  - Regional consortia are no longer required to oversee or co-ordinate funded projects or services
  - The City Region Boards (where they exist) will be asked to advise the Minister on priorities in their areas
  - A new National Transport Plan (NTP) will be published by the end of March 2015 and the City Region Board will be asked to highlight priorities in their areas for the NTP and to assist the Minister in her review of further improvements to transport planning and delivery
  - Local transport Authorities will be issued with guidance on meeting their statutory duty in relation to transport planning (Local Transport Plans)
- 2.3 SWWITCH Directors held an emergency meeting within a week of the announcements to plan a way forward, especially in view of the staffing implications implicit in the withdrawal of revenue funding.

- 2.4 It was seen as a priority by all four Directors to continue work collectively on the bus funding and so the Regional Bus Funding Officer post was maintained (see also Item 4).
- 2.5 The Chair responded to the Minister on 28<sup>th</sup> January and confirmed the SWWITCH support for, and willingness to work with, the City Region Board and in particular in terms of providing advice on transport issues. A copy of the chair's letter is attached as Appendix C.
- 2.6 The letter also confirmed the intention to continue to work together on bus funding. On a more practical note the letter sought some additional funding in recognition of the fact that insufficient notice had been given of the change of funding regimes to allow the affected staff to be given notice before the end of April, which in effect meant costs accruing back to the four Councils for pay and redundancy payments.
- 2.7 With the exception of the Travel Plan Co-ordinator and the Regional Bus Officer the remainder of the SWWITCH team were given formal notice.

### **3.0 CHANGES IN LAST TWO MONTHS**

- 3.1 At the Swansea Bay City Region Board meeting on 30th January 2014, Richard Workman as Lead Chief Officer for SWWITCH presented a paper on future arrangements for transport in the City Region. This paper set out:
  - The changes to the organisation of strategic transport announced by the Minister
  - The Minister's expectation that it would be the City Region Board which would determine transport priorities and provide advice on transport issues
  - The SWWITCH alignment with the City Region agenda
  - The draft 2014/15 transport programme, based on City Region principles
  - An offer of pump priming to provide a senior level transport resource to the Board for a year to facilitate the discussion on options, determination of priorities and the development of a programme for the future
- 3.2 The Board endorsed the report including the draft 2014/15 programme and agreed to the future arrangements proposed. The notice served on the SWWITCH Co-ordinator was rescinded and the Co-ordinator will provide advice on strategic transport issues to the City Region from 1<sup>st</sup> April.
- 3.3 The Co-ordinator prepared a paper (for information) to the 25<sup>th</sup> March City Region Board meeting providing some background to strategic transport decision making to date and outlining how the Board could seek to influence decisions in the future. A verbal update will be provided to Joint Committee.
- 3.4 At SWWITCH Management Group at the end of February there was an outline discussion about the practical impacts of change to the role of the consortium. This included:
  - SWWITCH Joint Committee
  - SWWITCH Officer level Groups

- Name, logo and branding

3.5 It is for Joint Committee to determine a way forward and some background and detail in respect of each of the above is set out in the following sections.

#### **4.0 SWWITCH JOINT COMMITTEE**

4.1 Joint Committee was formed in 2005 and its powers and responsibilities are set out in a Legal Agreement signed by each of the Authorities. The Committee directed the development of the statutory Regional Transport Plan which has provided the strategic framework for transport development and delivery for the last five years.

4.2 Joint Committee was also formed at a time when SWWITCH was receiving annual allocations. The allocation (used to fund staff and commissions) was paid to Swansea as host financial Authority. Since 2010/11 SWWITCH has also received capital allocation (again paid via Swansea) from the Regional Transport Consortia Grant funding. In the 2013/14 year SWWITCH has received bus revenue funding for the region.

4.3 As the Minister has now confirmed that no funding will come via the consortia from 31<sup>st</sup> March and responsibilities for future plan development will rest with individual Authorities (Local Transport Plans) or be based on advice on strategic transport issues from the City Region Boards (National Transport Plan) the issue now is whether there is a function for the Joint Committee.

4.4 There are three potential options for Joint Committee to consider as follows:

Option One - Carry on meeting as a formal Joint Committee, but with no decision making powers or budget.

Option Two – continue quarterly or twice yearly meetings but as a Regional Transport Forum, acting as a conduit for the sharing of information and best practice to/from Local Authorities and the City Region Board. This would also provide an ongoing platform for transport organisations to share forward proposals and business plans with the region.

Option Three -Agree to disband the and cease meetings altogether

4.5 Agreement to pursue Option 2 or 3 will have implications on the SWWITCH Legal Agreement. It is likely such proposals would need to be placed before each Individual Authority to seek approval to end the agreement and to share any joint assets that exist.

#### **5.0 SWWITCH OFFICER LEVEL GROUPS**

5.1 Supporting Joint Committee has always been the SWWITCH Management Group (Directors with transport responsibilities and transport strategy Officers from each Authority) and the SWWITCH Officer Working Group (transport strategy Officers from each Authority). It is suggested these Officer level groups are retained as



follows:

- Regional Transport Directors Group
- Regional Transport Planning Group

But that it is for Directors to determine the frequency of the meetings and changes necessary to meet needs as they arise.

5.2 A number of other Groups have developed over the years to address more specific issues and needs. These include:

- Programme Management Group
- Regional Road Safety Group
- Passenger Transport Working Group
- Walking and Cycling Group

5.3 The Programme Management Group was introduced to oversee the Regional Transport Consortia Grant allocation. It has worked well for the last four years, but with funding for RTP projects now directed to individual authorities, it's primary function has been removed and it is no longer needed.

5.4 The other Groups still have distinctive roles to play in supporting joint working and securing the benefits of collaboration across administrative boundaries. It is proposed that the Groups determine the most appropriate frequency of meetings to meet needs and issues and that the Groups report to the Regional Directors Group no less than twice a year, but more frequently where guidance or decisions are required.

## **6.0 NAME, LOGO AND BRANDING**

6.1 There are concerns that the consortia "brands" adopted have now become detrimental to future joint working as they have negative connotations associated with "failure to deliver" and "bureaucracy". SWWITCH has had a strong and consistent brand which is well used, well known and distinctive.

6.2 However, it is proposed that the future regional working and collaboration does not sit under a SWWITCH Banner and that the name, logo and branding associated with the consortium is withdrawn. This does have practical implications as there are a number of documents, proforma and concessionary passes etc which are in use with the SWWITCH logo on them.

6.3 A pragmatic approach would be to continue to use those resources (such as Concessionary bus passes) where there is a clear cost associated with replacement, but to remove the name and logo on any re-issue of materials or circulation of proforma etc.

6.4 More immediate change could be applied to material in electronic form and the SWWITCH website could be withdrawn with any "live" material (RTP, Bus Strategy etc) being accessed via individual LA websites.

6.5 It is proposed that future collaboration could take place under the name of the South West Wales Regional Transport Group or Forum and where appropriate the four Authority Logos are used.

## **7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

7.1 It is RECOMMENDED that:

1. Joint Committee notes the withdrawal of functions and funding from the consortium with effect from 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 and the implications on the SWWITCH team
2. Joint Committee supports the utilisation of the SWWITCH Co-ordinator to provide strategic transport advice to the City Region Board and thus retaining the strong link with the four Authorities in the region
3. Regional Officer Working Groups are retained where a clear role and benefit is evident
4. The name, logo and branding associated with SWWITCH is withdrawn as proposed

A further recommendation will be proposed depending on the outcome of discussion on the future of Joint Committee



Eich cyf/Your ref  
Ein cyf/Our ref

Councillor Colin Evans  
Chair of SWWITCH  
41 Pontamman Road  
Ammanford  
SA18 2HY

[DCEvans@carmarthenshire.gov.uk](mailto:DCEvans@carmarthenshire.gov.uk)

17 January 2014

Dear Councillor Evans

I am bringing to your attention my intention to introduce changes from April this year to transport grant funding currently allocated to Regional Transport Consortia in Wales.

Next financial year the Regional Transport Consortia Grant and Regional Transport Services Grant will cease. Future funding will be in the form of Road Safety Grant, Local Transport Fund and Bus Services Support Grant and these will be allocated directly to local authorities. In the case of Local Transport Fund, this will be allocated on a competitive basis and local authorities will be allowed to submit applications on a joint basis.

The change will mean that there will be no requirement on Regional Transport Consortia to oversee projects being funded or to co-ordinate activities arising from funding provided.

I will be asking the City Region Boards to advise on priorities in their areas and this will form part of the assessment of applications.

Funding provided for Consortia administrative services will also cease and I am giving separate consideration to the future funding arrangements for Travel Plan Co-ordinators and will confirm the proposed arrangements shortly.

I understand that these proposals will impact on the role played by Regional Transport Consortia but I hope you will appreciate these changes are being introduced to drive better value for money and bring greater benefits from our future transport investments in Wales.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'C. I.', located below the main text.



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

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## **WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH GOVERNMENT**

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**TITLE**        **Transport Planning and Funding**

**DATE**        **17 January 2014**

**BY**            **Edwina Hart AM CStJ MBE, Minister for Economy, Science and Transport**

I have always recognised the important role transport plays to serve the needs of businesses, people and communities and the need for an efficient and effective transport planning and delivery arrangement to take forward this Government's priorities.

In my discussions with business groups, transport groups and local government representatives, concern has been expressed about the current planning and delivery arrangements. This concern extended to the capacity, both within Welsh Government and in other bodies, to cope with transformational projects on the scale of Metro and to manage possible significant additional responsibilities in relation to rail.

The need to change the way we plan and deliver transport services was evidenced in the recommendations of the High Level Review of Highways and Transport Services document jointly published by Welsh Government and local government last year and in the 2009 report by the Ministerial Advisory Group on the Economy and Transport. The need for change is supported by the evidence from Dr Elizabeth Haywood in her report on the Dee Region Cross-Border Report published last year.

I have considered this evidence and have concluded that change is needed to the way we plan and deliver transport services and improvements. Our focus must be to drive better value for money, manage the challenge of reducing budgets and bring greater benefit from our future transport investments in Wales.

I am therefore proposing to introduce changes to the way we undertake transport planning and target our investments.

I have already confirmed my intention not to review the Wales Transport Strategy and to publish a new National Transport Plan by end of March 2015. It is my intention to re-define the National Transport Plan to include regional priorities and establish a transport framework that integrates local, regional and national transport planning.

Identifying regional priorities for transport is clearly still important and I will be looking to the City Region Boards to highlight the priorities in their areas and to provide the governance structure that will advise me as the new Transport Plan takes shape.

I will shortly be issuing guidance to local transport authorities on meeting their statutory duty in relation to transport planning.

We will have one transport plan for Wales and our focus will be on delivering improvements rather than on a long drawn out planning process.

As from April this year, the Regional Transport Consortia Grant and Regional Transport Services Grant managed by the Regional Transport Consortia, will be replaced by a Road Safety Grant, Local Transport Fund and Bus Services Support Grant. These will be allocated directly to local authorities and some on a competitive basis. Local authorities will be able to work collaboratively to submit joint applications.

It is also my intention to continue to review ways of further improvements to transport planning and delivery and I will be looking to the City Region Boards and the Ministerial Task Force for North Wales Transport to assist with this work.



**Edwina Hart MBE CStJ AM**  
**Minister for Economy, Science and Transport**  
**Welsh Government**  
**5th Floor**  
**Tŷ Hywel**  
**Cardiff Bay**  
**CF99 1NA**

e.mail:  
e.bost:

Your ref:  
Eich Cyf:

Our ref:  
Ein Cyf:

Direct Line: 01267 224647 Date: 28/1/14

This matter is being dealt with by:  
Trafodir y mater hwn gan: Mr Richard  
Workman, Director of Technical Services  
Carmarthenshire County Council

Dear Minister

### **Transport Arrangements in Swansea Bay City Region**

Thank you for your letter of 17th January setting out your intentions with regard to transport arrangements and transport funding from April 2014.

As you know, the four local authorities making up the city region are fully supportive of the City Region approach, and we are all keen to work with the City Region Board and with you as Minister to make real progress in developing the region and supporting economic growth through a variety of measures, including improvements to transport infrastructure.

Indeed the four authorities have been considering priorities for future investment in transport infrastructure and have determined that the key criterion for prioritisation is that projects must support business and encourage economic growth. I note that you will be asking the City Region Board to advise on transport priorities. The Swansea Bay City Region Board has already given some high level consideration to strategic priorities for transport investment. In addition it is proposed that the City Region Board considers the draft delivery plan for 2014/15 and subsequent years at its meeting at the end of the month.

The four authorities are keen to support this process, and to support the Board in its deliberations. I understand that the Board has not yet made provision for advice on transport issues, and recognising the importance of this and the need for it to happen quickly, the four authorities are prepared to fund this for the first year. This will enable options to be discussed, priorities to be determined, bids developed and programmes to be drawn up.

As you know SWWITCH currently undertakes a number of roles, some strategic and others more operational. Some of the work of SWWITCH is concerned with funding, claims and preparation of accounts for audit and although the financial year ends on 31st March, the closure of accounts, payment of invoices, submission of final claims etc would normally be undertaken in the following few months (April - June). It would be helpful to discuss how best this work can be handled in order to avoid issues for local authorities and for the Welsh Government in meeting grant administration and audit requirements.

Continued.....

Redundancy notices will now be issued to SWWITCH staff, as their posts are no longer funded. However most of the staff are entitled to three months notice, which means that they will not leave until the new financial year. Since these posts and functions have been funded by Welsh Government, I ask that salary and redundancy costs incurred (including those incurred early in the new financial year) are covered by the Welsh Government.

I note that you are considering the future and funding of Travel Plan Coordinators. These staff will be issued with redundancy notices, though these can of course be withdrawn if it becomes clear that there will be funding available or if the posts transfer elsewhere. It would of course be helpful to understand how this will be handled as soon as you are in a position to let me know.

Finally, the four South West Wales authorities recognise the benefits of working as a region, and the need to support business in the way that we work. Bus funding, including payment to bus operators in respect of kilometres operated, have been managed at a regional level this year, and this has provided consistency for private bus operating companies in the region. Our initial thoughts are that this element would best be managed regionally in the future, to avoid a multiplicity of quality standards and reimbursement rates to operators and to avoid operators having to submit four claims instead of the current one claim. We may therefore pool an element of bus funding that will now go to individual authorities. This demonstrates our awareness of the needs of business and willingness to work collaboratively at a regional level.

I hope these comments are helpful. I look forward to working with you and the City Region Board to establish the most appropriate mechanisms to support the City Region, and would be delighted to meet with you to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely

**Councillor Colin Evans**  
**Chair of SWWITCH**



## BUS FUNDING UPDATE

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Joint Committee will be aware from previous reports and discussions that SWWITCH has implemented and managed the change to bus service support, as a result of the Welsh Government reform of bus funding, over the last twelve months. The reform included the introduction of the Regional Transport Services Grant which replaced the former:

- UK based Bus Services Operators Grant
- Wales Government Local Transport Services Grant

1.2 SWWITCH was also required to develop a Regional Network Strategy for bus services. The Regional Network Strategy (RNS) was formally approved by the four respective Local Authorities prior to formal adoption by Joint Committee at the meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2013. The RNS was duly submitted to the Welsh Government in January.

1.3 Members may recall that the Welsh Government has also been undertaking a review of the All Wales Concessionary Bus Pass scheme, as the three year reimbursement to operators agreement is due to end on 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2014.

1.4 Since the Joint Committee meeting of December, the Welsh Government has made a number of announcements regarding further changes to bus funding and organisation in Wales, confirming that:

- The Regional Transport Services Grant will be replaced by a Bus Services Support Grant and the new grant will be administered by Local Authorities
- Changes to The Concessionary Fares reimbursement scheme. The Government has required authorities to notify operators of the new arrangement in order that the changes to the rate can come into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2014

### 2.0 REGIONAL TRANSPORT SERVICES GRANT

2.1 The transition from the former Local Transport Services Grant and Bus Services Operators Grant to the Regional Transport Services Grant (RTSG) in 2013/14 represented the largest change to bus industry funding, arguably since De Regulation arising from the 1985 Transport Act. The Consortium, working in partnership, has managed this change with minimal disruption to the bus sector and customers.

2.2 In terms of financial performance, the current out turn is forecast to be on budget. The re-imbursement rate to operators for Local Kilometre Support Grant has remained consistent throughout the 2013/14 financial year for both the commercial and voluntary sector and all operators have been paid on time.

- 2.3 Service reductions have resulted in a small redistribution of grant during the year, (this amounts to £160,000), direct to the four constituent Local Authorities. Authorities were able to use this funding to help mitigate the impact of service reductions that have occurred throughout the year.
- 2.4 The end of year procedures are in place to ensure the RTSG is effectively managed to the financial year end.
- 2.5 Further transition from RTSG to the Bus Services Support Grant will need to occur in the forthcoming weeks. The latest change will require the continued commitment of all Local Authorities. It is proposed that the four authorities continue to work together on a collaborative basis to manage the further and continued period of change. This process will be managed by the current Passenger Transport Working Group which is chaired by a Head of Service.

### **3.0 BUS SERVICE SUPPORT GRANT**

- 3.1 The Bus Services Support Grant (BSSG) will be introduced from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014. Local Authorities are currently awaiting notification of the final conditions and guidance for the new grant. Officers have received a draft of the proposals and provided feedback to the Welsh Government. Indications are that funding related to the grant will be held at the 2013/14 level i.e. £25 million for the whole of Wales and £5,116,682 (minus allocation for Traveline Cymru) for the four South West Wales Authorities.
- 3.2 The funding will be distributed to four lead Local Authorities across Wales, the City and County of Swansea undertakes this role currently and it is proposed that this arrangement will continue until future change is required.
- 3.3 The draft conditions indicate that the grant will be used to support local authorities' expenditure, in exercise of their powers under the Transport Acts 1985, 2000 and the Local Transport Act 2008.
- 3.4 The grant can be used to support transport solutions to meet local circumstances and requirements with support for core strategic networks. The grant should be used to enhance accessibility and connectivity to communities, essential services and facilities, so promoting economic prosperity, social inclusion and well-being. In doing so Authorities should use the grant to develop close and effective partnership working e.g. Through voluntary agreements, Statutory Bus Quality Partnerships and Quality Contract schemes, involving bus operators.
- 3.5 Local authorities working collectively should allocate at least 5 percent of the new BSSG to support the provision of community transport. The Welsh Government strongly recommends a figure of 10 percent is achieved providing that sufficient, good quality community transport projects that deliver value for money and integrate with the public transport network have been identified.
- 3.6 Local Authorities should use the RNS to inform decisions that they will make in selecting which services to support and can continue to work collaboratively to administer the new grant.

3.7 Members may recall the RNS was developed on the basis of prioritising investment through the allocation of the grant to:

- Local Kilometre Support (i.e. The element of the grant based on a rate per kilometre paid to operators for operating services which were registered to collect passengers)
- Direct grant to authorities to invest in transport services i.e. on the same basis as the former Local Transport Services Grant

3.8 With the final conditions for the new grant not yet issued and the new financial year rapidly approaching, it would be prudent to continue with the methodologies and staffing arrangements, developed to manage the former RTSG. This approach will provide some much needed stability for the Local Authorities and the bus industry during 2014/15.

#### **4.0 CONCESSIONARY FARES**

4.1 The Concessionary fares scheme has been the subject of much public debate over recent months as a result of the Welsh Government review of the national concessionary fares scheme. The scheme is administered by Local Authorities and there has been widespread concern regarding a potential reduction in the amount available to fund it.

4.2 The Welsh Government commissioned consultants to undertake a review of the scheme to establish whether the current rate of re-imbursment was commensurate with the fundamental principle that bus operators should be no better or no worse off as a result of revenue foregone by carrying the concessionary pass holder .

4.3 The Welsh Government consultants provided an initial view that the rate of reimbursement was not consistent with the principle of “no better no worse off,” this view was not supported by the bus operators and the Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT). The CPT commissioned their own consultants who disputed the Welsh Government’s consultant’s figures.

4.4 Discussions between the Welsh Government, Local Authorities and the Bus Industry continued into February this year. The outcome of those discussions resulted in the Government issuing a modified scheme in late February with a requirement for Local Authorities to issue the new scheme to participating operators by 28<sup>th</sup> February, thereby providing the requisite four months’ notice for the new rates to come into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2014. The new scheme was issued by the Local Authorities as required.

4.5 The scheme currently sets out the reimbursement rate of 73.59 percent for quarter one and 64 percent for quarters 2,3 and 4 of the 2014/15 financial year. A maximum budget of £65 million is available. This represents a reduction in budget of circa £9 million across Wales and is less than that originally anticipated.

4.6 The rates included within the revised published scheme, will result in expenditure

exceeding the budget available, unless demand reduces. The ongoing quarterly meetings to confirm the reimbursement rates to remain within budget will be critical unless additional funding is found within the financial year.

## **5.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 5.1 The bus sector continues to experience significant year on year change with continued reductions in public funding. The 2013/14 year has been managed effectively by the four SWWITCH authorities resulting in service delivery remaining within budget. This has been achieved by partnership working with the industry and the voluntary sector.
- 5.2 The 2014/15 financial year will be another year of change. The continued collaborative working between the four local authorities will be fundamental to delivering the further change required:
- 5.3 It is **RECOMMENDED** that Joint Committee:
1. Notes the further changes that are being made to bus funding in Wales
  2. Endorses the decision made to redistribute a small amount of the grant direct to the four constituent Local Authorities to help mitigate the impact of service reductions
  3. Supports the proposal that the four authorities continue to work together to manage the further and continued period of change on a collaborative basis. This process will be managed by the current Passenger Transport Working Group which is chaired by a Head of Service, with funding distributed by the City and County of Swansea as the host authority

## 2013/14 PROGRAMME DELIVERY UPDATE

### 1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 As the 2013/14 financial year draws to a close this paper provides an update on progress on delivery of the 2013/14 Regional Transport Consortia Grant allocation of £6.882m. As final claims will not be submitted until late in April, the details in this paper only include spend up to the end of February 2014.
- 1.2 Also included are details of virements during the last two months.

### 2.0 RTCG PROGRESS TO THE END OF FEBRUARY 2014

- 2.1 As at the end of February (month eleven of the financial year) RTCG spend is as shown in the table below.

**Table One – RTCG spend up to the end of February 2014**

Element	Allocation (£k)	Actual spend on ledger (£k)	Amount to be spent (£k)	% remaining
RTP capital	5,239	3,181	2,058	39%
RTP revenue	205	167.6	37.4	18%
RSG capital	959	519.8	439.5	45%
RSG revenue	479	404.1	74.9	16%
Total	6,882	4,272.5	2,609.5	

- 2.2 The revenue budgets, whether Road Safety or RTP are progressing according to plan and full expenditure is predicted. For RTP and Road Safety Capital allocations there remain large sums (and significant proportions) of the annual allocation to be claimed.
- 2.3 However, Project Managers from each Council are still confident of achieving full spend and have confirmed that (in a similar fashion to previous years) much of the allocation has been spent. The delay is administrative, related to ensuring that invoices get on the ledger in time.
- 2.4 The “end of year” processes for the RTCG have been circulated and final estimates have already been submitted to the WG. These clearly show that full grant expenditure is predicted. The next steps are the submission of the final claims which are due with WG by the end of April. Final payment, assuming all the details of the submission are correct, will then be made within a month to Swansea as Host financial authority and then paid onward to individual Local Authorities in response to invoices raised.

### 3.0 VIREMENTS

3.1 At last Joint Committee it was reported that two virements requests (approved by SWWITCH PMG) had been submitted to the Welsh Government and a response was outstanding. The two virements were approved and appropriate adjustments to allocations have been made.

3.2 Since December further virements have been requested as shown in Table Two below.

**Table Two – RTCG virement requests**

Element of RTCG and Project	Value of Virement	PMG decision	Next steps
RTP Capital - Virement of £33k to Ammanford to Cross Hands Bus Corridor and £19k to Carmarthenshire rural interchanges. Both form Carmarthen to Swansea bus corridor	£52k	Agreed	Approved by WG officials
RTP Capital - Virement of £18k from Fabian way Walking/cycling scheme and £14k from NPT Walking/cycling scheme – both to Amman Valley Cycleway	£32k	Agreed	Approved by WG officials
RTP Capital – Virement of £2.9k from Community Transport capital enhancement grant and £1.9k from Programme management and monitoring - both to Port Talbot to Swansea Bus Corridor (and Baglan bridge)	£4k	Agreed	Approved by WG officials
RTP Capital – An additional £12k for each of Milford Haven and Pembroke dock interchanges, an additional £20k to Carmarthenshire Riverside route and an additional £6k to Port Talbot to Swansea Bus Corridor (and Baglan bridge). All from preparation for Post 2015 policy and planning allocation of £50k	£50k	Agreed	Referred for Ministerial approval and approval granted 17 <sup>th</sup> March 2014

### 4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 It is RECOMMENDED that:

- (i) Joint Committee notes the position with respect to Regional Transport Consortia Grant spend at the end of February 2014 and the end of year claims process and timescales
- (ii) Joint Committee approves the virements proposed by SWWITCH Programme Management Group

## LOCAL TRANSPORT FUND AND ROAD SAFETY GRANT APPLICATIONS 2014/15 (FOR INFORMATION ONLY)

### 1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Joint Committee will be aware that since the adoption of the Regional Transport Plan in 2009, transport capital funding has been directed via the four consortia in Wales. So for each year between 2010/11 to 2013/14 a regional bid has been submitted to the Welsh Government, in accordance with published guidance and aimed an indicative allocation.
- 1.2 In the first three years the allocation was awarded to individual Local Authorities whilst in the current financial year the allocation was made to each consortium's host financial Authority , which for SWWITCH is Swansea.
- 1.3 At the last Joint Committee meeting in December 2013, there was no reason to believe this arrangement would not continue into 2014/15 and indeed Committee delegated responsibility to SWWITCH Management Group to approve a Delivery Plan submission, on the assumption that the timescale to submit a plan would fall between the December Committee meeting and this meeting. SWWITCH had already developed a draft Delivery Plan for 14/15
- 1.4 This paper explains what has changed for 2014/15 bids and provides a summary of the bids submitted for information.

### 2.0 CHANGES TO BID PROCESS

- 2.1 Aligned with the Minister's withdrawal of revenue support for the transport consortia in Wales (see Item 3), a radical change to the way transport funds would be allocated was announced by the Minister in her statements issued in January 2014.

#### 2.2 RTP Capital

Responsibility for bidding and then programme managing the funding secured was given back to individual Local Authorities. Guidance was issued by the Welsh Government on 4<sup>th</sup> February and a copy is attached for information as Appendix A. Aside from being an individual local authority process the other changes were:

- Each Council could bid for funding for a maximum of 5 schemes and no more than £1.5m would be allocated for any single scheme
- Bids must be prioritised by Local Authorities
- Authorities will have to provide a minimum of 10% match funding for each scheme
- Investment should be on schemes which support the Government's economic priorities
- Welsh Government will provide funding for purchase of land required for completion of a scheme, but will no longer meet the costs of land/project compensation costs, with the risk passing to the authority

- 2.3 The guidance confirmed the total available for RTP schemes in 2014/15 is £15.4m. If all 22 Authorities in Wales bid for the maximum of £7.5m (5 bids of £1.5m each) then there could be £165m worth of projects bidding for a pot of £15.4m.
- 2.4 All bids received will be appraised by Welsh Government Officials with key appraisal criteria being projects which:
- support economic priorities for jobs and growth
  - support reduced economic inactivity
  - encourage active and sustainable travel
  - improve quality of life, especially for those in disadvantaged communities
  - are deliverability
  - have match funding
- 2.5 The guidance also makes clear that the Welsh Government will consult the relevant City Region Board as part of the appraisal process. The draft Delivery Plan (see section 1.3 above) had already been endorsed by the City Region Board as a result of a paper presented to them by Richard Workman at their meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2014.
- 2.6 Local authorities were able to use the draft plan, with suitable amendments (to meet the guidance conditions) to formulate their individual Local Transport Fund bids by the closing date of 28<sup>th</sup> February 2014. The bids are summarised on Appendix B.
- 2.7 Road Safety Grant  
Responsibility for bidding and then programme managing road safety capital and revenue is also to be given back to Local Authorities. Guidance was issued on 3<sup>rd</sup> February and a copy is attached as Appendix C for information.

Other changes include:

Capital - competitive bidding by Local Authorities and no indication of the sum of funding available was provided. Up to four bids per Authority could be made and those which target sites or routes where there is evidence of collisions resulting in personal injury casualties will be given priority.

Revenue – the total pot available in Wales is £2m and this has been allocated by LA based on a formula (population and casualties). Applications are expected to focus on specific areas like Pass Plus Cymru, National Cycle training, Kerbcraft and Motorcyclist training. No bids for promotional activity, advertising etc will be supported.

The bids for Road Safety Grant were due for submission by 28<sup>th</sup> February 2014 and Appendix D summarises those bids.



## Appendix A - LTF Guidance

### Local Transport Fund - Guidance to Applicants 2014-15

#### Introduction

1. The purpose of the Guidance is to confirm the priorities that Welsh Government will support through the Local Transport Fund to local authorities in 2014-15.
2. It also sets out the process by which local authorities should submit applications in line with these priorities for consideration by the Welsh Government and how they will be assessed.

#### Outcomes

3. Schemes should support the Welsh Government's objective of developing integrated, efficient, effective, accessible, affordable and sustainable transport systems that support our strategic outcomes as outlined in Programme for Government:  
<http://wales.gov.uk/about/programmeforgov/?skip=1&lang=en> and the [Wales Transport Strategy](#).
4. Within the objectives outlined above, the Welsh Government has identified the following priority areas for support in 2014-15 and expects to see these reflected in the applications submitted:
  - Investment that will clearly support our economic priorities for jobs and growth, in particular for City Regions, Enterprise Zones, local growth zones and regeneration areas
  - Investment to reduce economic inactivity by delivering safe and affordable access to employment sites
  - Investment that will encourage healthier and sustainable travel and support delivery of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013
  - Investment that will improve quality of life particularly those living in disadvantaged communities by delivering safe and easy to use transport to key facilities and services

#### Capital Funding

5. Funding will be made direct to local authorities and will be available for 2014-15 only. The total available for schemes across Wales is £15.4m. The Welsh Government's contribution to any single application will not exceed £1.5m for 2014-15.
6. A further £0.3m will be allocated on a formula basis to cover the costs of producing the existing route maps under the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013. The allocations to each authority are set out in Annex 3 to this note and have been calculated based on the population and area covered by designated settlements. (Population accounts for 70% of funding, and area the remaining 30%. Additionally the distribution allows for a minimum of £5000 per local authority.) The allocations are indicative and will be confirmed when the final Direction identifying designated settlements is issued, following the recent consultation.
7. No commitment is made regarding any funding for future years. Applications for funding will be invited on an all Wales competitive basis.

#### Eligibility for Capital Funding

8. Local authorities can work together on their applications. The lead local authority must be identified for each scheme. Funding would be allocated to the lead local authority.
9. Applications can be made for funding to complete schemes which received Regional Transport Consortia Grant funding in 2013-14 and where works have started but will not be completed by 31 March 2014. Applications for new schemes can be made for single projects or for a package of related projects.
10. In total a maximum of five applications for existing and new schemes can be made per local authority. Applications must be ranked in number order of priority.
11. We will fund works and pre-works for capital schemes and the cost of scheme monitoring and evaluation can be included.

12. No scheme should be submitted for works funding in 2014-15 unless it is envisaged that all land issues will be closed out and orders or other permissions required are in place by 31 March 2014 (other than in exceptional circumstances by prior agreement). Local authorities will need to evidence in applications, where applicable, that signed land purchase agreements or Compulsory Purchase Orders are in place.
13. Whilst Welsh Government is prepared to fund the cost of land purchase, funding will not be provided in respect of compensation claims arising from the land purchase or from the project itself.
14. The provision of capital support to schemes is conditional upon local authorities' commitment to meet future revenue and maintenance costs.
15. Funding will be allocated up to the amount awarded for actual eligible expenditure incurred on an accepted scheme. Funding will be capped at the level of the award and the local authority will be required to carry the risk of any overspend that may occur. Where increased costs arise due to exceptional circumstances, outside the local authority's control, Welsh Government may consider making additional funding available.
16. Local Authorities will be expected to deliver the schemes accepted in accordance with their applications. Reports on progress will be required at intervals throughout the 2014-15 financial year and further information will be included in the award letter. Failure to demonstrate appropriate progress with delivery may result in funding offers being withdrawn and funding claimed up to that point being recovered from a local authority.
17. The £0.3m Active Travel network route mapping funds are allocated on a formula basis and the amounts for each local authority are shown in Annex 3. The allocation is for funding up to the amount set out in Annex 3 and will be paid on receipt of evidence of defrayed costs associated with the following activities in relation to the development of the existing route maps:
  - design and cartography
  - publication and distribution
  - production of the statement and explanation on conformity to design standards
  - consultation on maps and statements
18. Further detail of these activities will be set out in the Delivery Guidance which will be published for consultation in March and finalised before the Summer recess.

#### **Match Funding**

19. Applications for funding are for up to a maximum of 90% of scheme costs. Projects that demonstrate levels of match funding greater than 10% will score higher in the appraisal process.
20. Applications must clearly identify the levels and sources of available match funding and confirm this will be in place to ensure the completion of the works within the 2014-15 financial year. Match funding may be from internal or external sources and can include expenditure already incurred or committed.

#### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

21. Schemes must be monitored and evaluated. The cost of individual scheme before and after monitoring shall be identified and included in the scheme cost.
22. Local authorities will be required to provide Welsh Government with data on scheme outcomes achieved on an annual basis for a period of three years following completion of the scheme.

#### **Application Process Documentation**

23. Local Authorities should submit their applications using the template application form at Annex 1. Schemes included must be subject to proportionate appraisal, using the appropriate appraisal tools to ensure that sound decisions on the allocation of resources for transport in Wales are undertaken.

24. Local authorities will be responsible for ensuring that delivery remains on schedule and reporting any change to the works programme and/or spend profile.

### **Appraisal Process**

25. Bids will be considered by a panel of Welsh Government Transport officials. The Welsh Government will also consult the relevant City Region Board or Task Force as part of the appraisal process. The marking criteria are attached at Annex 2.

### **Project Management**

26. Local authorities are required to ensure that all schemes of work using Local Transport Funding are subject to a formal but proportionate risk management process.
27. Where the Contract for a project has been awarded on the basis of Quality and Price or procured from a Framework, the Welsh Government would expect the project to be monitored using Construction Excellence KPI measures to ensure the quality of service and product promised in the bid is delivered.
28. We will work with each local authority and reporting will be carried out on a quarterly basis. We will keep delivery under review and reserve the right to introduce more frequent reporting if progress on delivery is not satisfactory.
29. Further information on management and reporting including payments will be provided with the terms and conditions of the Local Transport Fund award letters.
30. Local authorities will be expected to deliver their approved schemes and achieve the outputs forecast. In-year changes to an approved scheme and outputs will require the approval of Welsh Government and change requests must include information on the impact to the overall benefits and outputs of the scheme.
31. Schemes shall be brought forward through the appropriate key stage approval process. The proposed schemes shall indicate the current key stage approval status and the key stage approval planned to be delivered during FY2014-15.

### **Publicity**

32. Welsh Government support for all interventions will be clearly identified in all press releases and any associated publicity material or plaques.
33. Welsh Government must be notified of any events or openings associated with interventions we have funded.

### **Deadline for submissions**

Bids must be submitted by **28 February 2014**, via [transportplanning@wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:transportplanning@wales.gsi.gov.uk). No additional or revised information will be accepted after that date.

### **Welsh Government Contacts for Further Information:**

#### **Alison Thomas**

Principal Transport Planner – South Wales  
[transportplanning@wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:transportplanning@wales.gsi.gov.uk)  
029 2082 6765

#### **Carol Willgoose**

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## Appendix B – South West Wales LTF bid summary

Scheme Name and (LA priority)	LA	14/15 RTP Bid £k
Port Talbot to Swansea bus corridor and link bridge (1)	NPT	1,500
Port Talbot Interchange (2)	NPT	100
Fabian Way walking/cycling/bus access*** (2)	SWA	330
Amman Valley Cycleway ** (3)	NPT	505
Park and share sites near the M4 (5)	SWA	55
City Centre Urban Cycling (3)	SWA	330
NCN links to Railway Stations (Fishguard, Goodwick and Milford Haven) (3)	PCC	179
Carmarthenshire Walking & Cycling linkages (3)	CCC	300
Strategic Bus corridors in Carmarthen (5)	CCC	150
Strategic bus corridors RTI development (4)	SWA	110
Haverfordwest to Tenby Bus corridor & Tenby Public Transport Interchange (1)	PCC	603
Pembroke Dock Public Transport Interchange (2)	PCC	405
Carmarthen Station Interchanges (4)	CCC	175
Morfa Distributor Road (1)	SWA	1,500
Waterston/Blackbridge Access Improvements (4)	PCC	135
Northern Distributor Network - Bulford Road* (5)	PCC	697
Cross Hands Economic Link Road (1)	CCC	500
Ammanford Economic Regeneration infrastructure (2)	CCC	400
Community Transport Capital Enhancement Grant (4)	NPT	65
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>8,039</b>

**Where:**

\* - not endorsed by CRB meeting

\*\* - joint bid NPT/CCC

\*\*\* - joint Swansea/NPT bid

## Appendix C

### ROAD SAFETY GRANT 2014-15 - Guidance Note

#### Introduction

This document invites local authorities to bid for capital and put forward proposals for revenue support for Road Safety schemes for 2014-15. The guidance below explains the arrangements for each element of the grant. Local authorities should note that different arrangements apply for capital and revenue.

#### Outcomes

A continued reduction of the number of people killed and seriously injured on Welsh roads, with the ultimate aspiration of no fatalities

#### Targets

All schemes receiving funding must contribute to the achievement of the targets contained in the Road Safety Framework for Wales as follows:

- a 40% reduction in the number of people killed or seriously injured;
- a 25% reduction in the number of motorcyclists killed and seriously injured on Welsh roads by 2020, meaning 64 fewer motorcyclist killed and seriously injured casualties;
- a 40% reduction in the number of young people (aged 16-24) killed and seriously injured on Welsh roads by 2020, meaning 139 fewer young people killed and seriously injured casualties.

We have also sought the advice of the All-Wales Senior Roads Policing Board who has advised the following priority groups to focus interventions on, based on the incidents the Police have been responding to:

- Speed enforcement and reduction / prevention
- Pedal cyclists
- Pedestrians
- Young drivers
- Older drivers
- Motorcyclists

#### Application Process

##### Documentation

Local authorities must complete separate application forms (attached) for capital and revenue bids.

##### Appraisal process

Bids will be considered by a panel of Welsh Government Transport officials and external partners, including the Police and RoSPA. The marking criteria and assessment scoring form are attached.

##### Deadline for submission of bids:

Bids must be submitted to Joanne Stevens, via the [Transport Planning Mailbox](#) at the address below, by **Friday 28 February 2014**. No additional or revised information will be accepted after that date.

Bids may be submitted electronically by the closing date but must be followed up with signed hard copies. Contact name and telephone number:

**Joanne Stevens 029 2082 6903**

**Email address: [TransportPlanning@Wales.GSI.Gov.UK](mailto:TransportPlanning@Wales.GSI.Gov.UK)**

## **Capital Funding**

Capital Funding will be paid directly to local authorities. Applications for funding will be invited on an all Wales competitive basis.

Applications should support the priorities in the Road Safety Framework and support the achievement of the casualty reduction targets.

### **Eligibility for capital funding**

- Projects, or a discrete phase of a larger project, must be completed by 31 March 2015.
- Applications and proposals must be submitted by the deadline.
- Capital funding applications are limited to a maximum of four applications per authority.
- Priority will be given to applications targeted at sites, routes or areas where there is evidence of road traffic collisions resulting in personal injury casualties.
- Applications for sites, routes or areas where significant numbers of slight collisions or damage only incidents have occurred will be considered where appropriate evidence is provided and supported by the Police.
- Schemes must be monitored and evaluated.

### **Key Criteria for capital funding:**

Applications for capital funding will be assessed against the following key criteria:

- Applicability to the priorities in the Road Safety Framework; targeting high risk and vulnerable groups as defined in the Framework.
- Evidence to support the need for intervention and to evaluate effectiveness in terms of reducing casualties, particularly KSI casualties.
- Value for money and deliverability
- Evidence of significant numbers of slight collisions or damage only collisions, supported by the Police
- How the project links to, and supports, the local authority's wider activity on road safety and casualty reduction

## **Revenue Funding**

Revenue funding will be paid directly to local authorities and allocated by use of a formula based on population numbers (60%) and casualty numbers of those killed or seriously injured (40%), set out at Annex 1.

To reflect the priorities in the Road Safety Framework we expect applications to focus on the following areas:

- Pass Plus Cymru
- Motorcyclist Training
- Kerbcraft
- National Cycle Training

Applications will be accepted for schemes outside these areas, if they are supported by clear evidence of need. Staff costs will only be funded if they are delivering a specific approved project.

Bids will not be accepted for the following:

- General promotional activity, advertising and media campaigns
- Schemes where no commitment to evaluation is given

The Welsh Government funding for road safety is provided as additional to local authorities' own road safety expenditure.

The Welsh Government also encourages authorities to identify other sources of funding and to make full use of partnership arrangements with other local authorities and other public, private and voluntary sector bodies.

Local authorities will be able to collaborate on revenue projects particularly where this will result in efficiencies and the sharing of good practice. Should joint bids be made, the collaborating authorities need to be listed, together with their financial contribution and a lead authority identified. Only the lead authority should submit the bid to prevent duplication. Collaborating authorities should reduce the value of their bids accordingly.

### **Eligibility for revenue funding**

- Applications should provide a cost break down for each project.
- Proposals for the priority areas identified above
- Projects that have not been evaluated, need to demonstrate how evaluation of outcomes will be undertaken. The RoSPA Eval-u-it tool, or equivalent method, should be used. Pass Plus Cymru will be evaluated nationally.
- Projects must be completed by 31 March 2015.
- Proposals must be submitted by the deadline.
- Each proposal must be made on the relevant form.

### **Key Criteria for revenue funding**

Proposal will need to demonstrate

- Applicability to the priorities in the Road Safety Framework; in particular targeting high risk and vulnerable groups as defined in the Framework and by the Police
- Evidence to support the need for intervention and to evaluate effectiveness in terms of reducing casualties
- How the project links to, and supports, the authority's wider activity on road safety and casualty reduction
- Value for money and deliverability

## SWITCH Joint Committee – 28<sup>th</sup> March 2014

### Proposed road safety grant revenue allocation to local authorities 2014/15

Based on weighting: 60% population and 40% all KSI casualties, adjusted to allow for a 2.5% minimum allocation (£50,000) per local authority.

The allocation is based on 2012 mid-year population data and on all killed or seriously injured casualties (sum of four years 2009 – 2012) in each authority.

	Total revenue grant £
Blaenau Gwent	50,000
Bridgend	81,000
Caerphilly	94,000
Cardiff	183,000
Carmarthenshire	136,000
Ceredigion	64,000
Conwy	81,000
Denbighshire	69,000
Flintshire	109,000
Gwynedd	102,000
Isle of Anglesey	54,000
Merthyr Tydfil	50,000
Monmouthshire	58,000
Neath Port Talbot	84,000
Newport	81,000
Pembrokeshire	94,000
Powys	139,000
Rhondda Cynon Taf	127,000
Swansea	140,000
The Vale of Glamorgan	70,000
Torfaen	50,000
Wrexham	84,000
Wales	2,000,000



**SWITCH Joint Committee – 28<sup>th</sup> March 2014**

**Appendix D – Summary of 14/15 Road Safety Grant bids**

**ROAD SAFETY CAPITAL BIDS**

LA	Scheme type	Location	Value of bid
C & C o S	Route Treatment	A483 Carmarthen Road/Pontarddulais Road	£493k
		A483 Fabian Way Phase 2	£84k
		A4118 New Orchard Street/Dyfatty Street	£62k
		B4295 Gowerton to Penclawdd	£260k
<b>Sub total</b>			<b>£899k</b>
PCC	Route Treatment	Ferry Lane, Pembroke Dock	£488k
		St Lawrence Hill, Milford Haven	£19k
		Little Milford, Freystrop	£36k
		Hendre to Mathry	£15k
<b>Sub total</b>			<b>£558k</b>
CCC	Route Treatment	A4069 Brynamman - Llangadog	£120k
		A482 Llanwrda- Cwmann	£95k
		A476 Swiss Valley – Gelli Onn	£90k
		A4138 Trostre Rdbt – Halfway Traffic signals	£90k
<b>Sub total</b>			<b>£395k</b>
NPT	Junction Treatment	A474 Neath Southern Link	£30k
	Route Treatment	Sidings Terrace, Skewen	£25k
		A474 Rhos to Bryncoch	£51k
	Site specific	B4289 at Bryn	£30k
<b>Sub total</b>			<b>£136k</b>
<b>TOTAL FOR REGION</b>			<b>£1,998k</b>

**SWITCH Joint Committee – 28<sup>th</sup> March 2014**

**ROAD SAFETY REVENUE BIDS**

LA	Bid	Value Of bid
C & C o S	Theatre in education for secondary schools/colleges post 16 yrs olds	£12k
	Kerbcraft	£43k
	Bike safe for motorcyclists	£10k
	Drive for Life for mature drivers	£4k
	Cycle Training for Primary school pupils	£30k
	Pass Plus Cymru for young drivers	£25k
	Dragon Rider for motorcyclists	£2k
	Ride Safe for young motorcyclists	£6k
	11-15 yr olds	£8k
<b>Sub total</b>		<b>£140k</b>
PCC	Pass Plus Cymru	£8k
	Motorcycle Training	£8k
	Young Peoples Road Safety Project & Theatre –in Education	£20k
	Older Driver Courses	£3k
	National Standards Cycling	£25k
	Kerbcraft	£30k
<b>Sub total</b>		<b>£94k</b>
Carms CC	Children's Traffic club	£4k
	Kerbcraft	£21k
	National standards cycle training	£25k
	Theatre in Education (primary)	£14k
	Theatre in Education (secondary and FE)	£12k
	Pass Plus Cymru	£15k
	"Make a difference" Resource	£5k
	Young Driver programme evaluation	£5k
	Ridersafe	£5k
	Dragon rider	£5k
	First Bike on scene	£1k
	Safer Communities programme	£11k
	Older driver's Refresher programme	£13k
<b>Sub total</b>		<b>£136k</b>
NPT	Drive IQ	£3k
	Pass Plus Cymru	£30k
	Drive for Life	£5k
	Bikesafe	£6k
	Dragon rider	£10k
	First Bike on scene	£7k
	Ridersafe	£10k
	National cycle Training	£8k
	Theatre in education	£5k
<b>Sub total</b>		<b>£84k</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£454k</b>

## PARTNER UPDATES

### 1.0 ARRIVA TRAINS WALES

#### 1.1 Performance

In terms of Public Performance Measure, ATW dropped into sixth position of the 19 UK Train operating companies but remains in second position in our “class”. Overall PPM was 87.1% in period 12 and 89.3% in period 13 below the Group target of 93.5%. The previous year, the figure was 92.3% and 91.5% respectively.

These were a challenging two periods with leaf fall, freight trains and bad weather all contributing to the drop in PPM. Severe storms in North Wales on December 5 caused the collapse of the sea wall in Mostyn, leading to lines being 550 delay minutes and 39 cancellations of services in North Wales. In period 13, there were 50 direct flooding incidents, the biggest being at Mountain Ash and also a number of line blockages caused by fallen trees. A major incident occurred on 3 January 2014 where many services were seriously disrupted by flooding causing 89 cancellations and 762 delay minutes. Flood water washed away the line between Llanelli and Carmarthen, along the Cambrian Coast line and Blaenau Ffestiniog line.

Network Rail are currently working hard to rebuild sections of infrastructure affected by the severe storms, it is expected that work to rebuild badly damaged parts of the line between Barmouth and Pwllheli will be completed by mid-May.

#### 1.2 Welsh Government’s Sustainability Charter

Arriva Trains Wales has publically signed up to the Welsh Government’s Sustainability Charter, Wales’ highest profile commitment to sustainable development. Signing the Charter is a voluntary commitment aimed at improving the economic, social and environmental well-being of Wales.

Arriva joins a network of over 150 other organisations from across Wales in making sustainability central to all they do. Rail plays a central role in a sustainable transport system for Wales and the Border Regions. To deliver this, we have to make sustainability a central role in our company too. This is key to ensuring we meet the needs of our passengers, local communities, employees and other stakeholders, now and for the future. By signing up to the Charter we are demonstrating our commitment to putting sustainability at the core of our organisation. Signing up to the Charter coincides with us setting out our Sustainability Strategy for the next five years to 2018.

The Arriva Trains Wales Sustainability Strategy includes targets such as: delivering best in class customer satisfaction scores, being an employer of choice and reducing our relative carbon emissions by five percent.

#### 1.3 10 Year Anniversary

Arriva Trains Wales started a year of celebrations on Sunday 8th December 2013 with a number of activities for our staff and customers. This was the same day as the franchise was first awarded back in 2003. Over the past decade, passengers have seen some important changes to their services, including:

- £30 million of investment by Arriva Trains Wales - improving trains, stations and customer service. We are proud to have delivered these customer benefits, working with the support of key partners such as the Welsh Government
- High levels of customer satisfaction - 86% 'satisfied' (January 2014), up 7% since 2003
- We are one of the top 'right-time' performing operators in the UK and are working closely with Network Rail to continue to improve punctuality and reliability
- We are one of the largest private sector employers in Wales, employing more than 2,000 people, with 300 new jobs created since 2003.

To coincide with this anniversary, we have been offering some of our most loyal customers a special £10 ticket. This special £10 return ticket can be purchased from any rail station ticket office and on-board our trains until 29th March 2014 and allows you to travel on any Arriva Trains Wales service for only £10 return.

To qualify, you need to be the holder of an adult monthly or longer season ticket, valid for travel within the period 5th January to 29th March 2014 between any two stations on the Arriva Trains Wales network.

Qualifying customers can also buy this special ticket for family and friends at £10.00 per adult or £5.00 per child (aged 15 years or under). This means that, if you are a qualifying season ticket holder, you and your family (up to two adults including the season ticket holder and up to 3 children) could travel together to great destinations including, Manchester, Cardiff, Chester, North Wales and Swansea for a total of only £35 return.

#### 1.4 Arriva Trains Wales Apprenticeship Programme

Arriva Trains Wales as one of the largest employers in Wales is doing its bit to help young people to enter the world of work, and as a result, we have created a brand new apprenticeship scheme. We have recruited two engineering apprentices, who will be equipped with the skills to maintain its fleet of trains and a further six to deliver excellent customer service at stations around the network. We think it's important that big organisations such as Arriva Trains Wales do their bit to help young people access employment and training.

The rail industry is renowned for providing high quality skilled jobs in communities all across Wales, and we want to provide entry ways for young people to access this type of high-value, high-skill job. We're certain that the energy and new ideas these apprentices will bring will add real value to our existing work force, already comprised of highly skilled and experienced engineers and customer facing professionals. For the Engineering Apprentices, following their initial twelve to eighteen month training period, they will go on to become fully qualified technicians, working on maintenance and engineering projects on Arriva Trains Wales's fleet of trains. They will eventually go on to complete HNC level qualifications in engineering after four years.

Four stations apprentices have been appointed to work in the Cardiff area, and two to work in the Chester area. They will be completing a Foundation Apprenticeship in Customer Service as part of their initial twelve to eighteen month apprenticeship programme.

### 1.5 National Passenger Survey

The results of the Autumn wave of the Passenger Focus National Passenger Survey have been published. Arriva Trains Wales scored an overall satisfaction rate of 86%, above the regional average of 83%.

### 1.6 Station Improvements

The Welsh Government has launched the £24m European Regional Development Fund backed programme to improve customer facilities, access, capacity and park and ride spaces at Aberystwyth, Pontypridd, Port Talbot, Rhyl and Ystrad Mynach stations. Arriva Trains Wales has committed £400,000 towards this project and is working closely with partners to help to deliver the projects successfully.

### 1.7 Senior Management Changes

Following the end of a successful 12 month secondment to the Arriva bid team, Tim Bell has now returned as Managing Director. Ian Bullock has now been appointed to the newly created role of Special Projects Director due to the large number of exciting projects currently being delivered on the Arriva Trains Wales network. Claire Mann has also joined Arriva Trains Wales as the new Operations and Safety Director.

## **2.0 WELSH LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (WLGA)**

### 2.1 Changes to RTC

In response to the WG announcement on 17th January 2014, the WLGA has been involved in discussions with the four RTC regarding changes to regional working and how to ensure a continued regional approach to transportation matters.

A report was prepared for WLGA Council on 28th February setting out the changes to RTC and making members aware of the issues particularly in relation to future Transport Plans and LAs statutory duty to produce a Local Transport Plan. Welsh Government will shortly be issuing guidance on preparing a local transport plan which WLGA understands will call for local authorities to produce something short and basic, to ensure there is compliance with requirements of the Act. If the recommendation is for a short and simple document to be produced by each local authority it is important to be aware of the risks associated with such an approach. The Transport Plans, as a statutory document, have to be robust enough to be relied upon in a variety of settings – not least in the preparation of Local Development Plans and when planning applications for major developments are being considered (or challenged).

### 2.2 Active Travel

The WLGA is represented on the Steering Group tasked with drafting the Design Guidance and through CSS has circulated an early draft. We have also responded to Active Travel settlement consultation calling for discretion for local authorities in designating Active Travel settlements.

### 2.3 PTI Traveline Cymru

At the WLGA Council on 28th February, the changes to the governance arrangements resulting in a reduction of local government representation from

four members to one member was agreed. Discussions are currently ongoing regarding future member attendance and officer support together with a process for ensuring that all LAs have sight of Board papers and opportunity to input into the meetings via the LA representative.

#### 2.4 Learner Travel

Welsh Government recently consulted on a specific issue in relation to Learner Travel. This is a revision to the risk assessment for walked routes to school which proposes increased liaison with stakeholders including children when undertaking a risk assessment. In our response we highlighted that the new proposals would be more resource intensive and that potential control measures to mitigate the risks would require capital funding.

#### 2.5 Salt Stocks

As we move into Spring, the winter has proved to be a relatively mild one and stock levels have held up well. The latest stock-take showed that around 175,000 tonnes remain in stores across Wales (including Welsh Government stock). That compares with around 213,000 tonnes in November as we went into winter. However, deliveries have been taking place continually over this period so it would be highly misleading to conclude that only 38,000 tonnes have been used. It will be important that LAs continue to build stocks back up now despite the mild winter and not see this as an area for short term cost cutting.

### 3.0 **BUS USERS CYMRU**

#### 3.1 Activities

In conjunction with the Welsh Government, Bus Users Cymru held surgeries in Aberystwyth, Lampeter, Carmarthen, Llangollen, Corwen, Bala, Barmouth, Dolgellau, Cardigan, Abergele, Rhyl and Holywell. These sessions were designed to provide passenger and potential passenger thoughts on what the services should like and what to include in the tender documents and SQPs for the new TrawsCymru networks.

3.2 For the year April 2013 to March 2014 the Bus Users Cymru Bus Compliance Officers reported to the Consortia for the mileage reimbursement element of RTSG (previously BSOG) but as from 1 April 2014 this will change. Bus Users awaits advice on new arrangements.

#### 3.3 Issues

Bus Users UK is still waiting to hear about their grant funding for 2014/15

3.4 The Passenger Transport User Committee is to be disbanded in its present form from 31st March 2014. A new body called Public Transport Users Advisory Panel is to be set up in its place and Bus Users Cymru is one of seven bodies represented on this new group.

This Ministerial advisory group will be meeting after 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 and the following have been invited to sit on the group: ATOC; Bus Users Cymru; CTA Cymru; CPT Cymru; Disability Wales; Passenger Focus; Citizens Advice Cymru.

- 3.5 Bus Users Cymru anticipates a rise in the number of complaints as the network changes start to make an impact. In addition the EU Passenger Rights Directive stipulates Bus Users UK as the body that will handle complaints on services of 250km and over. Although not many bus services in Wales reach the mileage stated, it is envisaged there will be an uplift in numbers of complaints as a result of the higher profile of our name.

## 4.0 COMMUNITY TRANSPORT ASSOCIATION

### 4.1 Policy and Public Affairs

With change underway again to the way bus and CT services are planned and funded in Wales, CTA Cymru has been liaising with the current RTCs and individual LAs to ensure that capital bids for the sector were included amongst those submitted to Welsh Government last month. However, it is another matter whether these bids will be prioritised. Additionally, although guidance on the new BSSG grant has yet to be issued at the time of writing, the draft that we have seen indicates that the minimum percentage to be spent on CT has been reduced from 10 to 5%, which is a cause for concern for the sector.

The Minister for Economy, Science and Transport has asked CTA Cymru to be part of the new Passenger Transport Users Advisory Panel which takes over from the disbanded Passenger Transport Users Group in April.

CTA worked with the office of The Older People's Commissioner for Wales to contribute material to her recent report on 'The Importance and Impact of Community Services within Wales' which includes transport. The report can be found at

[http://www.olderpeoplewales.com/Libraries/Community\\_Services/The\\_Importance\\_and\\_Impact\\_of\\_Community\\_Services\\_within\\_Wales.sflb.ashx](http://www.olderpeoplewales.com/Libraries/Community_Services/The_Importance_and_Impact_of_Community_Services_within_Wales.sflb.ashx)

CTA continues to contribute to the Welsh Government's three 'Transport to Health' working groups in North, South West and South East Wales, which are looking at access issues arising from the reconfiguration of local health board services.

The work of the NEPT National Implementation Board, of which CTA Cymru is a member, comes to an end in March after 4 years during which time the original 4 pilot schemes have expanded to 9. CTA Cymru has also been working with the Wales Renal Network during this financial year to look at how some journeys could be provided by CT operators.

The next meeting of The National Assembly for Wales Cross-Party Group on CT will take place in early April, prior to recess. Health transport was the main topic at the previous meeting.

### 4.2 Membership Support and Projects

Training programmes for members are underway in both South East Wales and North Wales, covering areas such as strategic and business planning, financial management, service route development and data gathering. These are being delivered free of charge to members thanks to financial support by the current

Regional Transport Consortia in those areas.

Work is on-going to develop a CT scheme to meet unmet transport needs identified by CTA Cymru in Llanelli. We are working with the Local Authority, town council, members and a range of third sector umbrella groups for elderly and disabled people in the area.

CTA is working with Swansea University, the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) and our members on the provision of accessible transport for athletes and team supports to and from points of entry, and within Swansea itself during the European Paralympic Championships in August 2014.

The Welsh Government funded Deep Rural Areas project, which we have been managing, ends on 31 March, as does the Strategic Regeneration Area project for the Western Valleys.

CTA is holding a round of regional CT forums across Wales during March to discuss the new bus funding grant regime with members and other partners.

In North Wales, CTA is working with Local Authority colleagues and car schemes on Anglesey, and in rural Conway and Denbighshire to achieve greater collaboration and co-ordination of service delivery, including the development of common criteria and policies.

#### 4.3 Staff Changes

Following the departure of Kerry Lane, Senior Development Officer, in October 2013, we have been operating with a smaller staff resource over the last 6 months which has been difficult. Following a restructuring in South Wales, David Brooks has been appointed as the new development officer for South West and Mid Wales and will take up his post on 1 April. A similar post for South East Wales has had to be re-advertised, together with the Director's post, as Betsan Caldwell is leaving CTA Cymru in late April.

### 5.0 PASSENGER FOCUS

#### 5.1 National Rail Passenger Survey

Results of the autumn 2013 wave have been published. In South Wales, results are down slightly against the previous wave. In particular, for overall satisfaction with the station and its environment, car parking and transport connections, as well as punctuality, value for money and the upkeep of trains. Other aspects went up such as train comfort, personal security on-board and connections with other trains. See Table One overleaf

#### 5.2 Personal Security

Looking at National Rail Passenger Survey (NRPS) results for Arriva Trains Wales and taking the breakdown for personal security, this shows a reduction at stations and on-board in North Wales and the Valleys, although South Wales has gone up slightly on-board. See Table Two overleaf



**Table One - National Rail Passenger Survey: South Wales**

% satisfied/good

Factor	Autumn 2013	Autumn 2012	Autumn 2011
Overall satisfaction	88	87	83
Overall satisfaction with station	75	79	64
Ticket buying facilities	80	81	76
Upkeep/repair of station buildings/platforms	69	69	56
Connections with other forms of public transport	62	65	55
Facilities for car parking	66	70	64
Overall station environment	67	70	55
Personal security whilst using the station	68	70	64
Provision of shelter facilities	73	72	-
Overall satisfaction with the train	86	86	-
Frequency of trains on that route	74	72	70
Punctuality/reliability	85	90	81
Connections with other train services	79	76	70
Length of time the journey was scheduled to take	84	86	78
Value for money for the price of your ticket	55	59	56
Upkeep and repair of the train	76	80	73
Sufficient room for passengers to sit/stand	77	76	74
Comfort of the seating area	79	77	77
Personal security whilst on board	85	82	82
How well train company dealt with delays	53	55	47

**Table Two - NRPS Personal Security - Arriva Trains Wales**

% satisfaction	Spring 2010	Autumn 2010	Spring 2011	Autumn 2011	Spring 2012	Autumn 2012	Spring 2013	Autumn 2013
<b>Personal Security at Stations</b>								
North Wales	68	66	72	68	70	68	73	72
South Wales	57	59	66	64	69	70	72	68
Valleys	63	56	55	68	65	63	68	65
<b>Personal Security on Board</b>								
North Wales	80	81	84	85	85	85	86	82
South Wales	85	81	80	82	84	82	84	85
Valleys	76	82	82	80	81	79	86	84

### 5.3 National Assembly for Wales: consultation work

One of the ways we are making sure that passengers are at the heart of franchising decisions, is our recent work with the National Assembly for Wales. We have been assisting the Assembly's enterprise and business committee inquiry ahead of the new Wales and Borders rail franchise, which is due to start in 2018. Work included inviting rail user groups and other stakeholders to an event

in Cardiff on 3 October 2013 to discuss policies and priorities for the next franchise, helping to inform the inquiry. We also gave oral evidence to the committee, following our written evidence that we had already submitted.

The Welsh Government response has accepted (or accepted in principle) all the recommendations made in the Enterprise and Business Committee's report and this was also debated by the Assembly on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> February. Key points made were:

- Rolling stock strategy is the single most important aspect, together with links into electrification
- Welsh Government is working to negotiate devolution of the necessary powers and funding to be in a position to specify and procure the next franchise
- Ensuring that the opportunity is used to get considerable improvements for users – it is important that the franchise is designed to meet the expectations of the travelling public
- Reliability, punctuality and accessibility of services; along with emphasis on a timetable that is integrated with public transport

The Assembly's Petitions Committee have also launched an inquiry into funding of local bus services, following a number of petitions received. We are assisting in alerting organisations and stakeholder groups to the survey, to encourage a range of views to give a broad picture of passenger experience. The links are here:

Welsh: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/bysiau-a-thrafnidiaeth-gymunedol-yng-nghymru>

English: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/bus-and-community-transport-in-wales>

#### 5.4 Delays and Disruptions

Recently many parts of the country have faced unprecedented weather which has disrupted some rail services in a major way. No one predicted the impact of this level of disruption and the way it has been handled by the rail industry will be a key factor in determining passenger satisfaction during this period.

Our latest National Rail Passenger Survey (NRPS), published last month, found that nationally, only 40 per cent of passengers were happy with the way their train company dealt with delays. The research, carried out between September and November, showed that there was also a great deal of variation between the train companies that got the highest and lowest scores for dealing with delays. The top company, East Coast, scored 65 per cent, while the bottom, London Overground, scored 30. First Great Western and CrossCountry, the train companies currently bearing the brunt of February's extreme weather, scored 40 and 44 per cent respectively, with Arriva Trains Wales also scoring 44 per cent.

We are pleased to see the industry reacting positively, with train companies accepting each other's tickets and lifting time restrictions on tickets where there is major disruption. Bus companies have also been helping out and extra long-distance coaches have been laid on where rail services are affected. These alternatives have been a great help to passengers planning journeys. However, passengers wanting to travel to and from Devon and Cornwall are facing a double disadvantage. Not only do they face the delay itself, but in some cases they are paying more to travel than they usually would.

Passenger Focus has been monitoring the quality of online information provided by the rail industry to passengers and there is a lot of good practice. But the rail industry continues to struggle with information. For instance, journey planners on 25 February were still showing some trains running via Dawlish – 21 days after the sea wall was destroyed. The immediate focus has rightly been on restoring services as quickly as is safe to do so. But important questions do need to be asked about passenger information accuracy and whether the level of investment in weatherproofing the railway should go beyond what has already been announced for the 2014 to 2019 Control Period.

## **6.0 FIRST CYMRU**

## **7.0 SUSTRANS**

## **8.0 FIRST GREAT WESTERN**

# Agenda Item 9

## SWWITCH

### Newsletter

March 2014



#### Looking back...Looking forward...

The future of the transport consortia in Wales has been in question for some time. The Minister for Economy, Science and Transport had made plain her view that they were not providing benefits expected by businesses and that they were viewed as an additional tier of bureaucracy.

SWWITCH was set up in 1998 (before to the Welsh Government!) by the four constituent Local Authorities and has developed and evolved over the years to meet changing needs. It was formalised in 2005 by the establishment of a Joint Committee and it has been supported by the Welsh Government with revenue funding to employ a small team of officers since 2002.

However, the establishment of the Swansea Bay City Region has provided a new and more “economy focused” opportunity for collaboration on transport within the region and the Minister will now be seeking City Region Board views/input and City Region priorities for strategic transport in South West Wales. SWWITCH has been supportive of the City Region Board since the idea was first raised and has indeed taken the decision within the last year to align programme priorities with the City Region and the regional economic regeneration strategy.

With the Minister’s decision in January this year to withdraw the consortia revenue grant from 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 with the exception of the Travel Plan Co-ordinator post which will remain, there is inevitably significant change ahead. None of the SWWITCH Councils is able to plug the funding gap and SWWITCH staff have been put on notice. Whilst it is inevitable that there will be changes in terms of capacity (fewer staff) and outward signs (branded website, materials, papers etc) what will not change is the determination of the four Authorities to work with each other and to engage with partners to ensure that improvements to transport and access in the region are driven forward. That is the priority and focus for the future. To users of our transport network and systems the names, logos and boundaries don’t matter, it is the quality, coverage and capacity that matters. The four Authorities get that and that is why they will continue to collaborate long beyond SWWITCH.

#### No Oscars, but huge thanks

There is no money for a grand event, no red carpet or glittery ornaments for the mantelpiece, but we couldn’t draw a line under SWWITCH without passing on thanks to all those who have helped and supported the joint working over the last 16 years. This includes the all elected Members, Directors and Heads of Service who have all contributed time and effort over the years and especially the Officers:

**Simon Charles, Ceri Rees, Ben George, Brian Biscoe** – take a bow fellas!



And of course the SWWITCH staff who are currently seeking alternative employment:

**Marcus Judd, Allison Gough and Richard Watkins** – we couldn’t have done it without you and we wish you all the best of luck in your new careers.



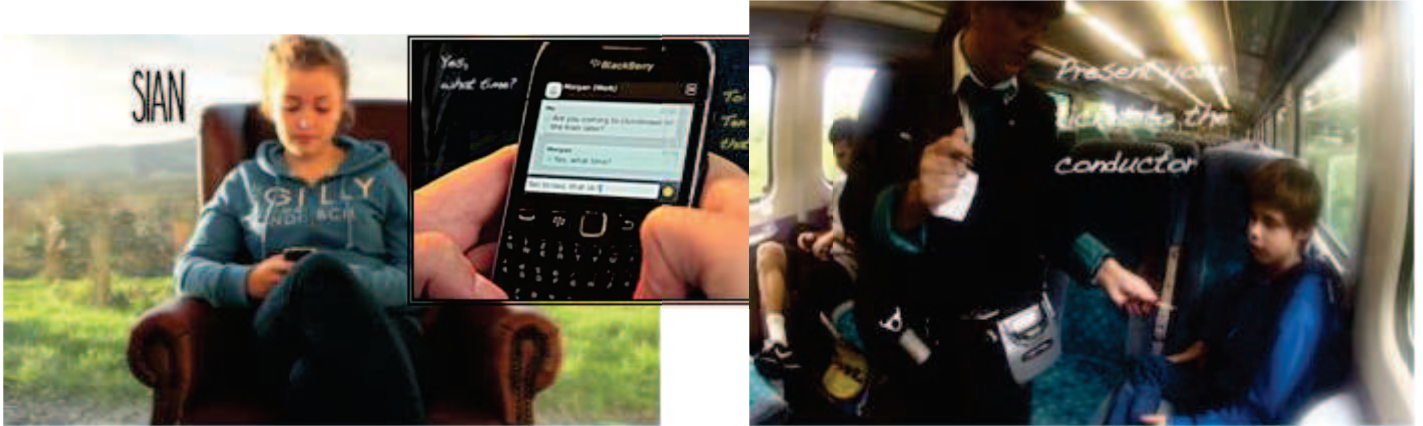
#### Regional Contacts

Sue Miles – City Region Transport Advisor – [sue.miles@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:sue.miles@swansea.gov.uk)

Jayne Cornelius – Regional Travel Plan co-ordinator – [jayne.cornelius@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:jayne.cornelius@swansea.gov.uk)



**The School Transport Project** has been branching out in every sense of the word! We have created a series of clips all about accessing train services. Filmed via a headcam with great support from our producer and editor Simon Worley, the clips show how to buy tickets online, collect tickets at the station, board the train and complete a journey. After a couple of days of Hollywood filming (well, Carmarthen train station and at home in the Preselli Hills!), we are very proud of the efforts of Ben Workman and Ella Rees our film stars with Iolo Rees coming in at the last moment to save the day with our Welsh voiceover. The clips, which are bilingual, will be used to complement a school assembly package aimed at Secondary School pupils but will also be completely accessible on the School Transport Website which will be an information source covering Bus Safety Training, CPC Driver Training, Train Training and relevant travel and transport information in our region.



**Regional Network Strategy**

The SWWITCH Regional Network Strategy was submitted on time to the Welsh Government on the 17th January 2014. It was largely informed by the responses received to the consultation and (unlike other consortia strategies) focuses on managing changes to bus funding through the establishment of a financial and accessibility model. The Minister intends to ask the newly established Bus Policy Group for Wales to include the regional strategies as part of their work plan in the next year.

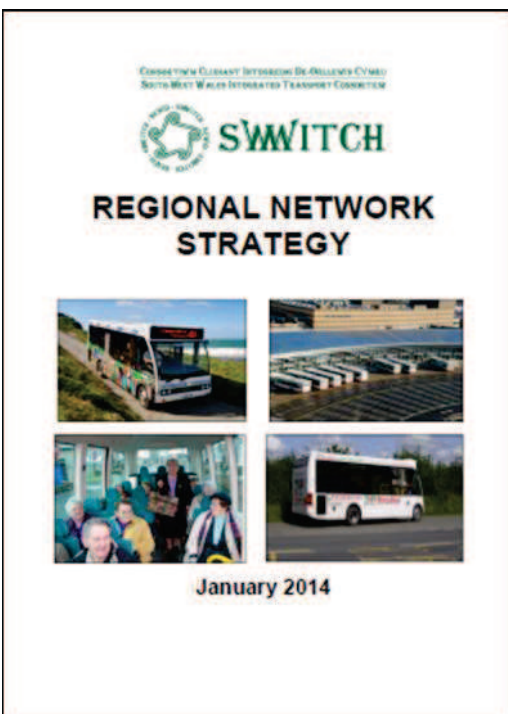
**Long Term Planning Process for Rail services in Wales**

Network Rail is making progress in the Long Term Planning Process (LTTP) for Rail in Wales. This work is intended to develop a range of options for future investment in rail for the period beyond 2019. The Wales work follows other LTTPs prepared for Long Distance, Regional and Urban and Rail Freight services.

The process which includes engagement with key stakeholders will examine various growth (or reduction) demand scenarios and look at what needs to be done to rail infrastructure to ensure that demand can be met (i.e. that rail can play an appropriate role in supporting economic development). Funders will then have a range of options and a clear pathway to achieve those options.

The work is still at an early stage, but it is expected that a draft Wales LTTP will be published in autumn 2014 and the final LTTP will be published in summer 2015.

Network Rail has met with SWWITCH twice already as part of this process and has acknowledged the value of the SWWITCH Rail Strategy in supporting the LTTP work.



## Local Transport Fund bids

The funding regime for delivering RTP projects has changed from the former Regional Transport Consortia Grant to the Local Transport Fund from April 1st 2014. This new fund (which has only £15.4m available across Wales in 2014/15) requires a minimum of 10% match funding from Local Authorities. A maximum of 5 projects per Authority can be submitted and the Welsh Government will pay no more than £1.5m per project. The closing date for submissions was 28th February 2014 and fingers and toes are crossed that the four SWWITCH Councils will be rewarded for their efforts in submitting well prepared and presented bids.



### Baglan Bridge

Construction has started on the £7.3 million link bridge on Baglan Energy Park. The four span bridge crosses railway lines and sidings that sever the Park, constraining its development and access options. The bridge creates a viable through route for buses that can deliver employees close to the offices and SME's on the Park, connecting with Swansea, Neath and Port Talbot. It will also form part of a safe route to the proposed new school in Baglan Bay. The link is due to open in June 2015.



### Green Dragon Bus

Just after the last newsletter was issued Green Dragon publicised their first user for their community scooter hire scheme. The scheme, based on the "wheels to work" principle, is intended to help those (over 17 years old) who live in rural areas and who have no access to private transport and no public transport options, to be able to hire a scooter at a reasonable rate to allow them to access training and job opportunities. Their first applicant completed the process in two weeks, including an application, interview, compulsory basic training and being issued with safety clothing. The applicant Toby (pictured left with the CBT Trainer) was very grateful for the freedom the scheme will allow him.

Scheme Name	LA	14/15 RTP Bid £k
Port Talbot to Swansea bus corridor and link bridge	NPT	1,500
Port Talbot Interchange	NPT	100
Fabian Way walking/cycling/bus access***	SWA	330
Amman Valley Cycleway **	NPT	505
Park and share sites near the M4	SWA	55
City Centre Urban Cycling	SWA	330
NCN links to Railway Stations (Fishguard, Goodwick and Milford Haven)	PCC	179
Carmarthenshire Walking & Cycling linkages	CCC	300
Strategic Bus corridors in Carmarthen	CCC	150
Strategic bus corridors RTI development	SWA	110
Haverfordwest to Tenby Bus corridor & Tenby Public Transport Interchange	PCC	603
Pembroke Dock Public Transport Interchange	PCC	405
Carmarthen Station Interchanges	CCC	175
Morfa Distributor road	SWA	1,500
Waterston/Blackbridge Access Improvements	PCC	135
Northern Distributor Network - Bulford Road*	PCC	697
Cross Hands ELR	CCC	500
Ammanford Economic Regeneration infrastructure	CCC	400
Community Transport Capital Enhancement Grant	NPT	65





The 'All Wales' bilingual journey sharing scheme was launched on Tuesday 18th February 2014 at the Liberty Stadium, Swansea. The main function of the site is to provide an online tool matching potential Car Sharers, both drivers and passengers. The website is free to register on and provides all the information needed by potential car sharers, such as safety information, cost savings, and carbon savings. It is a secure website to match registered users' journeys and has the benefit of providing useful information on carbon saving compared with a single occupancy driver making the same journey.

Users of the scheme do not have to be able to drive or own a car as there will be the facility to choose to share as a passenger. Alternatively the user can choose another mode of transport such as cycling or taxi sharing.

As part of the launch event, Craig Barrack from Carbon Heroes, with Jayne Cornelius the Regional Travel Plan Coordinator announced the launch competition 'Win a tank of fuel'.

**Tell it how it is**

The Petitions Committee of the National Assembly for Wales is keen to hear the views of users across Wales on bus and community transport provision. In particular views on any recent changes in provision and how they have affected users. An online survey is available on

<http://www.senedd.assemblywales.org/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=218>

Responses will be used alongside other evidence gathered to help form a series of recommendations to the Welsh Government. But hurry! The closing date is 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014.

**Bus funding**

The Minister has announced a change to the new bus funding regime introduced last April. The Regional Transport Services Grant will be replaced by a new fund "Bus Services Support Grant". This will be paid directly to Local Councils, who are able to continue to work together if they choose. In South West Wales the joint working on that element of bus funding which relates to mileage based payments LKSG (the former Bus Service Operators Grant) has worked well, with stability maintained throughout the year, helping operators of bus and community transport services plan better. So the decision to continue to work together (with Swansea as Host financial authority) was relatively easy.



Goodbye from the SWWITCH Team



sharecymru helps you travel more sustainably whilst commuting, on business and at leisure.



When you've registered at [www.sharecymru.com](http://www.sharecymru.com), you can add journeys you're planning to make and find people with whom you might share.

**Tablets to make transport better**

Funding obtained through the SWWITCH Capital Enhancement Programme has been used to purchase and implement 3 computer 'Tablet' screens to enable passenger booking information to be sent directly to the Town Rider vehicles utilising Trapeze software.

Bookings for the Town Rider services are managed by the Pembrokeshire Council's Demand Management Centre. Prior to the introduction of the new technology, the transfer of booking information was sometimes problematic in terms of ensuring the drivers are provided with the latest bookings, trip cancellations and changes to pick-up times.

The implementation on this technology ensures the drivers always have the latest booking information available on-board the vehicle and it will also allow changes in booking information to be sent direct to the vehicle at short notice. This will allow the 24 hour notice required for bookings to be reduced to same day bookings.



## SWITCH JOINT COMMITTEE

### City & County of Swansea Representatives:

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Councillor Paul Meara	23, Kimberley Road, Sketty, Swansea, SA2 9DP <a href="mailto:Paul.meara@swansea.gov.uk">Paul.meara@swansea.gov.uk</a>
Phil Roberts	Corporate Director (Place), Civic Centre, Swansea

### Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council Representatives:

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John Flower	Director of Environment

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Richard Workman	Director of Transport & Highways, County Hall, Carmarthen, SA31 1JP

### Pembrokeshire County Council Representatives:

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Councillor Huw George	Parsons Lodge, Clunderwen, SA66 7NQ <a href="mailto:cldr.huw.george@pembrokeshire.gov.uk">cldr.huw.george@pembrokeshire.gov.uk</a>
Ian Westley	Director of Transport & Environment, County Hall, Haverfordwest, SA61 1TP.

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John Pockett	CPT and First Great Western	<a href="mailto:Johnp@cpt-uk.org">Johnp@cpt-uk.org</a>
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