

**N.B. This is a copy of the Ceredigion County Council response to 'Policy Review of Public Transport'.
Original is in surface mail**

Environment, Planning and Transport Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
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CF99 1NA

10 October 2001

Mr. D.A. Thomas

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Pl.Misc/DAT

Dear Sirs

Policy Review of Public Transport

The Consultation Document, 'Policy Review of Public Transport', was considered on 26 September 2001 by a Working Party of Members and subsequently the Cabinet on 2 October 2001.

The Working Party welcomed the National Assembly for Wales' Policy Review of Public Transport and the opportunity afforded to comment on the Consultation Report.

It noted the finding that people want to use public transport but are dismayed by poor service quality and lack of provision, and agrees that this situation calls for a visionary approach backed with considerable resources, both public and private, to address historic levels of under investment in public transport.

It concurred that transport planning should be brought onto a regional basis and that the voluntary groupings of regional consortia should be strengthened to deliver improved services, and, looking to the longer term, a new organisational model needs to be designed to meet the needs of Wales.

Having regard to the specific recommendations, it agreed that it would be appropriate -

R1 - to develop a quality kite mark as part of the work on quality partnerships and contracts, initially covering bus services, and extended to include community transport, rail, and other modes.

R2 - for the National Assembly, local authorities, and transport operators, to address historic levels of under investment in public transport.

R3 - for the National Assembly and local authorities working together with operators, passengers and other stakeholders, to take forward the following priorities as funding allows, subject to Recommendation 11

- Extend the concessionary fare scheme to include community transport, and taxis on a limited basis, and consider the opportunity to support travel by young people.
- Pilot all-mode information centres

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- Feasibility studies for second generation public transport (to include feasibility studies for sea-bourne public transport around coastline)
- Establish an all-Wales passenger group to cover all modes of public transport
- Develop interchanges between modes of public transport (and also between private and public transport)
- Develop park and ride facilities
- Set up a school transport demonstration project (with an emphasis on conditioning children into a lesser dependency on car-ownership as adults)
- Develop community transport as part of the mainstream of provision
- Improve long distance coach provision (particularly inter-modal long distance coach services)

R4 - for local authorities to prepare regional public transport strategies by April 2003 reflecting bus strategies, and including developments on rail and community transport.

R5 - that regional transport strategies should guide decisions on funding by the National Assembly.

R6 - for each consortium to agree with partners, including the National Assembly, how objectives in the regional public transport strategies will be delivered, taking into account Local Transport Plans (including cross-border travel patterns) and availability of funding.

R7 - for local authorities to consider how they would establish more robust regional consortia building on existing arrangements so that National Assembly's vision and regional transport strategies can be implemented, taking account of local needs and the availability of resources.

R8 - for local authorities and the National Assembly Cabinet to consider how individual authorities would be affected under relevant legislation and whether there is the possibility of using existing legislation to place consortia on a statutory basis.

R9 - for the National Assembly Cabinet to consider with local authorities how the National Assembly should be represented on each consortium and the remit of its representatives.

R10 - for the consortia to raise their profile amongst passengers by developing their own branding, linked to quality services.

R11 - for the National Assembly and local authorities to agree an evaluation framework for measuring the benefits of targeted public transport investment at national, regional and local levels, focused on delivering improvements and avoiding future mistakes.

R12 - that evaluation results of public transport policies, programmes and projects should be collected as a body of evidence of what works in Wales over time, providing a base for future policy development.

R13 - that passengers be involved in drawing up the evaluation framework, and involved early on in evaluating individual public transport schemes.

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R14 – that all those involved in planning and implementing public transport policy in Wales should learn about what does and what does not work elsewhere, and consider how we can learn from this in developing more effective public transport services in Wales.

With regard to the issues (Chapter 4 and Chapter 5), the Report recognises that Ceredigion County Council is a Member of the Mid Wales Partnership, with observer status within the SWITCH Partnership. The focus in the document on a regional approach, i.e., preparation of regional public transport strategies (R4), and that they in turn would guide decisions on funding (R5), the subsequent delivery (R6), the strengthening (R7) and the placing of such consortia on a statutory basis (R8), makes it imperative that the current basis of such consortia is considered to be the best means of addressing the needs of public transport within its own area.

Ceredigion's geographic location, transport corridors, travel to work patterns and public transport links may necessitate a thorough review of its commitment to its present partners, or indeed require its active and full participation within two regional consortia. It is unclear from the document whether/how such arrangements would/could be accommodated.

With regard to the longer term, the creation of an All-Wales PTA is not favoured: developing on existing arrangements is preferred.

Members did not wish to comment on what the appropriate provision should be for South East Wales.

Yours faithfully,

**D.A. Thomas
Policy and Development Engineer
for Director of Highways, Property and Works**