



6th September 2021

Paul Davies MS
Chair, Economy, Trade & Rural Affairs Committee
Senedd
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1WP

Dear Paul,

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee's call for evidence on its priorities over the coming 12-18 months. The Committee has a vital role to play in scrutinising the Welsh Government on matters around the Welsh economy, which will be crucial as we look to achieve a strong recovery from the impact of Covid-19.

As the organisation representing coach and bus operators of all sizes in Wales, CPT Cymru looks forward to working closely with you to ensure the policy developed in Wales helps us to achieve those targets in a positive and equitable way.

Before the election, CPT Cymru drew up a list of priorities for both the coach and bus sectors separately that could be used to inform the work of incoming Members of the Senedd. Please see attached both documents for your perusal.

Coach Tourism

With the remit of the Committee in mind, CPT Cymru believes an **inquiry into the future of tourism in Wales** would be a worthwhile endeavour. Many of our members operate a coach tourism offer and this is a vital part of the economy across many parts of our nation. As you will be aware, during the pandemic coach operators have suffered significantly with regulations precluding them from operating coach tours.

Whilst many of our members will have benefitted from the Economic Renewal Fund, other UK nations such as Scotland introduced coach specific measures that have helped the sector position themselves for future recovery. Furthermore, many coach parking facilities at key attractions have been repurposed during the pandemic to support vaccination efforts.

An inquiry into Wales' tourism recovery would provide a strong opportunity for issues around coach tourism to be considered and to ensure that Welsh Government sees coach tourism as a vital part of the recovery of Wales' tourism sector. In particular, this could consider how Welsh Government and Visit Wales can support efforts to promote and market coach travel to passengers, supporting key CPT campaigns in this area.

Employment and Skills in the Coach and Bus Sector

There is currently significant pressure on the coach and bus sector in relation to skills. This problem is twofold, firstly there is a shortage of drivers. This is the result of short-term issues relating to a tight labour market, significantly delayed processing times for DVLA license renewals and applications and a lack of testing slots with the DVSA. In the longer-term, the sector faces significant demographic challenges with the age of drivers typically leading to retirements that cannot be replaced by younger drivers.

Confederation of Passenger Transport Cymru

website: www.cpt-uk.org

Secondly, many operators, particularly coach operators in the tourism sector, have staff that curate a customer experience. Training for customer facing staff is therefore a crucial issues that warrants consideration. CPT Cymru would therefore encourage the Committee to **consider reviewing the provision of training and skills for vocational sectors and the careers information, advice and guidance provided** through programmes such as Working Wales and Careers Wales to encourage younger, more diverse people into our sector.

Conclusion

CPT Cymru welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the Committee's priorities over the coming 18 months. The Committee will have a key role to play in scrutinising Welsh Government and helping to improve the policy development process in Wales. CPT Cymru looks forward to engaging its membership in the important work undertaken by the Committee.

Your sincerely,

J W Miles

Joshua Miles
Director CPT Cymru

About CPT Cymru

Cyddfederasiwn Cludwyr Teithwyr Cymru/The Confederation of Passenger Transport Wales (CPTCymru) is the professional trade association of the bus and coach industry in Wales and is part of CPT UK. Its members in Wales include operators forming part of large multinational transport operators, municipally owned operators, medium sized independent operators and small family businesses. CPT Cymru members provide over 80% of all bus journeys and some 70% of all public transport journeys made across Wales. Our members are often significant local employers, especially in the rural parts of Wales, and make major contributions to their local economies. The bus and coach industry as a whole employs some 4000 people across Wales.