

# **NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **Streetscene & Engineering Cabinet Board**

24<sup>th</sup> May 2019

### **Report of the Head of Engineering & Transport**

D. W. Griffiths

#### **Matter for Decision**

**Wards Affected:** All Wards

#### **Transport Regional Governance**

#### **Purpose of Report**

1. To seek Members' endorsement in principle, to align transport governance proposals to the City Deal Board.

#### **Executive Summary**

2. The current regional working arrangements have been in place since the Welsh Government ceased financial support for the former South West Wales Integrated Transport Consortium (SWWITCH) in 2014. SWWITCH was a formally constituted body where decisions were based on a consensus arrangement. Decisions were made by the Executive Board Members, each with voting rights at regional level, with policy decisions approved by the constituent Local Authorities. The arrangement functioned effectively from the period of inception in 2005 to the point that it came to an end in 2014.
3. Since 2014, the four constituent authorities, Carmarthenshire, Neath Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire and the City and County of Swansea have continued to work together; with the respective authority's Executive Board Members continuing to meet periodically. There are no formal governance arrangements in place and Members have no decision making powers.

#### **Background**

4. The current arrangements are not considered to be suitable for the region to have sufficient influence at national level and place the region in a vulnerable position when competing for funding with other areas of Wales. More substantive regional governance arrangements will help ensure the

region builds on its record of effective collaboration to develop transport policy and strategy and the delivery of transport projects that were prioritised in the respective transport plans.

### Moving Forward

5. There are major developments likely to happen over the next 12 to 24 month period, which will have an impact on regional transport planning and delivery. It will be important for the region to have a higher profile to influence the level of transport investment for the region and to ensure democratic input to regional and national policy. The developments include:-
  - The Welsh Government has indicated, it would like to see a more robust governance arrangement for the current collaborative working arrangements for transport in South West Wales.
  - The Welsh Government intend to establish Joint Transport Authorities, initially to plan and manage the delivery of public transport.
  - Projects that are being delivered under the City Deal to improve the economic performance of the region, will change the nature of movement of people and goods as the projects come on stream.
  - The Metro Project, currently being led by the City and County of Swansea, has work-streams that are moving forward. Such projects include the development of public transport including bus and rail and a review of regional transport strategies. All will require regional decisions to be made as the projects develop.
  - The delivery the Economic Regeneration Strategy 2013-30 and vision for the region, i.e. “By 2030, South West Wales will be a confident, ambitious and connected City Region, recognised internationally for its emerging knowledge and innovation economy.”
6. Given the significance of the City Deal arrangements to deliver the regional economic strategy and ambitions, it is suggested that it would be appropriate to align the governance arrangements for transport closely to the City Deal Governance structure.
7. It is therefore proposed that a new sub board for transport is set up to be constituted of the respective Executive Board Member with responsibility for transport, from each local authority. The purpose of the Transport Board

would be to consider all transport policy and strategy matters for the City Deal Board and to respond to national government proposals around policy development, with due regards to the emerging Joint Transport Authorities.

8. It is proposed that the Transport Board would make decisions on transport policy and strategy to be ratified by the City Deal Board and approved by the constituent Councils.
9. The proposal is framed to support and help the City deal improve peoples' lives in all parts of South West Wales, both urban and rural, by raising aspirations, improving services, boosting skills and creating well paid employment opportunities across the region. From a transport perspective, the proposed vision for Transport is consistent with that set out in the Joint Transport Plan for South West Wales i.e. "To improve transport and access within and beyond the region to facilitate economic regeneration, reduce deprivation and support the development and use of more sustainable and healthier modes of travel."
10. The proposed objectives of the Board are:
  - To co-ordinate the delivery of an integrated transport strategy for the Region, seeking to influence the development and use of more sustainable forms of accessible public modes of transportation through an appropriate mix of transport projects and supporting policies in the transport and related fields
  - To promote the essential role of transport in economic and land use planning, and to influence land development to make the necessary provision for transport across the Region.
  - To improve connectivity, the efficiency and reliability of the movement of people and goods within and beyond South West Wales on the local and regional networks to support economic growth across the City Region.
  - To improve access for all to a wide range of services and facilities including employment, and business, education and training, health care, tourism and leisure activities.
  - To improve the sustainability of transport by improving the range and quality of and awareness about, transport options, including those which improve health and well-being.

- To improve transport integration between services and modes of transport in South West Wales.
  - To implement measures which will protect and enhance the natural and built environment and reduce the adverse impact of transport on health and climate change.
  - To improve road safety in South West Wales.
  - To respond and comment on National proposals and policy development.
11. The proposal to align transport with the City Deal Governance is the first stage of the process. Should the proposal be approved the next stage would be to seek approval from the City Deal Board and constituent Councils. Should approval be provided by the respective organisations, formal governance arrangements and the structures will be developed and presented to the City deal Board and constituent Councils.

### **Financial Impacts**

12. There are currently no financial implications.

### **Equality Impact Assessment**

13. A Screen Assessment has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010. After completing the assessment, it has been determined that this function does not require an Equality Impact Assessment.

### **Workforce Impacts**

14. There are no workforce implications other than Officer time.

### **Legal Impacts**

15. There are no legal implications at this stage.

### **Risk Management**

16. There are no risk management implications associated with this scheme.

## **Consultation**

17. There is no requirement for external consultation on this item.

## **Recommendations**

18. It is recommended that Members endorse in principle:-

- The proposal to align transport governance to the City Deal Board.
- To present the proposal to the City Deal Board for consideration.

(Should the City Deal Board be mindful to approve the proposal, more formal governance arrangements will be presented for future approval).

## **Reasons for Proposed Decision**

19. To strengthen Regional Arrangements i.e. relating to transport policy development on a more formal arrangement.

## **Implementation of Decision**

20. The decision is proposed for implementation after the three-day call-in period.

## **Appendices**

21. None

## **List of Background Papers**

22. None

## **Officer Contact**

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