

ITEM

MEETING	THE COUNCIL
DATE	22 October, 2009
TITLE	North Wales Regional Transport Plan and the Mid Wales Regional Transport Plan
PURPOSE	To inform members of the contents of the North Wales Regional Transport Plan And to seek the Board's approval of the documents
RECOMMENDATION	i) That the full Council adopt the North Wales Regional Transport Plan and the Mid Wales Transport Plan.
AUTHOR	Head of Regulatory Department
PORTFOLIO LEADER	Councillor W Gareth Roberts

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Regional Transport Planning (Wales) Order 2006 (as amended by the Regional Transport Planning (Wales) (Amendment) Order 2008 and Regional Transport Planning (Wales) (Amendment) Order 2009) places an obligation on local authorities to produce local transport plans under section 108 of the Transport Act 2000.
- 1.2 The deadline for publication of the final Regional Transport Plan (RTP) is the 31 December 2009. The agreed deadline between the WLGA and the Welsh Assembly Government for the submission of the RTP was the 30th September 2009.
- 1.3 The six North Wales authorities, who form the TAITH transport consortium have worked jointly to produce the RTP. The three Mid Wales local authorities which form the TraCC consortium have been working on the Mid Wales Regional Transport Plan. There are three other transport consortia within Wales who are also producing similar documents.
- 1.4 Bilingual copies of the Executive Summaries are included as Appendix 1 and Appendix 2. Copies of the full english version of the RTP document are available in the Members' Lounge, whilst one of the other North Wales counties are in the process of translating this document into Welsh.
- 1.5 The Council should note that the North Wales Regional Transport Plan does not cover the Meirionnydd Area of Gwynedd. The Central Wales Regional Transport Plan, includes the Meirionnydd Area and that is why Gwynedd are in an unique position in Wales having to contribute to the preparation of these documents for two transport consortia.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 Developments to date – TAITH (North Wales)

2.1.1 The draft RTP documents were consulted upon and scrutinized by the Environment Scrutiny Committee on the 16th September, 2008.

2.1.2 The TAITH Board approved the Provisional Regional Transport Plan at the 12th December 2008 meeting and formally submitted the document to the Welsh Assembly Government on the 30th December, 2008.

2.1.3 Comments on the submission were received from the Welsh Assembly Government in March 2009. Significant dialogue has been undertaken with the Assembly's Regional Transport Planner concerning this and other informal feedback to ensure that the Regional Transport Plan meets the requirements of the Welsh Assembly Government.

2.2 Development so far – TraCC (Mid Wales)

2.2.1 The draft RTP documents were consulted upon and scrutinized by the Environment Scrutiny Committee on the 7th November, 2008.

2.2.2 The TraCC Board approved the Provisional Regional Transport Plan at the 5th December 2008 meeting and formally submitted the document to the Welsh Assembly Government on the 30th December, 2008.

2.2.3 Comments on the submission were received from the Welsh Assembly Government in March 2009. Significant dialogue has been undertaken with the Assembly's Regional Transport Planner concerning this and other informal feedback to ensure that the Regional Transport Plan meets the requirements of the Welsh Assembly Government.

2.3 National Transport Plan

2.3.1 That the consultation version of the National Transport Plan (NTP) has been produced by the Assembly, and was released before the Senedd's summer recess in mid July with a view to adoption by the 31st December, 2009.

2.3.2 Officers have worked with other authorities to review the document and have made appropriate amendments to the RTPs. As part of this work, TAITH and TraCC have prepared a consultation response to the NTP.

2.4 Finance and the 5 year Programme

2.4.1 There have been continuing discussions between the WLGA, Transport Consortia and the Welsh Assembly Government concerning the future funding arrangements for the Regional Transport Plan process.

- 2.4.2 One significant issue considered has been how current ‘committed’ schemes would be treated in the new Regional Transport Plan system.
- 2.4.3 Five key legacy road schemes have been agreed to be taken into the Regional Transport Plan process. Of the five schemes, two are in the TAITH Region, namely;
- Holyhead Port Access Road (A55 extension)
 - Wrexham Industrial Estate Access Road
- And one are in the TraCC area
- Ceredigion Southern Link Road
- 2.4.4 It has been proposed that the cost of these schemes will be top sliced by the Welsh Assembly Government from the consortias’ budget over the next few years.
- 2.4.5 Representatives of the four consortia met to discuss the methodology for determining how the remaining budget would be allocated. After much discussion, all four consortia were unanimous in agreeing the formula for how the headroom would be allocated.
- 2.4.6 It was agreed that the current Local Transport Services Grant (LTSG) formula should be used as a basis for apportionment. In the case of TAITH this would result in a 22.4% allocation. This compares well with TAITH’s previous allocation of 18.7% between 2001/02 and 2009/10.
- 2.4.7 In the case of TraCC, this would mean an allocation of 13.7%.
- 2.4.8 This initial allocation formula will take effect from April 2010 and run for an interim period of three financial years. Prior to the commencement of the fourth year of the Regional Transport Plan period, a full review of the funding mechanism will be undertaken to establish a more permanent arrangement. The interim arrangement would give time to develop robust criteria for determining future funding apportionment, linked to objectives in the RTPs and appropriate consortia area data.
- 2.4.9 Contained within the TAITH RTP (Page 71), an indicative summary 5 year financial profile is set out. This is a summary which assumes a constant £100 million Transport Grant budget line, and that the five nationally agreed ‘legacy’ projects start on time and on budget.
- 2.4.10 The Council will note that the consortia budget is fairly small to start with and over time grows as the ‘legacy’ programmes complete. There are a number of variables in this analysis, not least projects starting on

time and to budget and the overall level of funding which is allocated by the Welsh Assembly Government.

- 2.4.11 Project programming and prioritisation required in order to complete three strategic options of Preferred, Best Alternative and Do–Minimum has been undertaken by the respective programme groups (Group of the respective Heads of Service and the Executive Officer) for TAITH and TraCC. This has been reviewed by the North Wales Strategic Directors Group for the next TAITH Board Meeting. Programming and prioritisation for the TraCC consortium has been undertaken through a process which mirrors this arrangement.

3. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- 3.1 Members are informed that the Regional Transport Plan, including the 5 year capital programme was submitted and approved by the TAITH Board meeting on the 11th September, 2009.
- 3.2 The Mid Wales Regional Transport Plan and 5 year programme was submitted and approved at the TraCC Board meeting on 4th September, 2009.
- 3.3 A list of schemes relevant to Gwynedd which are included in the North and Mid Wales Regional Transport Plans are included as Appendix 3 and Appendix 4.

4. RECOMMENDATON

- 4.1 To recommend that the full Council adopt the North Wales Regional Transport Plan and the Mid Wales Regional Transport Plan.

A. Views of the Local Member:

B. The Views of the Statutory Officers:

1. Chief Executive:

"This work is the result of extensive collaboration and joint working and there is agreement between the authorities on the proposals. The projects identified in appendices 3 and 4 have implications for the county. It is recommended that the Board approve the adoption of the plan."

2. Monitoring Officer:

“It is a statutory requirement that Local Transport Plans be approved by the Full Council, but no other issues of propriety arise.”

3. Chief Finance Officer:

“I note from 2.35-2.46 of the report that the four consortia in Wales have agreed to use the Transport Grant formula to allocate resources between them. There will be a need for the consortia and the Welsh Assembly Government to formalise this agreement before implementation from April 2010. However, I support the recommendation for the Board/Full Council to approve the Regional Transport Plans.”

C. Background Papers:

CH. Policy Implications:
