



Report of the Chief Executive (Neath Port Talbot Council)

Swansea Bay City Region Joint Committee – 29 October 2019

Establish a Transport Sub Committee

Purpose:	To establish a formal subcommittee of the City Region Joint Committee to take an overview of transport issues and develop the first stage of proposals to take forward the Swansea Bay Metro proposition.
Policy Framework:	None.
Consultation:	All 4 Chief Executives, Joint Committee Monitoring Officer & Joint Committee Section 151 Officer.
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The Joint Committee formally establish a sub-committee with a specific remit on transport, to consist of Cabinet Members or their nominees from the four constituent authorities with relevant officer support; 2) In the short term, the sub-committee oversee the completion of a proposition to be put to Welsh Ministers and other stakeholders outlining the region’s priorities for stage one of the Metro project and related programmes. This work should draw on existing funding streams (circa £200,000) and sign off a proposal by <u>31 March 2020</u>; 3) The Joint Committee request that specific Terms of Reference are drawn up for approval at the November meeting to achieve (2) above; 4) If recommendations 1-3 above are agreed, that the Chair of the Joint Committee formally write to Ministers to notify them of our intentions.



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Access to Services Officer:	N / A

1. Introduction

- 1.1 To establish a formal subcommittee of the City Region Joint Committee to take an overview of transport issues and develop the first stage of proposals to take forward the Swansea Bay Metro proposition.

2. Background

2.1 The Swansea Bay City Deal governance structure does not currently include a specific transport strand. However, at an earlier stage (when in shadow form) the Joint Committee recognised that transport and related infrastructure would be key to future growth prospects in the region and a vitally important adjunct to the projects covered by the Deal, so as to ensure maximum benefit.

2.2 It is therefore timely for this and a number of other reasons (see below) to return to the issue. These overlapping dynamics include:

- i) The Welsh Government developing legislative proposals in the context of the Public Transport (Wales) Bill which will cover many of these issues – work has already begun in terms of reforming key components of the wider system e.g. concessionary fares;
- ii) A separate proposal from Ministers on local government reform, expected imminently (and to be followed by legislation), that is near certain to include proposals for statutory Corporate Joint Committees in four areas – one of which is transport;
- iii) Professor Mark Barry’s commission from the Welsh Government to develop proposals for a Metro system for the region, which has been the subject of discussion in the Joint Committee. There is further analysis to be done; but a broad recognition that the rail proposals form a “backbone” to the transport proposal and that any proposition must reflect regional connectivity. This would effectively be a first/preliminary stage of the Regional Metro. However, whilst Professor Barry’s work concentrates on rail, there is a wider transport agenda to be considered including bus services, wider public transport system, active travel, highway infrastructure and other matters;
- iv) It is likely that further powers on rail will be devolved to the Welsh Government from Westminster in the short term. There also seems to be far more engagement on offer from the likes of the UK Government and others than previously;

- v) Whilst this is a long term agenda, it is also important that the region move beyond high level aspirations into the arena of specific proposals – not another strategy per se - for an initial phase of a comprehensive approach to transport in the region. The current proposals put forward for Velindre Parkway are welcome in principle but now needs to be considered as part of the wider strategic picture for the Region; and

- vi) It will be necessary to define roles and responsibilities so as to ensure that there is no duplication of effort. Informal contacts with the Welsh Government suggest that the basic approach would be for the region to define strategic priorities and Transport for Wales to act as the delivery arm. However, further discussion between stakeholders is necessary.

Background Papers: None.

Appendices: None