

SWWITCH Joint Committee Meeting – 28th March 2014

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 20th 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.

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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 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: