



**Wales TUC Response to the
National Assembly Environment, Planning
and Transport Committee
Policy Review of Public Transport**

**Wales TUC Cymru
1, Cathedral Road
Cardiff
CF11 9SD**

Introduction

The Wales TUC is pleased to respond to the National Assembly Environment, Planning and Transport Committee Policy Review of Public Transport. The Wales TUC represents 55 trade unions in Wales with a membership of around 500,000 people.

Chapter 2 Context and Perceptions of where we are now

Despite the poor perceptions of public transport in Wales, we agree that much has been done. The Wales TUC applauds the fact that the Assembly has given additional resources to Transport and addressed the issue of rail improvements in the first three years of its ten-year plan.

Chapter 3 Vision and Quality

It is important that quality is tangibly improved for the benefit of passengers.

Regarding Key projects, 3.15, Wales TUC would be in favour of light rail schemes in town/city centres, park and ride, community transport, improvements in long distance coach provision in Wales and green travel plans. We also support passenger's views being engaged in the first instance.

In relation to Recommendation 3, Wales TUC agrees and that the good work of SWIFT/TIGER needs to be carried on.

In 'Delivering the Vision', 3.16 – 3.20, Wales TUC agrees that improvements cannot solely come from within existing local authority boundaries. Much has been done within existing partnerships between local authorities and operators. Even wider boundaries such as those based on the four economic areas of Wales may produce greater strategic value.

Chapter 4 The present situation, Consortia and investigation of them

Regarding Recommendation 6, Wales TUC would agree and that the various Consortia need to have a more formal structure. We note that none of the consortia have their own separate existence or support staff and we would therefore recommend formalised secretariats.

Regarding Recommendation 10 with consortia improving their profile and developing branding, Wales TUC would agree that emphasise must be given to building the profile of local consortia.

Regarding 4.13 that there is an argument for rationalising existing consortia to four, reflecting the National Assembly's economic for a boundaries, Wales TUC acknowledges that there is widespread support for this.

Chapter 5 A ‘factual analysis’

In 5.13, there is a view that South East Wales should have a Passenger Transport Authority established. The Wales TUC would accept that ‘a one solution fits all’ approach would be inappropriate across Wales. One of the keys to successful PTA’s has been their lack of the rural/urban diversity that Wales is noted for. For example the South Yorkshire PTA was effectively traced over a Metropolitan Council boundary. There is a strong view that South East Wales has to stand-alone and the Wales TUC would endorse this view. The Assembly should give thought to arrangements in other parts of Wales, for example North East Wales linking up with neighbouring English local authorities.

In 5.15 – 5.17 there is a suggestion that to provide an all-Wales strategic leadership, (although not changing local authorities existing statutory powers) the National Assembly would need to explore further whether it could obtain powers of direction over the SRA on the lines of the Scottish model. The Wales TUC would agree providing ring-fenced monies are available from Central Government.

Chapter 8 Invites views on alternate models e.g. All Wales PTA, PTA for 10 SE Wales local authorities, developing existing partnership arrangements, other innovative solutions.

The Wales TUC suggests that consortia should be split into the four Economic Areas because of the strategic nature of the services and to guard against areas becoming too inwardly focused. These consortia should have a strategic reporting structure to the National Assembly for Wales.

Wales TUC would re-iterate that should responsibility for Rail be delegated to the National Assembly for Wales, which we would endorse, then funds from Central Government would need to be ring fenced.

Final Points

Key Road Projects

Wales TUC would wish to remind the Assembly that various studies have shown the need for a second M4 corridor in Newport. There is a feeling that this has rather slipped off the transport map and we would press the Assembly to re-visit this scheme urgently.

There is now urgent need for the road into Pembroke to be dualled. If West Wales is to gain the economic prosperity we are all looking for, then improving the infrastructure will be as important for West Wales as the A55 upgrade to North Wales.

Air Links

The Wales TUC applauds the opening of the Vale of Glamorgan line and Rhoose station. In the long term however we are convinced of the need for a rail spur into the airport together with better, upgraded road links.