

Report to	Partnerships Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting	13th February 2025
Lead Member / Officer	Lead Member for Environment and Transport /Head of Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Services
Report author	Traffic and Transportation Manager
Title	Draft Regional Transport Plan

1. What is the report about?

- 1.1. This report is about the ongoing development of the North Wales Regional Transport Plan which will replace the existing *North Wales Joint Local Transport Plan 2015*.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

- 2.1. To provide Partnerships Scrutiny Committee with an overview of the Draft Regional Transport Plan which is currently being consulted upon over a 12-week period. The consultation period commenced on the 20th January 2025.

3. What are the Recommendations?

- 3.1. That the Committee confirms that it has read, understood and taken account of the Integrated Well-being Appraisal (Appendix A) as part of its consideration.
- 3.2. That the Committee notes the contents of the report and provides observations on the Draft Regional Transport Plan.

4. Report details

Background

- 4.1. Across Wales, each of the four Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs) are required to produce both a Strategic Development Plan (SDP) and a Regional Transport Plan (RTP) for their respective region. This report concerns the development of the *North Wales Regional Transport Plan*, which is being developed by the North Wales CJC in collaboration with the six North Wales local authorities.
- 4.2. The *North Wales Regional Transport Plan* will replace the previous *North Wales Joint Local Transport Plan 2015*. The latter Plan will remain “live” until the North Wales RTP has been approved by the Welsh Government, which is expected to be in the Summer of 2025.
- 4.3. The purpose of the four Regional Transport Plans is to help deliver the ambitions contained within the Wales Transport Strategy “Llwybr Newydd”. There is also a National Transport Delivery Plan (NTDP) which will also help deliver the Wales Transport Strategy. The Welsh Government has developed the NTDP, and this will deliver trunk road projects, rail projects, and transport policies, projects and initiatives of national significance.
- 4.4. The Wales Transport Strategy (WTS) sets the vision for a sustainable, accessible, safe and efficient transport system across Wales. It places particular emphasis on encouraging modal shift to greener modes of transport.
- 4.5. Each RTP must contain policies for delivering the WTS at a regional level and will have a lifecycle of 5 years.
- 4.6. Each RTP must also contain a Delivery Plan setting out how the respective local authorities will deliver the policies set out in the RTP, in terms of projects and initiatives. The Denbighshire projects contained within the Delivery Plan are listed in Appendix B.
- 4.7. The RTP Delivery Plan is important because it will impact upon which projects secure WG grant funding in future years. In other words, if a project is not

contained within the RTP Delivery Plan, it will have significantly less chance of success against other projects which are competing for grant funding.

Development of the RTP

- 4.8. The initial development of the RTP has been led by Alwen Williams, Portfolio Director at Ambition North Wales, whilst the CJC executive structure is being established.
- 4.9. Moving forward, Conwy CBC will take on the role of lead authority for the further development of the RTP through to the approval stage.
- 4.10. The consultant, Arup, have been commissioned to help coordinate the input from the six local authorities, and to undertake other specific tasks associated with the production of the RTP, such as the production of an *Integrated Wellbeing Appraisal Scoping Report*.
- 4.11. Senior Officers from the six local authorities, including Denbighshire, have been involved in the development of the draft RTP policies and RTP Delivery Plan.
- 4.12. In terms of Denbighshire, the Traffic and Transportation Manager, has coordinated input into the development of the draft policies and projects from officers across various related services and teams.
- 4.13. The Lead Member for Environment and Transport has been involved in the process to develop the RTP through the CJC Transport Sub-Committee, which consists of transport/highways portfolio leads from each of the six North Wales local authorities.
- 4.14. The Draft Regional Transport Plan can be viewed by clicking on the following link: [North Wales Regional Transport Plan](#)
- 4.15. Appendix C contains a standard set of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) that has been developed to accompany the consultation on the Draft RTP.

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

5.1. The Wales Transport Strategy's vision is for an efficient, safe, sustainable and greener transport system. These ambitions will contribute towards several of the priorities within the Corporate Plan particularly; a prosperous Denbighshire; a greener Denbighshire; a healthier and happier, caring Denbighshire; and a learning and growing Denbighshire.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

6.1. The projects and initiatives contained within Regional Transport Plan Delivery Plan will mostly be dependent upon securing Welsh Government grant funding. Presently, there are at least seven different Welsh Government grants which relate to transport projects, albeit they are for specific purposes, such as road safety, active travel or low emission vehicles, for example. The Welsh Government has previously indicated that they intend to consolidate these into a fewer number of larger grants in the future.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

7.1. The scoping stage for a Well-being Impact Assessment has been undertaken as part of the development of the RTP.

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

8.1. The consultation on the Draft RTP recently launched on the 20th January 2025 and will last for 12 weeks. The engagement will largely take place online, owing to the need cover the whole North Wales region.

8.2. In addition to this report to Partnerships Scrutiny Committee, a report was taken to Cabinet Briefing on the 3rd February 2025. It is also proposed to issue a Briefing Note to all County Councillors in February 2025 about the Draft RTP.

- 8.3. Also in February 2025, we intend to write to all the clerks to the City, Town Community Councils to make them aware of the public consultation, and to inform them how they can respond directly to the consultation.
- 8.4. The feedback from Cabinet Briefing; from Scrutiny; and from County Councillors will be considered and collated into a Council response to the consultation, which will be submitted under a covering letter by the Lead Member for Environment and Transport.
- 8.5. Once the feedback from the engagement has been collated, this will be carefully considered in the development of the final version of the RTP which will be submitted to the Welsh Government in late Spring 2025.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

- 9.1. The delivery of Denbighshire County Council projects and initiatives contained within the Regional Transport Delivery Plan will mostly be dependent upon securing WG grant funding, especially due to the future financial constraints facing local authorities. As is currently the case, all projects seeking external (or internal) funding, will require a Financial Business Case submitting to Capital Scrutiny Group for approval, prior to the submission of any bids to WG.

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

- 10.1. The biggest risk would be a failure to include all of the transport projects that we are likely to want to deliver over the next 5 years within the RTP Delivery Plan, as this is necessary to secure WG grant funding for those projects. To help mitigate this risk, we have consulted with colleagues to ensure that the appropriate projects are included. The current engagement will also give a further opportunity for comment and discussion about the projects included.

11. Power to make the decision

11.1. Section 21 of the Local Government Act and Section 7.4.1 of the Council's Constitution outlines Scrutiny's powers with respect to policy development and review.