

Agenda – Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee

Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 1 – Senedd

Meeting date: 7 March 2018

Meeting time: 09.00

For further information contact:

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Private pre-meeting (09.00–09.15)

(Private item) Summary of survey and focus groups – Active Travel

(Wales) Act 2013 – Post-Legislative

(09.15–09.30)

1 Introductions, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

2 Campaigners – Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 – Post-Legislative Scrutiny

(09.30–10.45)

(Pages 31 – 72)

Rachel Maycock, Wales Manager, Living Streets Cymru

Steve Brooks, National Director, Sustrans Cymru

Ryland Jones, Head of Built Environment, Sustrans Cymru

Attached Documents:

Research brief

EIS(5)–06–18(p1) Living Streets

EIS(5)–06–18(p2) Sustrans Cymru



Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales

Break (10.45–11.00)

3 Built environment – Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 – Post-Legislative

(11.00–11.45)

(Pages 73 – 80)

Simon Shouler, ACE Cymru Wales Manager, ACE Cymru Wales

Robert Jones, Associate Transport Planner with WSP Consultants, ACE Member

Martin Buckle, Independent Planning, Transport and Regeneration Consultant / Chair, Wales Planning Policy and Research Forum, RTPI Cymru.

Mark Farrar – Planning Director, The Urbanists Ltd (Representing RTPI Cymru)

Attached Documents:

EIS(5)–06–18(p3) ACE Cymru Wales

EIS(5)–06–18(p4) RTPI Cymru

4 Paper(s) to note

4.1 Correspondence from the Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Transport to the Chair regarding the Traffic Commissioner for Wales

(Pages 81 – 84)

Attached Documents:

EIS(5)–06–18(p5) Correspondence from the Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Transport to the Chair regarding the Traffic Commissioner for Wales

4.2 Correspondence to the Leader of the House and Chief Whip, and Minister for Culture, Tourism and Sport regarding Ofcom: Draft Memorandum of Understanding

(Page 85)

Attached Documents:

EIS(5)–06–18(p6) Correspondence to the Leader of the House and Chief Whip,

and Minister for Culture, Tourism and Sport regarding Ofcom: Draft Memorandum of Understanding

4.3 Correspondence to the Cabinet Secretary for Energy, Planning and Rural Affairs regarding the planning elements of the Mobile Action Plan and her response

(Pages 86 – 88)

Attached Documents:

EIS(5)–06–18(p7) Correspondence to the Cabinet Secretary

EIS(5)–06–18(p8) Correspondence from the Cabinet Secretary

4.4 Additional information from Openreach following the Committee meeting on 25 January

(Pages 89 – 90)

Attached Documents:

EIS(5)–06–18(p9) Additional information from Openreach following the Committee meeting on 25 January

5 Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to resolve to exclude the public from the remainder of the meeting

6 Correspondence to the Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Transport and written evidence received on speed limits – New Powers: New Possibilities inquiry

(11.45–12.00)

(Pages 91 – 103)

Attached Documents:

EIS(5)–06–18(p10) Correspondence to the Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Transport including annexed summary of key issues – New Powers: New Possibilities inquiry

EIS(5)–06–18(p11) Written evidence from the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) regarding speed limits

EIS(5)–06–18(p12) Written evidence from Wales Police Forces regarding speed limits

EIS(5)–06–18(p13) Written evidence from GoSafe regarding speed limits

7 Consideration of draft summer Forward Work Programme

(12.00–12.15)

(Pages 104 – 105)

Attached Documents:

EIS(5)–06–18(p14) Draft Forward Work Programme

Private de-brief (12.15–12.30)

Agenda Annex

Document is Restricted

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Agenda Item 2

Document is Restricted



Living Streets assessment of the implementation and operation to date of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013

On behalf of pedestrians in Wales, Living Streets Cymru wants to see active travel as the preferred and best choice for people making short, everyday journeys such as the walk to school.

The letter of the Active Travel Act, to produce maps is on track, with some small delays. However the vision to transform our country into an active travel nation is not being realised by the Act and those responsible for its implementation.

In regard to implementation there is still a lot to be done. The letter of the Act is being delivered, mostly on schedule. However, the spirit and purpose of the Act is to increase active travel and this cannot be done in the transport portfolio alone. Delivery needs to be seen across health, education, communities as well as environment briefs amongst others. A joined-up effort across Welsh Government could make efficiency savings and, most importantly, see more people benefit from active travel. Active Travel delivery sits within Road Safety and Transport but the bulk of benefits would be seen in public health.

The wide variety of benefits of active travel are not being seen across the country. While there are hot spots of behavior change delivering higher rates of walking and cycling and some good examples of infrastructure improvements, these are the exception.

For example out of 1549 schools in Wales there are fewer than 100 are funded by Welsh Government to have intensive support to increase and improve active travel, only 30 schools received Safe Routes in Communities funding to improve the journey to school in 2016/17.

Given the scope for savings across government in health alone - low physical activity levels among children and adults is estimated to cost the NHS Wales £650 million a year – investment in active travel schemes is excellent value money. Compared with other investment in transport projects, walking environment improvements are good value for money¹.

In order for the act to be effective the Action Plan needs to be more strategic and ambitious, setting targets and increasing multi-year funding to delivery partners and Local Authorities. Data collection and evaluation are important to guide this work, but should no longer be used as a delaying tactic to hold up progress or innovation.

We need to invest in schemes that are proven to increase walking (and cycling) across the country and ultimately make every school an active travel school, and every workplace an active travel workplace. Some of the levers to make this change exist but they are not being coordinated centrally or expected to deliver. The 21st Century Schools programme and the Wales and Borders and Metro franchise are key opportunities, led and funded by Welsh Government that must be harnessed.

Action Plan

Without a clear road map for improvement, including targets, deadlines, funding streams the Action Plan is unable to deliver change. The current action plan sets out a vision, but no method to get there.

A revised Active Travel Action Plan should set out an ambitious approach to funding, targets and implementation across departments and public bodies.

Mapping

These maps need to be made relevant to those who need them, but the target audience is still unclear. If they are for planners and local authorities then this was an expensive and time consuming exercise. If they are meant for public use it needs to be clear how and why they would access the maps. The mapping is at worst an exercise that has raised expectations with communities that there will be infrastructure improvement, which may not be the case due to funding.

The Welsh Government needs to raise the bar and offer greater leadership so these processes yield maps fit for purpose, i.e. they increase and promote active travel for all.

Consultation

The design guidance section 3ⁱⁱ sets out the best practice and tools for consultation. I would suggest the majority of Local Authorities did not adhere closely to this, but rather followed the statutory minimum of 12 weeks online consultation. With the complexity of the process, an online approach was not an ideal method to consult communities on the active travel routes they use and would like to use. Living Streets, Sustrans and Cycling UK worked to identify the opportunity and methods for consultation on the integrated network maps across Wales, using our networks to encourage people to get involved where they live, work, study.

Living Streets developed a bilingual school route audit toolkit for schoolsⁱⁱⁱ based on a pilot in three Local Authorities, this was sent out to all 22 Local Authorities as a consultation tool for the active travel mapping, school travel plans and safe routes in communities bids. To my knowledge this has not been used by any local authorities to date.

Impact on the ground

The scale of impact on the ground is still extremely small. When I ask if people have noticed a difference since the Act was passed I have never heard anyone say they have noticed a positive difference. There is an implementation deficit that needs to be addressed urgently.

A recent pedestrian survey highlighted a number of concerns, issues which prevented people from walking as often or as safely as they wished. The top two issues were pavement parking and reducing the speed limit in residential areas to 20 miles per hour. The Wales Act 2017 devolves powers speed limits of Welsh roads to the Welsh Government Ministers. The Act should be used to lead the way in making Wales one of the safest and easiest places to walk.

Walking schemes in Wales

There was one walking scheme for health impacts, Let's Walk Cymru in Wales. The scheme was run by the Ramblers for over 12 years. Walking for health schemes like this focus on shorter community walks, particularly as a method to tackle social isolation and increase physical activity, thereby reducing the rate of preventable illnesses such as heart disease, Type 2 diabetes, some cancers and obesity.

In 2017 this scheme was ended, with no announcement or explanation given. In England and Scotland walking for health is a growing area of work. Given we have the Act in Wales, this seemed to be a retrograde decision. There are no other walking schemes looking at behaviour change, which are funded by the Welsh Government.

In 2017 Living Streets carried out a School Route Audit pilot project for 3 schools, despite the success of the pilot there was no scope within Welsh Government to develop this scheme.

Schemes such as the Daily Mile are promoted but not funded by Welsh Government.

Walk to School

Living Streets runs the WOW walk to school challenge across the UK. In England over 3000 WOW schools participate, with over 1200 funded directly by DfT. In Scotland there are over 300 WOW schools, with about 200 funded directly by Scottish Government. In Wales there are currently 8 self-funded or LA funded WOW schools, and 0 funded by Welsh Government.

The WOW scheme works to increase walking rates to school on average by 23%^{iv}. It is based on the badge collection incentive for children to walk at least once a week. Last year 600,000 children took part across the UK.

Crucially the data collected in each school records the mode of travel for every child every day. This data tracks progress and effectiveness of interventions to increase active travel.

We submitted a proposal to Welsh Government for funding to place WOW in Welsh schools, in particular to translate materials and the data collection software, Travel Tracker^v, into Welsh language, this was unsuccessful.

Active Travel Board

The role of any board is to provide an external perspective and offer timely and informed advice, for government boards this should ideally be for the Minister, in an opportunity for direct communication and dialogue with industry/sector experts.

The Active Travel Board has had several iterations since 2014, the chair, membership and ministerial attendance has varied. As several board members are also (potential) delivery partners there is a need to increase transparency on the actions and advice of the board.

The role of Welsh Government officials should also be clarified on the board, for example in ensuring advice gets through to the minister in this direct forum. A chair of the board should be engaged in the agenda and neutral, not an interested party.

In our view ministerial attendance is essential at all Active Travel Board meetings. If the Board is to drive a real increase in active travel there needs to be Ministerial oversight to ensure better coordination across government.

Funding

Firstly there is very little transparency when it comes to the amount of funding being spent on active travel, where this money is being spent and the outcomes achieved.

Our experience in behavior change programmes shows that multi-year funding is key to achieving results that can be then sustained without direct support. Most of the funding to Local Authorities, either for the mapping process or Safe Routes in Communities are one year pots of funding, with no guarantees for future funding. This makes it impossible to plan a series of work. Year on year Local Authorities do not know what they will receive and many have stopped bidding for funds from these pots as they cannot be relied upon.

We support the calls for there to be a minimum spend per person on active travel, of at least £10 per head. This should also be divided into capital and revenue schemes to support behavior change alongside infrastructure improvement. Potential streams of dedicated funds include a model like England with DfT spending 1.2 billion on the CWIS, coupled with Department for Education PE and Sports Premium grants for schools raised by the 'sugar tax' which can now also be spent on active travel to and from school^{vi}.

An independent study for DfT has shown for every £1 invested, our walk to school programme is expected to return £7.64^{vii} in benefits. Interventions like these can help reverse the long term

decline in the number of children walking to school in Wales. Other delivery partners have similar return on investment ratios for cycling schemes.

Target-setting

The Westminster Government has signed up to the Living Streets target to reverse the decline in the number of children walking to school, to get it back to at least 55%.

Having passed the Active Travel Act, the Welsh Government should be able match or better this commitment.

Living Streets Cymru have offered to hold workshops with experts and government officials from England, Scotland and Wales to develop targets for walking and cycling that are ambitious and suitable.

Active Travel Strategy – some comparisons

While we have an Act here in Wales it is clear that we need to better integrate policies and implementation across government to deliver strategic change.

DfT have the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy^{viii} includes targets by 2025 for children walking (to 55%) and cycling (double) to school and increase walking as the natural choice for short journeys. The Strategy sets out how government departments, local governments, industry, other transport networks, business and the third sector all work to deliver these targets.

Scotland has a National Walking Strategy and Cycling Action Plan for Scotland 2017-2020 with aims to increase walking up with the best performing countries.^{ix}

Recent Active Travel Wales data – some UK comparisons

Firstly it is worth noting the data released by Welsh Government not as detailed as the DfT's Cycling and Walking statistics for England released earlier this year.

Data on active travel released by the Welsh Government^x reveals a severe drop in walking rates for people in Wales, including children on the school run. The Welsh Government statistics reveal 42 per cent of primary school children walk to school, down from 50 per cent in 2013-14.

Most alarmingly the release suggested this was a 'slight' reduction. With over 270,000 pupils in primary school a reduction of 8% is estimated at 22,000 fewer children walking to school. There is a correlation between this data and an increase in the number of children travelling to school by car.

The reduction in the number of children walking to school seems to be largely the result of a fall in the number of those walking to school on their own or with friends. Safer crossings, school street closures and 20mph limits are all ways to help parents feel safer walking to school.

Walking for travel

- 61% of adults walked for at least five minutes at least once a week for active travel purposes. This has fallen from 66% in 2013-14, despite the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 and the Active Travel Action Plan published in February 2016.
- For comparison, the England 2016 figures showed 42% of adults walked at least ten minutes at least once a week for active travel purposes, and 68% walked at least once a week for travel or leisure.

Walking to school

- 44% of children actively travel (and 42% walk) to primary school, and 34% to secondary school. This was a reduction for primary school children from 50% in 2013-14, which seems to be largely the result of a fall in the number of children walking to school on their own or with other

children, and a corresponding rise in the number travelling by car.

- Distance to school is not surprisingly a strong predictor of walking: 78% of primary school children who lived less than a kilometre from their school sometimes walked to school, but just 26% of those who lived 1–2 km away did so. 86% of secondary school children who lived less than a kilometre and a half away from their school sometimes walked to school but just 47% of those who lived 1.5–3 km away did so, and fewer than 5% of those who lived at least 3 km away.
- Again there's a rural / urban divide: Children living in more sparsely populated rural areas, defined as 'hamlet and isolated dwellings' were more likely to use a car to get to school and less likely to walk, than those who lived in urban areas. It seems likely this is correlated at least partly with distance, but there's no data on it.
- As children get older they reduce their reliance on an adult and are more likely to walk on their own or with other children. Travelling to school by car is very common for young children (over half of children under 10 years old), but as children get older and go to secondary school, use of the car reduces (less than a fifth of children aged 17 to 19).

Regional variations

- The percentage of people who walked for more than 5 minutes as a means of transport, more often than once a month, varied from 42% in Flintshire to 86% in Cardiff. Cardiff was also the local authority with the highest proportion of people walking as a means of transport most frequently and Flintshire the lowest, with 44% walking every day in Cardiff and 14% doing so in Flintshire
- This is partly due to the rural / urban divide: 72% of people in urban areas walked for more than 5 minutes as a means of transport, more often than once a month, compared with 59% of people in rural areas. People in urban areas were also more likely to walk more frequently, with 31% of people in urban areas walking every day compared with 22% in rural areas.

ⁱ <https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/media/1392/making-the-case-summary-final.pdf>

ⁱⁱ <http://gov.wales/docs/det/publications/141209-active-travel-design-guidance-en.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/media/2770/living-street-toolkit-english-_online-final.pdf

^{iv} <https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/what-we-do/projects/wow>

^v <https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/what-we-do/projects/wow-travel-tracker>

^{vi} <https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/what-we-do/walk-to-school/sport-premium>

^{vii} Economic webtag analysis carried out by Capita, March 2014

^{viii} <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-publishes-12-billion-plan-to-increase-cycling-and-walking>

^{ix} <https://www.transport.gov.scot/our-approach/active-travel/walking-and-cycling/>

^x <http://gov.wales/docs/statistics/2018/180130-active-travel-walking-cycling-2016-17-en.pdf>

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Sustrans Cymru

Submission of evidence to the National Assembly Economy, Infrastructure & Skills Committee post-legislative scrutiny of the Active Travel (Wales) Act (2013)

February 2018



About Sustrans Cymru

Sustrans Cymru is the charity that makes it easier for people to walk and cycle in Wales. We work for a Wales with happier, healthier people; greener, better local environments; and stronger economies and communities. With bases in Aberystwyth, Bangor, Cardiff, Ruthin, and Swansea; our behaviour change, built environment, policy and communications, volunteer teams work across Wales to help implement the Active Travel Act.

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Summary

Sustrans Cymru welcomes the opportunity to respond to the National Assembly Economy, Infrastructure & Skills Committee's Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 post-legislative scrutiny.

Having led the civil society campaign for the introduction of the Act, Sustrans Cymru was pleased when the National Assembly passed legislation in 2013. Whilst the Act has been a positive development, Sustrans Cymru believes its implementation has failed to deliver the level of ambition originally promised. Further, we would caution that whilst the Act is welcome, the effects of the legislation will be limited unless Welsh Government tackles Wales' overreliance on the car.

Sustrans Cymru recommends that Welsh Government re-asserts its support for the Act by providing appropriate political leadership and funding, and boosting the capacity and capability of professionals to deliver.

Further, we would recommend that Welsh Government places modal shift at the heart of its transport agenda, and uses the new Welsh Transport Strategy and the review of active travel funding as two vehicles for driving forward a step change in how Wales travels.

How far the stated objectives of the Act have been achieved

Introduction

The Act has a broad, three-party purpose: the mapping process; enhancing provision and giving due regard; and the wider promotion of active travel journeys.

On **mapping**, whilst Welsh Government and local authorities are implementing the letter of the law, Sustrans Cymru remains disappointed at the quality of implementation and the extent to which public bodies are following the spirit of the law. On **enhancing provision and ensuring due regard**, we are content that some progress is being made, however we would caution that without a concerted effort this progress will become isolated examples of good practice rather than common practice. Finally, on the **wider promotion of active travel journeys**, whilst some work has been undertaken the extent to which Welsh Government is prioritising active travel in both spending decisions within transport, and beyond the wider mapping process is poor. Sustrans Cymru maintains that overall revenue funding for behaviour change interventions is insufficient.

Mapping process

This section of the Act should be more than a mapping exercise. The Existing Routes Maps (ERMs) and the Integrated Network Maps (INMs) process is an opportunity for local authorities to engage with communities, develop a vision for active travel, and lay out a strategic plan aligned with other council priorities. It should be an opportunity for local authorities to consider how they can use transport planning as a tool for implementing the Well-being of Future Generations Act; tackling issues like air pollution, physical inactivity, obesity and other public health concerns; congestion; road safety; community cohesion, isolation and loneliness; prosperity and retail vitality. Local authorities should view the INM as one of a number of important corporate documents alongside their corporate plan/programme for government, LDP, or economic development plan. In this respect, the Act should be 'more than a map'.

Despite some examples of good practice, local authorities have largely failed to see this process as 'more than a map'. Whilst we are content that local authorities have followed the letter of the law, the spirit of the Act and the original promise of the Act have largely not materialised. Cardiff and Wrexham are two examples of authorities that have aligned INMs to corporate priorities.

Why does this matter? On a policy level, local authorities risk misusing an important weapon in their armoury: active travel contributes to at least five of the seven well-being goals. On a delivery level, without a strategic vision for local route networks, current scheme prioritisation methods do not provide an effective forward planning process.

The cause of this problem is complex and Sustrans Cymru is clear that the cause does not lie with any one particular body. There are four factors that we believe contribute to the problem: political leadership; insufficient capacity; unpredictable and insufficient funding; and insufficient capability; which are all expanded upon below.

Political Leadership

Despite the passage of the Act, and the will on the part of some Welsh Ministers to implement it effectively, overall active travel has not been afforded the kind of political attention it has enjoyed in other parts of the world. Experience shows that to deliver change, we need political leaders who are prepared to personally lead this agenda, challenge business as usual, paint a positive vision for the future and enable delivery bodies to meet their obligations. In Scotland, London and New York City, we see leaders who have articulated a vision, crafted a strategy and have been hungry for results. Here in Wales, that kind of leadership is beginning to be demonstrated by the new administration in Cardiff council. A more assertive approach at a political level will drive this agenda

forward which in turn would stimulate greater buy-in and results from the civil service (beyond the small team working on active travel) and within local government, political leaders and senior officers. We would cite as an example the political leadership provided by Welsh Ministers in the implementation of the Waste (Wales) Measure (2010) and municipal waste targets as an example of what can be achieved.

Insufficient capacity

Within Welsh Government there is insufficient staff resource to implement the Act. Our understanding is that there are just 2.5 FTE within the civil service working on the Act and allied active travel matters. Similarly, within local government, there is insufficient staff resource with very little capacity at a senior level for walking and cycling.

Insufficient funding

Welsh Government has failed to provide appropriate funding streams to implement the Active Travel Act. Over the last 10 years capital budgets for transport have been around £300m per annum (equating to broadly £100 per capita per annum). Welsh Government understands that funding for active travel schemes was usually between £12-20m, an average of 5% of the total budget per year, or £5 per capita per annum. However because Welsh Government fails to capture investment data accurately, our estimate is that spend could be as low as £3 per head per year.

In Scotland, the investment picture is considerably better with around £16 per head per year. In 2016 the Mayor of London made a commitment to invest in 'record levels' in cycling which is expected to equate to £17 per capita per annum, an amount similar to that in Denmark and parts of the Netherlands. In Copenhagen city, investment levels on cycling have been more than £35 per capita per annum since 2004, resulting on a 41% modal share for cycling in the city.

Sustrans' Bike Life report which was published last year was the UK's biggest assessment of cycling in seven major UK cities including Cardiff. Our research found a considerable difference in spending levels across the seven cities ranging from £25 per capita in Bristol to just £4 per capita in Cardiff. The research also found overwhelming public support for investment, with 79% of those sampled by ICM in Cardiff liking to see more money spent on cycling. Bike Life went on to highlight the return on investment spending on cycling creates. Current spend in Cardiff delivers a £28m total benefit to the city including a saving for the NHS of £699,000 annually (equivalent to the average salary of 30 nurses); and taking 11,008 cars off the capital's roads each day (equivalent to a 33 mile tailback).

We have warmly welcomed the statement from the Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Transport to increase the 'aggregate' spend on walking and cycling. We have recommended to government that it increases investment to £10 per capita per annum for the financial year 2018/19, rising to £15 by 2019/20 and £20 by 2020/21. £20 by 2020 would not only provide the certainty and sustainability that delivery bodies including local government require, but would also send a strong political signal that the Welsh Government is truly committed to delivering the Active Travel Act.

As with any sector of the economy, transport needs certainty and predictability that enables forward-planning and instils confidence and ambition. At present, the allocation and delivery of active travel funding has made investment hugely challenging. Without a mandate of future funding streams aligned to the Active Travel Act, local authorities have little incentive to consider the development of a strategic programme for active travel schemes, and prioritise them effectively. The lack of multi-year funding has created a situation whereby smaller, 'shovel-ready' schemes are usually the only schemes to progress, often at a standard below the Design Guidance. This in part explains why very few landmark schemes have progressed over the last few years.

Notwithstanding the INM process, historic allocation of funding has tended to be piecemeal without any real alignment to a set of strategic objectives directed by Welsh Minister or any assurance that the final delivery of schemes will meet standards.

In addition to recommending an increase in investment, we have also recommended to Welsh Government that the budget is moved onto a five-year cycle and that firmer criteria are developed for the allocation of funding.

Insufficient capabilities

Whilst Welsh Government has provided some resource to support local authorities and industry to deliver the Act (such as the Design Guidance, guidance on funding applications, support on the INM drafting process) this level of support falls short of what is needed. We compare the situation regarding the Active Travel Act with that of the support provided by Welsh Government to the construction industry when it created new national standards for sustainable buildings and changed Building Regulations. Professionals need to have a better understanding of the policy agenda and a greater technical understanding of how schemes should be delivered. Issues include: Planning and Development Control processes, Road Safety Audit, and links to statutory approaches outlined in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges. Often, because the Act guidance is viewed as subordinate to these well-established approaches, there is little evidence of either the desire or ability to achieve the required step change in approach that is needed to properly implement the Act.

It remains to be seen the extent to which the mapping process will make a transformative contribution to new and improved active travel routes and related facilities needed to create integrated networks of active travel routes and related facilities in local authority areas.

Enhancing provision and giving due regard (in preparing transport policies and under the performance of functions under the Highways Act (1980))

We are content that some progress is being made in the implementation of these provisions of the Act; however we would caution that without concerted effort this progress will become isolated examples of good practice rather than common practice.

At a policy level, Sustrans Cymru has worked with Welsh Government to revise WelTAG and we are currently in dialogue with officials regarding the refresh of Planning Policy Wales (PPW). However, other strategic policy documents, like the Programme for Government and Prosperity for All, whilst making strong reference to active travel, fail to recognise and appropriately prioritise active travel as an agenda that will deliver wider government objectives (for example, town centre regeneration, carbon reduction and improved air quality, public health). At a senior-level, both within Welsh Government and local authorities, there is still a disappointing lack of awareness and understanding of the Act and the wider active travel agenda. Walking is often seen as a lesser-order problem that does not require government intervention, whereas cycling can be seen as a leisure or sporting activity, rather than a mode of transport. We are pleased however that the Future Generations Commissioner has prioritised sustainable transport and active travel as primary work stream for her office.

At a delivery level there exists a 'practice chasm', a gap between national policy and local delivery. Increasingly, policy documentation and strategic plans take account of the Active Travel Act in principle, but the reality of delivery timescales, lack of awareness among delivery staff and reluctance to innovate means that there is still little evidence of policy being put into practice on a wide scale. Application for funding of active travel schemes via programmes such as the Local Transport Fund and Safe Routes in Communities require authorities to consider the Act and this is reflected in scheme

submissions in terms of links to policy. However, scheme implementation often falls short of the required standards, particularly on innovative approaches, and this is not reflected in reduction or removal of funding approvals which is required to change the status quo. This is exacerbated by weak monitoring of scheme implementation. Without punitive measures to address this gap, it is unlikely the required step change in approach will be achieved within current funding systems.

Promotion of active travel journeys and securing of new and improved active travel routes and related facilities

Regarding the wider promotion of active travel journeys, whilst some work has been undertaken, the extent to which Welsh Government is prioritising active travel in both spending and policy decisions within transport, and beyond the wider mapping process is poor. Sustrans Cymru maintains that the level of Welsh Government support for behaviour change programmes is insufficient.

The Wales and Borders rail franchise procurement process (and the development of a South Wales Metro) represents a missed opportunity to better integrate walking and cycling with public transport. Integration between active travel and rail is often wrongly confused with bike storage on trains. The issues impacting integration are much broader and include the accessibility of stations for pedestrians and cyclists; the placement of a station within its wider physical environment (wayfinding, placemaking); safety and security measures; bike storage and allied facilities at stations; disabled access etc.

It is our view that Transport for Wales under-specified requirements for active travel in the bidding process, leaving a gap that has been filled by franchise bidders, local authorities and third sector organisations like Sustrans Cymru. The franchise could have been an opportunity for Welsh Government to clearly state its vision for an integrated active travel/rail network.

There is still an opportunity for Welsh Government to consider key walking and cycling routes as part of Wales' national infrastructure base, alongside motorways and trunk roads, broadband, energy distribution, flood management. It is for this end that we recommend that the National Cycle Network and other walking and cycling routes of strategic importance be included within the remit of the National Infrastructure Commission for Wales and the National Development Framework for Wales. Such an approach would ensure a more strategic approach to funding regionally important walking and cycling routes (such as the proposed Cycle Superhighways in Cardiff, or the travel to work corridors around the Deeside Enterprise Zone).

In our model of change, Sustrans Cymru believes there are three components to promoting active travel: infrastructure, individual behaviour change, and community engagement. Whilst Welsh Government investment in infrastructure is insufficient, the amount of resource it provides to support individual behaviour change and community engagement is even poorer.

Sustrans Cymru is funded by the Welsh Government to deliver our Active Journeys programme which works with schools across Wales to create a culture that makes it easier for children to walk, scoot or cycle. Supporting Schools in all 22 local authorities, we provide graduated interventions that help to build the skills, confidence and awareness that make active travel for everyday journeys a reality. Our work typically increases the levels of active travel by 9% after one year of engagement. Whilst we are proud of the impact this programme is having, we are conscious that we are engaging just 8% of schools in Wales. Further, with the end of our Cymru Active Travel Challenge project (focused on workplaces) there is no Welsh Government funded workplaces programme in Wales. This is despite Welsh Government's national strategy *Prosperity for All* stating a commitment to work with and

support the business community to improve the health and well-being of workers and help people to remain in employment.

Our Better Places programme is based on approach which combines placemaking with Complete Streets (a similar example can be seen in the Mayor of London's Healthy Streets programme). By involving residents and local communities in the street design process, Better Place is able to deliver low-cost physical interventions that improve the street scene, and improve walking and also cycling provision. Sustrans Cymru is delivering a number of projects as part of our Better Places programme, but would welcome Welsh Government support to ensure that, like in London, this approach is seen as an important vehicle for delivering community regeneration.

The effectiveness of subordinate legislation and guidance made under the Act

Sustrans Cymru considers the Design Guidance to be generally be good, however we would observe that we have yet to see any schemes that have been developed from start to finish using the Design Guidance. Local authorities have generally not been good at innovative design measures, except in Cardiff. One continual challenge has been the extent to which local authorities have wanted to reduce traffic capacity. It is still the norm that the Design Guidance is used in a way which 'fits' walking and cycling around space for cars.

Action which should be taken to improve the effectiveness of the Act and its implementation

Our mantra is better implementation and increased investment. Both are urgently needed and both are mutually dependent.

Action requiring ministers to report on active travel

Welsh Government produces an annual report documenting progress made in delivering the Act. The annual report is laid as a document before the Assembly and has been accompanied by a Written Statement from the minister. It is our view that this does not provide Assembly Members sufficient opportunity to scrutinise progress, and that Welsh ministers should commit to holding an annual debate of no less than one hour during government time.

The effectiveness of wider active travel policy in supporting delivery of the Active Travel (Wales) Act

The effectiveness of the Active Travel Action Plan

The Active Travel Action Plan should be a vitally important document that drives the implementation of the Act. However, the current content and use of the Action Plan is insufficient for this purpose. There is little political scrutiny of the Action Plan, SMART objectives and milestones are lacking, ownership can be confused. Sustrans Cymru does not recommend a lengthy redrafting exercise at this stage, however we would welcome the establishment of a national set of targets for walking and cycling based on evidence where latent demand for walking and cycling can be released.

The operation of the Active Travel Board

Whilst the Active Travel Board provides a useful forum to share information, the way the body is currently constituted is not fit for purpose. We also note calls for an active travel commissioner for Wales and observe the degree to which similar roles are working in other territories. In light of this, we would recommend that the Active Travel Board is replaced with a new National Advisory Board for Active Travel, which comprises of Welsh Government, local government, other transport sector stakeholders (such as regional transport authorities, Transport for Wales), NGOs, and academics/experts. The Board should have a publicly appointed chair, have a clear terms of reference, with papers published online.

Wider sustainable transport agenda

Despite the introduction of the Active Travel Act, transport policy in Wales is still largely driven by the car. In a Wales designed around the car, those that are unable to afford to own or run a car risk being excluded socially and economically. With more cars on the road, we know that levels of air quality are worsening and congesting is increasing, generating greater negative impacts on our health, economy, communities, and environment. There is a danger that new technology like EVs and major infrastructure projects like the South Wales Metro will be seen as silver bullets, but our concern remains that without a fundamentally different approach to the car, we will continue to entrench problems that harm the well-being of future generations.

Sustrans Cymru advocates a people-centre approach to transport policy. One where people are able to access shops, schools, healthcare and work within a short distance on foot or by bike. Where that is not possible, quality public transport including buses, should be the modal choice but properly integrated with walking and cycling routes. For some, using the car for shorter journeys will remain necessary. Urban shift workers and those in large parts of rural Wales are two examples. But for necessary car journeys, EVs fuelled by renewable energy should be the choice.

Welsh Government and all political parties need to grasp this challenge, and lead a step change in how Wales travels. The forthcoming Welsh Transport Strategy offers an opportunity to place a people-centred approach that delivers modal shift at the heart of transport policy.

Introduction

The Association for Consultancy and Engineering Cymru Wales' response comprises the agglomerated views and evidence from key member organizations.

The structure follows the two-stage headings and sub-headings of the consultation commissioning document.

1 Assessment of the implementation and operation to date of the Act

1.1 How far the stated objectives of the Active Travel Act are being achieved

1.1.1 Since 2013 cycling provision and activity in the South Wales region is encouraging, particularly in Cardiff. There have been 11.5m bike trips in Cardiff per year – a 28% increase between 2013 and 2014 (source: Bike Life Cardiff Report).

1.1.2 Formal submission of integrated network maps and public consultations on existing and future active travel routes shows Local Authorities' (referred to hereafter as LA) commitment to provide for Active Travel needs.

1.2 The effectiveness of subordinate legislation and guidance made under the Act

1.2.1 Active Travel Design Guidance (referred to hereafter as ATDG) provides standalone and simplified design guidance. The audit tools set out standards by which to evaluate active travel routes, however these could be refined further to reflect local characteristics and the requirements of less urbanized areas. The ATDG and audit tools were developed in collaboration with major campaign groups, cycling organizations and practitioners in the industry, giving them credibility. They capture lessons learnt from prominent schemes both in the UK and internationally.

1.2.2 The ATDG is well used across the UK as current best practice for LAs and practitioners. The Department for Transport (referred to hereafter as DfT) directs local highway authorities to the ATDG for producing Local Cycling and Walking Improvement Plans. There are English LAs that have adopted the term Active Travel.

1.2.3 Welsh LAs, and the promoters of major highway schemes, follow the ATDG as the Act places a duty on promoters of all Welsh transport schemes. We understand that all twenty-two Welsh LAs have developed existing route maps and integrated network maps. Some have identified very few routes on their existing route maps while others have done more

extensive work to identify a more comprehensive starting point. Generally, there appears to be uncertainty about future funding for year-on-year improvements.

1.2.4 Feedback indicates that the application of the ATDG to trunk road schemes would benefit from clearer guidance and early consideration during the scheme objective setting stage. Culturally, trunk road promoters should align with the expectation that new transport schemes should add value for active travel users.

1.3 What action should be taken to improve the effectiveness of the Act and its implementation

1.3.1 Make the Act's requirements more conspicuous to developers that do not regularly operate in Wales.

1.3.2 Expand the ATDG to cover less than perfect site conditions. For example, in south Wales' valleys towns, key routes commonly exceed a gradient of 1:40.

1.3.3 With cross-authority walking and cycling being commonplace, consider adopting a more strategic/centralised mapping and route-development approach.

1.3.4 Provide guidance to address fragmented and disjointed networks through urban areas and across authorities' boundaries to form continuous routes.

1.3.5 Clarify what constitutes enhancement.

1.3.6 Provide guidance on the level of survey-based evidence required to understand whether a scheme impacts on active travel users.

1.3.7 Clarify the spatial scope with which active travel users should be considered. For example, limit intervention to where the scheme interacts with existing active travel routes only or with communities, or whether there is a need for a wider, more strategic approach to the opportunities a new scheme might create. For example, a North Wales trunk road scheme provided only for active travel users within the scheme limits.

1.3.8 Provide further guidance aimed primarily at private developers setting out how residential and commercial developments might contribute towards future active travel routes.

1.3.9 Co-ordinate Active Travel schemes and wayfinding material at a national level, linked to the National Cycle Network.

1.3.10 Unlock Active Travel barriers by promoting schemes such as wayfinding, cycle parking and adult cycle training.

1.3.11 Set strategic targets and look at engaging communities to monitor the success of Active Travel schemes to assess against the targets.

1.3.12 Expand current appraisal methods to consider the impacts of Active Travel schemes.

1.3.13 Provide a consistent funding stream for interventions that are not funded by development gain. It appears that some LAs struggle to fulfil the Act's requirements year on year because of competing budgetary pressures.

1.4 How far has the Act represented, and will continue to represent, value for money

1.4.1 The Act usually increases the cost of developments and requires public funding. Current appraisal methods focus on journey time benefits and thus are not suited to appraising Active Travel schemes. Active Travel schemes can delay motorized traffic, causing economic dis-benefit using current assessment criteria. For example, schemes that require traffic light-controlled road crossing points. Therefore, any test of value for money would be weak at best using established criteria.

1.4.2 A better test might be to consider the added value, or the cross-portfolio impacts over the longer-term. For example, looking at the impact the Act is having on the growth in walking and cycling and the benefits this brings to people's health, lowering emissions and providing recreation opportunities.

2 Assessment of the effectiveness of wider active travel policy in supporting delivery of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013

2.1 The effectiveness of the Active Travel Action Plan

2.1.1 The Active Travel Action Plan gives good guidance on designers' roles and responsibilities and clarifies how clients should interact with the process.

2.1.2 The Act has had positive success in terms of LAs mapping and planning routes. However, there is variance in its application and success. For example, there are quick wins to disperse non-motorized users (NMU) throughout key urban areas, but the more difficult challenge is to provide them with longer-range access to urban destinations. Ironically, these projects could add more value, considering that there is likely to be latent demand for safe NMU commuter routes.

2.2 Whether sufficient funding and capacity are available to support implementation of the Act itself and wider active travel policy

2.2.1 The short answer is no. There has been some central government support but, in the main, the Act requires local authorities, private developers and trunk road capital budgets to fund the duties imposed. Due to fiscal constraint, without adequate and assured local transport funding, promoting Active Travel is likely to be at the expense of other

planned spend. This does raise the question as to whether year-on-year route development is viable.

2.3 The operation of the Active Travel Board

2.3.1 We are aware that the Active Travel Board scrutinized and challenged aspects of a trunk road project in North Wales for compliance with the Act. Our understanding is that the challenge was not upheld. (In most cases, this type of project is scrutinized in detail at public local inquiry.)

2.4 Whether active travel is integrated effectively in wider Welsh Government and local government policy

2.4.1 Integration appears patchy. Areas for improvement include: planning for new schools and earlier engagement in trunk road project planning. National Health Service Wales has, on at least one project, identified and championed Active Travel successfully.

2.4.2 Technical Advice Note 22 makes singular reference to the requirements of the Act. Developers outside Wales, looking to implement schemes in Wales covered by the Act, would benefit from more detailed information to avoid late design changes and additional cost.



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7 February 2018

e-mail response sent to: SeneddEIS@assembly.wales

Dear Sir/Madam,

Response to: The National Assembly for Wales' Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee is undertaking an inquiry into The Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013

The Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) is the largest professional institute for planners in Europe, representing some 25,000 spatial planners. RTPI Cymru represents the RTPI in Wales, with 1,100 members. The Institute seeks to advance the science and art of spatial planning for the benefit of the public. As well as promoting spatial planning, the RTPI develops and shapes policy affecting the built environment, works to raise professional standards and supports members through continuous education, training and development.

The response has been formed drawing on the expertise of the RTPI Cymru Policy and Research Forum which includes a cross section of planning practitioners from the private and public sectors and academia from across Wales.

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute our views to the above Inquiry.

1.0 The Objectives of the Active Travel Act

- 1.1 RTPI Cymru fully supports the objectives of the Active Travel Act.
- 1.2 Many of the towns, cities and neighbourhoods in the UK and elsewhere most noted for the quality of their built environment are those where people can get around easily on foot or by bicycle. Active travel is a key component of 'liveable' communities.
- 1.3 The prevalence of motorised transport presents a continuing challenge to planners and other built environment professionals seeking to create the attractive, healthy, vibrant and sustainable places which most people aspire to live in.
- 1.4 In developing local infrastructure that supports daily travel by active modes and enables more people to shift from car use, the delivery of the Active Travel Act will strongly complement the role of the Welsh planning system under the Planning (Wales) Act 2015 and the Well Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 to facilitate and manage the use of land in the public interest and support sustainable development and improve air quality. It is essential that the synergy between the Act

and the planning system is recognised and articulated through the development and implementation of planning policy at both local and national levels.

- 1.5 In facilitating development, the planning system places additional demand on transport infrastructure and networks. Given the high proportion of daily journeys which are short and local, and the high proportion of short trips which are made by car, the provision of local active travel networks can provide very effective mitigation of development impacts. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the planning system and the development industry to play its part in supporting the delivery of the Active Travel (Wales) Act.

2.0 Disconnect between the Active Travel Act and the Planning System

- 2.1 The Active Travel Act is a laudable piece of legislation, but the narrow scope of the duty it confers upon local authorities represents a major flaw. Due to the way that the Act and supporting guidance have been framed, in reality the burden of meeting the duty has tended to fall mainly upon local authority transport and highway functions. Whilst these functions would always be expected to play a central role in meeting the requirements set out in the Act, a 'whole local authority' approach integrating the actions of key service areas (e.g. education) is arguably essential in order for the Act to have its intended impact. In this regard, it is significant that the Act makes no reference to the planning system in Wales and requires no specific contribution to the delivery of the Act by local authority planning functions. This is in spite of the considerable influence the planning system has in shaping the design and use of the built environment and local movement networks, and in creating many of the problems which the Active Travel Act sets out to remedy, mainly, by the retrofitting infrastructure.

- 2.2 This lack of a clear linkage with the planning system represents a major weakness in the Active Travel Act which arguably jeopardises its future success. The best means of filling this gap (and of avoiding any revision to the Act) is via a revision of planning policy, planning guidance and the delivery and design guidance for the Act. The comprehensive revision of Planning Policy Wales (PPW) currently being undertaken by Welsh Government represents an ideal opportunity to begin this process. In addition to a strengthening of PPW there should also be appropriate references included in Technical Advice Notes relating to development plans, transport and design

3.0 Strengthening Planning Policy

- 3.1 PPW was first published by Welsh Government in 2002. Since then it has undergone periodic content updates to reflect changes in related legislation and policy. However, its format has remained more or less the same.
- 3.2 The most recently-published update of PPW (edition 9, November 2016) represents the final edition of PPW in its established format. Welsh Government is working on a comprehensive revision of PPW to align it with the Planning (Wales) Act and the Well Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.
- 3.3 The current edition 9 of PPW, (in section 8.2, page 119) makes only factual references to the Active Travel Act. It recognises the desirability of encouraging active travel for short journeys, asks local authorities to take into account the requirements of the Active Travel Act and encourages the implementation of facilities to support cycling. However, it places no effective obligation upon the developers of land to support the delivery of the Act through their schemes.

- 3.4 If the planning system is to contribute to support delivery of the Act, the content and language of the revised PPW (expected Spring 2018) where it relates to Active Travel needs to be greatly strengthened. Provision for active travel through the development process must be made a central and essential requirement under the new document. It must not be something that can be regarded as optional or tradeable through negotiation, as is possible under the current version of PPW.
- 3.5 The strengthened policy would require all new developments to:
- facilitate the development and completion of routes shown on local Active Travel Integrated Network Maps (INMs);
 - integrate with local active travel networks as defined in the INMs; and,
 - contribute to the expansion and improvement of local active travel networks through the provision of well-designed facilities within development sites and facilitating off-site connections.
- 3.6 Policy must also ensure these provisions are reflected within Local Development Plans.
- 3.7 The requirements relating to development management also need to be strengthened. In determining planning applications local planning authorities must ensure that development proposals maximise their contribution to the objectives of the Active Travel Act through their design and supporting infrastructure. This is necessary as, too often, the provision of active travel facilities within new developments is prevented or compromised due to other considerations taking precedence. Where developments do manage to include provision, it is frequently the case that facilities are poorly-designed and do not adequately meet users' needs. This highlights the need for clearer guidance on design and professional training.
- 4.0 The need for improved design guidance to address the design of active travel facilities in new developments.**
- 4.1 The Active Travel Design Guidance published to support the delivery of the Act provides advice on the design of good quality active travel routes. Embracing many aspects of good practice in infrastructure design, it is a useful and comprehensive document. However, its weakness is that it relates mainly to the retro-fitting of facilities within the existing highway network. This makes it of limited interest and value to the designers of new developments and planning decision-makers.
- 4.2 The document is in the process of being reviewed and revised by Welsh Government. This presents the opportunity to broaden the scope of the document beyond retro-fitting so that it is also relevant and useful for the design of new developments and streets.
- 4.3 The revised version needs to provide advice that is relevant for active travel design in all situations. It must work for planners, urban designers and engineers and help to reconcile the conflicts which frequently arise in the place-making process between engineering and aesthetic considerations.
- 4.4 Wales has a great opportunity to take the lead in creating comprehensive Active Travel Design Guidance that can be used for designing infrastructure both in the existing urban realm and within new development schemes and settlements.

5.0 Funding and Developer Contributions

- 5.1 Active travel infrastructure should be provided as an integral element of new development. Where off-site connections are possible and required to provide non-motorised access to a development or connect it to other facilities, developers must be expected to contribute to this provision through a S106 planning agreement or an agreement under S278 of the Highways Act 1980.
- 5.2 Any future reforms of the Community Infrastructure Levy should consider mechanisms that could generate funding which could help to pool contributions for the development of wider local active travel network development and to match funding from local authorities' own capital budgets and Welsh Government transport grants.

6.0 Championing the Active Travel Act

- 6.1 Delivering the Active Travel Act in Wales is not just the role of local authorities. Success will require the concentrated effort and the collective commitment of multiple organisations and professionals across the public, private and voluntary sectors.
- 6.2 Welsh Government has a key role to play in harnessing and co-ordinating the energies, expertise and actions of the many actors involved.
- 6.3 The establishment of a central unit within Welsh Government, if properly resourced, could provide the mechanism needed to champion and co-ordinate the delivery of the Act. Its role could include integrating delivery of active travel across policy areas, promoting the Act across all sectors, providing advice to practitioners delivering the Act and working with professional institutions, the development industry, academia, NGOs and local advocacy groups to facilitate inter-disciplinary collaboration through training and professional development programmes.
- 6.4 It is also important that Welsh Government leads by example in the delivery of its own projects - by ensuring that any new transport, development or regeneration schemes with an active travel component which Welsh Government delivers itself are exemplars of active travel best practice.
- 6.5 While the new Transport for Wales will focus on public transport facilities and services there will be opportunities for those facilities and services to link to and support active travel provision. Recognising and supporting such opportunities should be a specific aim for Transport for Wales.
- 6.6 The RTPI has championed improved links between transport planners and spatial planners for some time to ensure an effective level of communication and joint working. Improved links could ensure active transport initiatives are given a growing emphasis.

If you require further assistance, please contact RTPI Cymru on 029 2047 3923 or e-mail Roisin Willmott at walespolicy@rtpi.org.uk

Yours sincerely,



Dr Roisin Willmott OBE FRTPi
Director
RTPI Cymru

Ken Skates AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi a Thrafnidiaeth
Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Transport



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref MA – P/KS/0502/18

Russell George AM
Chair
Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee

13 February 2018

Dear *Russell,*

Thank you for your letter of 18 January 2018 regarding the Traffic Commissioner for Wales' first Wales specific Annual Report and his appearance at the Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee on 28 November.

I welcome the Commissioner's first annual report which has raised a number of important issues and I was pleased to be able to meet and discuss this report in further detail with the Commissioner on 23 November.

I am grateful to the Commissioner for his close and effective working relationship with officials, and for making available his expertise to assist in the work of the Welsh Government. The appointment of Wales's first, full-time Traffic Commissioner has created a resource sufficient to enable the Commissioner to significantly increase his engagement with the road freight and bus sectors, as well as other organisations with an interest in these modes of transport

You have raised a number of issues in your letter which I have endeavoured to address below.

The potential for a more effective and efficient Welsh approach to bus registration
Responsibility for the registration of local bus services will become a matter for the Welsh Ministers on commencement of the Wales Act 2017, expected later this year in the Spring.

In preparation for the new devolved responsibilities provided by the Wales Act 2017, I have asked my officials to consider reforms to the planning and delivery of local bus services. Our initial outline proposals were published following the first Welsh Bus Summit held in Wrexham in January 2017 and I expect to be able to bring forward detailed proposals for a further public consultation by the early spring, or early summer.

In developing these proposals, I shall be working with the Traffic Commissioner for Wales, the bus sector and local authorities to ensure that the procedures for the registration of local bus services are improved to ensure that the services delivered to passengers are the best they can be.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Like the Traffic Commissioner, I believe that better use of new technology will enable information about commercially registered local bus services to be shared more easily. I also consider it important that in registering local bus services, consideration is given to the viability of the proposed service, the impact on the local bus market and the standards of service to be provided to passengers in local communities.

Closer alignment of taxi and private hire vehicles

The enactment of the Wales Act 2017, and its expected commencement this year, will for the first time bring the licensing of taxis and private hire vehicles within the competence of the National Assembly for Wales. It is on that basis that I consulted last year on how licensing of taxis and private hire vehicles can be reformed and improved here in Wales.

The summary of responses to the consultation on taxi and private hire vehicle licensing in Wales has been published. The document can be found here:

https://consultations.gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultation_doc_files/summary-of-responses-taxi-and-private-hire-vehicle-licensing-in-wales.pdf

Detailed proposals will now be developed by officials on how best the licensing regime can be reformed to better meet the transportation needs of the people of Wales, operators and professional drivers in Wales. It is expected that these detailed proposals will be published for public consultation in the late Spring/early summer.

It is important that we explore how best the role of the Traffic Commissioner can support our ambitions for an integrated public transport network within the constraints that remain as part of the new devolved settlement. It is also important to note that functions of the Traffic Commissioner, other than the registration of local bus services, shall continue to remain matter reserved to the UK Government.

Making the Traffic Commissioner for Wales an appeal body and creating a pan-Wales DBS body

In principle, there is merit in exploring the opportunities now possible through the Welsh Government's investment in delivering a Traffic Commissioner dedicated to Wales.

An enhanced role in relation to transport appeals and disclosure and barring servicing may be a useful expansion to the role of the Traffic Commissioner in Wales. It should be noted however, that any formal expansion of the Traffic Commissioner's function may require the consent of the UK Government.

To make the rate of BSSG payments conditional on DBS checks for PSV drivers

In principle, I am in agreement that drivers of public service vehicles should be subject to DBS checks as a condition of their employment for the delivery of local scheduled bus services, as is the case currently with professional drivers delivering dedicated learner transport.

I have asked my officials to consult with stakeholders and local authorities to further explore the potential impact this proposal may have on the bus sector in Wales. Passenger safety must be our first duty.

The introduction of service standards to ensure PSV operators are not financially disadvantaged by late reimbursement of moneys such as concessionary fares

Local authorities already have their own targets for reimbursing bus operators for carrying passholders for free. We have asked all local authorities to develop a common timetable and to make that available to all bus operators.

The review of criteria for the award of contracts by local authorities

We have asked local authorities to confirm their procedures for awarding bus contracts with the aim of distilling those into a single set of criteria, and a common tender process and documentation throughout Wales. It is hoped that this could, subject to approval by each authority, be implemented from April 2020.

BSSG to put a greater focus on quality

Local authorities are already required to insist upon minimum standards, set by the Welsh Government, if they wish to award any BSSG to bus operators. Operators attaining enhanced quality standards may receive a higher award.

The Commissioner's recommendations, contained as examples in his report, will be included as part of the ongoing review of the quality standards required from operators to maintain their eligibility for BSSG.

Whether operators could be obliged, to use electronic card readers to monitor the use of concessionary fare cards to reduce the scope for mistakes and fraud?

The use of Electronic Ticketing Machines which meet the Welsh Government's minimum criteria for recording concessionary bus pass journeys has been a core requirement within the Welsh Government's Voluntary Welsh Bus Quality Standards since its publication in March 2016.

We have committed funding in 17/18 to replace obsolete smartcard machines for affected operators. This will ensure electronic pass recording continues to be undertaken in line with our reimbursement and counter fraud processes.

Organisations which issue community transport permits could be reduced to a single body, with the Traffic Commissioner for Wales dealing with appeals

The proposal put forward by the Traffic Commissioner for Wales appears to be a sensible and proportionate approach to the issuing of community transport permits in Wales. The Community Transport permit regime is a non devolved matter and shall continue to be a matter reserved to the UK Government following commencement of the Wales Act 2017 later this year.

The UK Government is proposing to undertake a public consultation in relation to the Community Transport Permit regime, expected to begin in the Spring. Discussions will be undertaken with the relevant organisations in Wales to bring forward proposals to adopt a system that best meets the needs of the Community Transport Sector in Wales.

The appropriateness of allowing HGVs to use bus lanes in limited cases where it might be effective means of improving traffic flow

This will be reviewed during 2018-19, including the possible safety implications, through discussions with responsible highway bodies, the Traffic Commissioner and road and freight transport organisations, enabling conclusions to be published by April 2019.

Welsh Government position on the balance between BSSG and concessionary fares in maintaining and developing bus services in Wales

Welsh Government and local authority funding for reimbursing bus operators for carrying passholders, and for supporting the bus network, meet entirely independent objectives.

Legislation requires local authorities to ensure that their reimbursement of bus operators meets the legislative obligation they have that those operators should be "no better and no worse off" as a result. There is no evidence that local authorities are reimbursing bus operators contrary to their obligation.

In contrast, local authorities' payments to bus operators under the BSSG scheme support the retention of the bus network.

Community Transport permitting arrangements currently and following commencement of the Wales Act 2017.

The community transport permit regime is a non-devolved matter and my understanding is that responsibility will continue to be a matter reserved to the UK Government once provisions within the Wales Act 2017 are commenced early next year.

Traffic Commissioner for Wales Resourcing

The Traffic Commissioner for Wales is appointed by and accountable to the Secretary of State for Transport. His existing staff and those three new bilingual staff we have agreed to fund are not and will not be Welsh Government employees. This means that his and their employers must be satisfied as to the suitability of their accommodation.

The Welsh Government initially asked the Commissioner's office to estimate the cost of refurbishing the premises formerly occupied by Bus Users Cymru, and to which he had access. Their estimate was into six figures, which we considered too high.

We then identified several commercial premises for the Traffic Commissioner to view. None was acceptable. More recently, the Commissioner viewed several other possible premises, and his office has been asked to assess their suitability.

We have reviewed internally what accommodation might be available within the Welsh Government's property estate, and commercially. This identified that the Commissioner's support staff could be accommodated within the Welsh Government's Llandudno Junction office, and his office has been advised of that.

The Annual Report initially available in English Only

My officials had explained to the Traffic Commissioner that we would meet the cost of translating his annual report into Welsh.

I trust this outlines our position on the issues you have raised and I look forward to continuing to work closely with the Commissioner to tackle the challenges facing the road freight and bus networks in the future.

*Yours ever,
Ken*

Ken Skates AC/AM

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi a Thrafnidiaeth
Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Transport

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru
Y Pwyllgor Cyfrifon Cyhoeddus

National Assembly for Wales
Public Accounts Committee

Julie James AM
Leader of the House and Chief Whip
Dafydd Elis-Thomas AM
Minister for Culture, Tourism and Sport
Welsh Government

19 February 2018

Dear Julie and Dafydd,

Ofcom: Draft Memorandum of Understanding

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft Memorandum of Understanding between the Welsh Government, the National Assembly for Wales and the Office of Communication (Ofcom). This was considered by the Public Accounts Committee on 12 February 2018, Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee on 14 February and Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee on 15 February.

The Committees noted that Welsh Ministers will lead on the appointment of the Welsh Ofcom Board Member. We believe that there is real merit in a pre-appointment hearing being held for this candidate by one of the Assembly Committees. While this hearing may not afforded a power of veto, it is a vitally important appointment, and such a hearing will enable Members to endorse and support the appointment, or highlight any concerns which may need to be addressed. We believe it will bring transparency and accountability to the process.

As you are aware, the MoU commits to the Ofcom accounts being laid before the National Assembly for Wales. Each Committee supports this position and agreed that this should be considered as part of the annual account scrutiny work that takes place across the Assembly's Committees.

Yours sincerely,



Committee Chair

cc: Elin Jones AM, Llywydd



Committee Chair



Acting Committee Chair



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Agenda Item 4.3

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru
Pwyllgor yr Economi, Seilwaith a Sgiliau

National Assembly for Wales
Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee

Lesley Griffiths AM
Cabinet Secretary for Energy, Planning and Rural Affairs
Welsh Government

29 January 2018

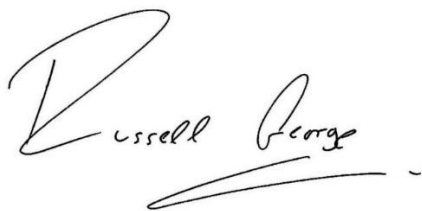
Dear Lesley,

Digitalisation update

The Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee recently took evidence from the Leader of the House and Chief Whip, Julie James AM on the subject of digitalisation update and in particular planning restrictions on masts.

The Committee would be grateful for an update on where the Welsh Government is on planning restrictions particularly in regards to the Mobile Action Plan?

Yours sincerely,



Russell George AM

Chair Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee



Lesley Griffiths AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Ynni, Cynllunio a Materion Gwledig
Cabinet Secretary for Energy, Planning and Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref: MA-P/LG/0444/18

Russell George AM
Chair – Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
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22 February 2018

Dear Russell

Thank you for your letter of 29 January, requesting an update on the planning elements of the Mobile Action Plan. There are three action points for planning in the document covering permitted development rights, planning policy and TAN19/Code of Practice.

With regard to the first of these, the research report on permitted development rights for telecommunication equipment was published in January and is available to view on the Welsh Government website at:

<http://gov.wales/topics/planning/planningresearch/publishedresearch/planning-for-mobile-telecommunications-an-assessment-of-permitted-development-rights-in-wales/?lang=en>

This research will inform a consultation on permitted development rights which I anticipate will commence in the spring of 2018.

On revisions to Planning Policy Wales (PPW), I recently launched a consultation on a revised version of PPW. The new version of the document highlights the positive relationship between telecommunications and the economy and the contribution digital connectivity makes to successful places.

The consultation documents can also be accessed on the Welsh Government website at:
<https://consultations.gov.wales/>

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

The third point on TAN19 and the Industry Code of Best Practice is a longer term action which can only be commenced once the legislative and policy elements of the first two actions are complete. My officials will continue to engage with representatives from the mobile phone industry to ascertain what further work can be done in this area.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lesley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Lesley Griffiths AC/AM

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Ynni, Cynllunio a Materion Gwledig
Cabinet Secretary for Energy, Planning and Rural Affairs

Russell George AM
Chair, Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee
National Assembly for Wales
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20th February, 2018

Dear Russell,

Thank you for giving Openreach the opportunity to appear before the Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee on 25th January. There were a number of points on which I agreed to write to the committee.

Fibre-to-the-Premises (FTTP)

You asked what number of premises connected with FTTP technology under Superfast Cymru are accessing superfast services from a provider other than BT.

Our FTTP product is regulated and open to all providers to use at the same wholesale cost. When it becomes available, all providers are notified at the same time. In other words, there is no discrimination in how the product is offered. A list of providers that offer the service are available on our website:

<https://www.homeandbusiness.openreach.co.uk/fibre-broadband/ultrafast-broadband/ultrafast-fibre-buy-it-now>.

BT Superfast Services

You asked what the current take-up of BT's superfast services via the Superfast Cymru network is and what the corresponding figure is in areas where Openreach has deployed superfast broadband on a commercial basis.

We are not able to publically share commercial take-up figures. However, the take-up in our commercial footprint is in line with the project take-up.

Superfast Cymru

Finally, you asked how many premises were told that they were in scope of the Superfast Cymru project before 31st December 2017, only for the project to end before they had been connected.

Kim Mears
Strategic Infrastructure Development

Page 1 of 2

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The intervention area (defined as postcodes and premises within a postcode) in the Wales contract was defined as approximately 767,000 premises. This increased from an original figure of 727,000 in 2012, due to the Superfast Extension Programme (SEP).

The contract with the Welsh Government required completion of 690,000 premises. Because of the ongoing test and verification process on final results we are unable to give precise numbers. However, an intervention area that was greater than the contractual obligation was always going to lead to raised expectations versus numbers delivered.

I am copying this letter to the Deputy Clerk of the Committee.

Yours sincerely,



Kim Mears

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru
Pwyllgor yr Economi, Seilwaith a Sgiliau

National Assembly for Wales
Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee

Ken Skates AM
Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Transport

22 February 2018

Wales Act 2017 Transport Powers and transport scrutiny session

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

You may be aware that the Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee recently received oral evidence from stakeholders in relation to the devolution of transport powers under the Wales Act 2017. Please find attached as an annex to this letter a summary of the key issues raised in relation to the devolution of bus registration powers, devolution of taxi and private hire vehicle licensing and devolution of ports policy and development powers. The Committee has also written to stakeholders to seek views on devolved powers relating to speed limits, and will provide an update in due course.

The Committee heard that there was unanimous support for Traveline Cymru taking responsibility for bus service registrations. We understand that such a change could be relatively straightforward to implement, but should result in more accurate information for passengers. The Committee notes from your letter of 13 February that your officials are considering reforms to the planning and delivery of local bus services and believes that the Welsh Government should give early consideration to the proposal that Traveline take this responsibility and would be grateful for your response to this.



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Strong evidence was presented in favour of updating legislation relating to taxi and private hire vehicles, particularly in light of technological developments which have impacted on the industry. Many of the issues raised by stakeholders could be addressed by introducing proposals to legislate once the powers are in place, in particular having a consistent approach across Wales on issues such as cross-border hire, national standards for drivers and operators and a national register of drivers. The Committee notes that your officials will be developing proposals to reform the licensing regime and believes that this should be given urgent consideration to ensure an effective and safe service for passengers and drivers. The Committee would be grateful for updates as this work progresses, including specific timescales for bringing forward detailed proposals for reform.

The Committee heard that devolution of ports policy and development will allow the Welsh Government to join up relevant policy areas and better reflect ports in its strategies. It will be important that the Welsh Government be ready to administer its additional responsibilities when powers are devolved, including ensuring that there is sufficient expertise among its staff. We were told that the Scottish Government have an effective team in place, so it will be important to learn from their experience.

Following on from these oral evidence sessions, the Committee agreed that it would like to invite you to attend a scrutiny session focussing specifically on the transport aspects of your remit, and I understand that arrangements for this are being put in place.

Prior to that session, the Committee would be grateful if you could provide an outline of the Welsh Government's plans for how you intend to use the powers once devolved, and an indication of timescale for bringing forward any legislation. Additionally, continuing our consideration of planning and delivery of highway schemes, in the light of your recent letter of 31 January, the Committee would be grateful if, in replying to this letter, you could provide the following information



for all trunk road projects (both new roads and improvements) completed between 2007/08 and 2017/18:

- The earliest cost estimate identified during scheme development (including the quarter / year on which the price estimate is based);
- The final cost estimate identified during scheme development pre-construction (if different from the above, including the quarter / year on which the price estimate is based);
- The actual final cost of each completed scheme; and
- A brief description of each scheme, including the contract type length of road constructed / upgraded by the scheme and the reason for any under / overspend against estimated costs.”

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Russell George". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial 'R' and a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Russell George

Chair of the Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee



Annex – Summary of oral evidence on the use of new transport powers devolved by the *Wales Act 2017*.

17 January: [bus registration powers and taxi / private hire licencing](#); and

25 January: [ports policy and development powers](#).

Devolution of bus registration powers

Key points included:

- The importance of providing a framework to enable a stable and effective bus network;
- Congestion is the biggest barrier to an efficient service. The industry would welcome further measures to tackle congestion and give buses priority. Reliability, punctuality and speed are the biggest passenger priorities;
- There is a need to simplify and improve information for passengers. Traveline Cymru’s biggest source of public complaints is inaccurate information as Traveline isn’t notified of service changes;
- All witnesses urged caution on bus franchising. For example, there was concern that it would be expensive and, particularly in rural areas, could lead to a marketplace with fewer operators. WLGA was reticent about franchising but agreed that it should be an option available to local authorities;
- Partnership working on a regional level was seen as key to delivering improvements, in particular a defined joined-up plan is needed as well as stable funding;
- Regional planning should cross local authority boundaries and take account of ‘travel to work’ areas;
- The Welsh Government has consulted on repeal of the current statutory prohibition on local authorities setting up bus companies. However, witnesses felt it is unlikely that local authorities would set up bus companies unless there was a serious failure in the provision of services in an area;
- Low emission vehicles could make bus travel an appealing option if low emission zones were introduced;
- Stakeholders are still waiting to see the outcome of the Welsh Government’s “bus summit” held in January 2017 and the subsequent workshops. Currently



the outcomes are unclear. Clarity on bus policy, combined with continuity of funding, were felt to be key;

- The Bus Services Support Grant is an important element of bus funding, particularly when combined with voluntary bus standards;
- Enhanced standards were introduced in south-east Wales. Operators get paid a different rate per kilometre depending on the standard reached;
- Technology can improve service delivery, but requires investment;
- All witnesses supported Traveline Cymru taking responsibility for bus service registrations. This would enable them to receive information directly rather than relying on local authorities or bus operators for updates. This should lead to more up to date, accurate information for passengers; and
- Bus Users Cymru felt it is important to stop bus operators “over-extending” themselves leading to financial difficulties.

Devolution of taxi and private hire vehicle licensing

Key points included:

- The view that the current system is not fit for purpose. The legislation is antiquated and some was drafted for horse drawn hackney carriages. It needs a “complete overhaul”;
- Overhauling the legislation will be a major task and will require resources;
- The two-tier licensing system is complicated. While there was some support for a single tier, this was not universal;
- A regional system was discussed as a stepping stone to a national approach;
- It was clear that there is variation in practice across Wales. For example, Cardiff is the only local authority which currently limits the number of hackney carriage plates;
- The fee regime should enable local authorities to recover costs of enforcement and other costs, such as taxi marshals. The system should be self-financing. However, the cost of the licensing regime, and the fact that the burden is currently on drivers, was also raised;
- Local authorities are not carrying out annual assessments of need. The GMB Union felt this has led to too many licences being issued;
- Legislation has not kept pace with technology – for example GPS is widely used but is not a “taxi meter” for the purposes of the legislation;



- Cross-border hire / working (i.e. taxis licenced in one local authority working in another) is a major issue and needs to be addressed. Some suggested all journeys should start or finish in the area which issued a driver's taxi / PHV licence. Witnesses said currently Transport for London registered drivers are working in Cardiff, and 144 Uber drivers registered in Newport live in Cardiff;
- Enforcement is an issue due to the age of current legislation. Local authorities cannot currently enforce against a driver working in their area who is licensed in a different authority. Greater funding is needed to improve enforcement;
- The Welsh Government's consultation on taxi and private hire vehicle licensing focused on implementing Law Commission recommendations. However, the GMB suggested the Law Commission report would need to be updated;
- Standards for drivers and operators are needed at a national level;
- More streamlined enforcement is needed;
- A definition of 'fit and proper' person is required, and a code of conduct for operators needed, to address the risk of exploitation of drivers and establish a driver complaints mechanism; and
- A national register of drivers and consistent approach across Wales is required.

Devolution of ports policy and development powers

Key points included:

- The view that current UK ports policy is generally effective but devolution might bring greater clarity and dialogue in some areas;
- Beyond some policy and guidance documents, current policy is largely delegated to ports and is market led. This allows ports to operate flexibly as businesses and respond to customer needs;
- Devolution will allow the Welsh Government to join up relevant policy areas and better reflect ports in its strategies. Currently policy areas affecting ports are partly devolved (e.g. land use planning, marine licensing, highways) and partly reserved (port development);
- Brexit and negotiations on customs and other checks are important issues – port capacity is a function of the size of the ports and the speed traffic passes through. Devolution may help by bringing relevant frameworks together in Wales;



- The Welsh National Marine Plan “could be quite an important document” which will have to balance sustainable development and marine environmental protection;
- Ports want to see environmental protection “tailored” with “port zones” supporting “a pro-business and development-type policy”. Ports cannot be relocated and are often in economically deprived areas;
- Ports need a level playing field. Compared to Wales, EU governments have put in place simpler consenting regimes and in England longer licences are granted with more activities exempt from marine licence requirements;
- Delays in the consenting process are a major issue. Opportunities can be lost if applications are not handled efficiently;
- The ports supported both “free zones” in appropriate circumstances (i.e. areas with exemptions from import duty requirements while goods remain in the zone), and also “port zones” (simplified and accelerated development arrangements);
- Resourcing in the Welsh Government to administer policy will be important – Scotland was described as a good model with sufficient staff, appropriate expertise and an effective system; and
- Discussions with the Welsh Government are on-going with “some positive indications”. There has been consistency in the Welsh Government staff which ports are dealing with and mutual respect. Ports are “in a good place with officials and the transport team”.



RoSPA Response to “New Powers: New Possibilities Inquiry”

The Wales Act 2017 – Speed Limits

16 February 2018

Introduction

This is RoSPA’s response to the Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee’s consultation into, New Powers: New Possibilities and in particular the Wales Act 2017 on speed limits.

The Committee is seeking views on:

- Current speed limits and arrangements for setting speed limits in Wales; and
How the powers to be devolved by the Wales Act 2017 from 1 April 2018 should be used by the Welsh Government and the Assembly.

RoSPA Response

Speed significantly increases the chance of being injured in a collision. A well designed road network could reduce the risk of exposure to the conditions that can cause serious and fatal injuries.

RoSPA believes that the Welsh Government should have the flexibility to set or amend speed limits and should still involve local authorities where necessary. We think it would still be beneficial for the Speed Limit Appraisal Tool to be used to help assess the cost and benefits of any proposed scheme. This would ensure that evidence-based decisions can be made when introducing local speed limits, which would reflect the needs of all road users.

A study of collisions together with analysis of traffic volumes and speeds should indicate whether an existing speed limit is appropriate for the class of road and its use by different groups of road users, including the presence or potential presence of vulnerable road users (including pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders or motorcyclists), or whether it needs to be altered. Local residents may also express their concerns or desire for a lower speed limit and these comments should be considered.

While RoSPA is of the view that road safety should be the primary reason for setting speed limits, there are many links to be made between injury prevention and other areas of public health. Vehicle emissions and air quality is one such link. RoSPA understands that compliance with air quality limits could be a factor when implementing speed limits, however, this should not override safety concerns.

Where there is poor compliance with an existing speed limit, the reasons behind non-compliance should be examined. It could be that a speed limit need not be changed if the collision rate can be improved with alternative measures. If the speed limit is set too low for no visible reason and the risk of a collision is low, then it may be appropriate to increase the limit.

It could be far easier to persuade people to drive at safer speeds if they understand and accept that driving too fast significantly increases the chances of being involved in a collision, and significantly increases the chances of such an incident being serious or fatal.

RoSPA thinks that education is absolutely vital in trying to change attitudes towards speeding. Inappropriate speed contributes to a number of injury and fatal collisions. This can be when the speed limit is exceeded but also when a driver or rider is within the speed limit but their speed is excessive for the conditions at the time (for example, in poor weather, poor visibility or densely populated areas).



RoSPA Response to “New Powers: New Possibilities Inquiry”

Those people who drink or take drugs and drive are seen as behaving in a dangerous, anti-social and selfish manner with little or no regard for the safety of other road users. However, those who speed are often not regarded in this way unless they grossly exceed the posted speed limit. Therefore, we feel it is essential that the dangers caused by driving at inappropriate speeds are clearly explained and demonstrated to highlight the consequences of illegal and inappropriate speed.

Roads policing is an indispensable action, which plays a vital role in saving lives and minimising injury on the road in Wales. In order for this to be done effectively and consistently across the country, roads policing must be given its rightful priority by the Welsh Government and the Police Service, and be adequately resourced.

In having the devolved powers to alter speed limits in Wales, the Welsh Government will be able to continue to work in conjunction with the already long-standing Wales Road Casualty Reduction Partnership to address issues proactively and efficiently, and also help to ensure that road users continue to comply.

RoSPA thanks the Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee for the opportunity to comment on the consultation. We have no objection to our response being reproduced or attributed.

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accidents don't have to happen

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This is a composite response from the four Welsh Police Forces that responded to the consultation on the Welsh Government New Powers: New Possibilities Inquiry – Speed Limits

Views on current speed limits and arrangements for setting speed limits in Wales.

There are current arrangements in place for the setting of speed limits in Wales through which the Highways Authority are able to set 'local speed limits'. Where the Police have been fully engaged in discussions prior to adoption there has been consistency through to any subsequent police enforcement of the new regulation. There have been instances where NPCC guidance regarding 20mph speed limits/zones has not been followed and this has created some enforcement challenges.

Views on how the powers to be devolved by the Wales Act 2017 from 1st April 2018 should be used by the Welsh Government and Assembly

It is a shared view across the Welsh Roads Policing landscape that it is vital the Police continue to be consulted prior to any changes. As the enforcement agency, it is important to public confidence that any changes are evidence based, are proportionate to the objective they are looking to achieve and a justifiable response to ensuring the safety of the public on our roads.

There are already differences between speed limits for certain classifications of vehicles within England and Wales to those in Scotland, although some across Wales are of the view that engineering solutions should form an equal part of the Road Safety thought process.

There is a general consensus that devolving the responsibility for Speed Limits would help bring about a greater consistency across the country. This, however, needs to form part of a wider awareness raising campaign promoting the safe use of our roads and the dangers of speed, whether that is in excess of the limit or excessive due to prevailing weather/road conditions. It is important the key message remains to educate and not punish road users.

In terms of comments on the use of powers in Wales, I would add as follows from a GoSafe perspective:

- Wales should not deviate from national (UK) policy for setting limits unless there are solid, exceptional, circumstances. This would apply particularly where it would affect enforcement. This would include the setting of, signing and enforcement of limits. The reason for this response is:
 - the police as the enforcement agency are often challenged about the prosecution of speeding offences and a common defence is signing. There is clear and consistent guidance in the UK which allows a robust legal standing where this guidance is followed. Any deviation from this would leave the public bodies exposed for challenges. As such, it would be prudent to ask the relevant police force for comment when setting local speed limits
 - A clear and consistent speed limit setting policy needs to be adhered to for the motoring public: often we find compliance with speed limits in particular is where there is a clear and obvious reason for that reason to be applicable
- There should be no deviation or special adjustments to signage or policy across Wales: all highways authorities in Wales should be held to the same policies and guidance for purposes of clarity and fairness
- There is a significant amount of tourist traffic from the English border, any signage should be easily recognisable to the UK motoring public as 'common' practice to ensure best compliance.

Best Regards,

Teresa Ciano
Partnership Manager
GoSafe

Agenda Item 7

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