



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

PUBLICATION

Cabinet Sub-Committee for North Wales meeting: 15 July 2021

Minutes of the Cabinet Sub-Committee for North Wales
meeting on 15 July 2021.

First published: 16 November 2021

Last updated: 16 November 2021

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.

Go to <https://gov.wales/cabinet-sub-committee-for-north-wales-meeting-15-july-2021-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).

Contents

Present

Programme for Government

North Wales Metro

Covid response

Local Authority Leaders

Present

- Rt Hon First Minister, Mark Drakeford MS
- Lesley Griffiths MS (Chair)
- Lee Waters MS (Vice-Chair - item 1)
- Mick Antoniw MS
- Rebecca Evans MS
- Vaughan Gething MS
- Jane Hutt MS
- Jeremy Miles MS
- Eluned Morgan MS
- Dawn Bowden MS
- Hannah Blythyn MS
- Julie Morgan MS
- Lynne Neagle MS

Leaders of North Wales Local Authorities:

- Cllr Ian Roberts, Flintshire
- Cllr Mark Pritchard, Wrexham

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.

Go to <https://gov.wales/cabinet-sub-committee-for-north-wales-meeting-15-july-2021-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).

- Cllr Charlie McCoubrey, Conwy
- Cllr Llinos Medi Huws, Anglesey
- Cllr Dyfrig Siencyn, Gwynedd
- Chris Llewelyn, Chief Executive, WLGA
- Stephen Jones, WLGA

Other external attendees:

- Lee Robinson, Transport for Wales
- Jo Whitehead, Chief Executive – Betsi Cadwaladr UHB
- Lucy Reid, Vice Chair – Betsi Cadwaladr UHB

Welsh Government officials

- Shan Morgan, Permanent Secretary
- Des Clifford, Director General, Office of the First Minister
- Andrew Goodall, Director General, Health & Social Services
- Olivia Shorrocks, Head of Major Conditions
- Gareth Evans, Head of Policy Development Analysis, Transport
- Will Whiteley, Head of Cabinet Secretariat
- Catrin Sully, Head of Cabinet Office (item 1)
- Jane Runeckles, Special Adviser
- Andrew Johnson, Special Adviser
- Clare Jenkins, Special Adviser
- Alex Bevan, Special Adviser
- Ian Butler, Special Adviser
- Mitch Theaker, Special Adviser
- Damian Roche, Cabinet Secretariat (minutes)
- Christopher Morgan, Cabinet Secretariat
- Gwenllian Roberts, Chief Regional Officer, North Wales
- Heledd Cressey, Senior Regional Planning Manager, North Wales

Apologies

- Cllr Hugh Evans, Denbighshire

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.

Go to <https://gov.wales/cabinet-sub-committee-for-north-wales-meeting-15-july-2021-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).

Item 1: Programme for Government – North Wales delivery

1.1 The Minister for North Wales introduced the item, which considered the impacts of the Programme for Government from a North Wales perspective.

1.2 It was vital for North Wales to be considered as part of delivery of the whole Programme for Government.

Item 2: North Wales Metro update

2.1 The Minister for North Wales welcomed the Local Authority Leaders from across North Wales and Dr. Chris Llewelyn, Chief Executive of the Welsh Local Government Association to the meeting. It was noted the opportunity to continue collectively with this work for the benefit of the wider region was highly valued by all attendees, and the objective of continued engagement on a range of issues across North Wales was praised.

2.2 The Deputy Minister for Climate Change welcomed Lee Robinson from Transport for Wales to the Committee and asked him to provide the latest position on the North Wales Metro programme.

2.3 The North Wales Metro would make it easier and faster to travel between the North Wales Coast, Wrexham, Deeside and Merseyside and improve bus and rail connections.

2.4 Work on the initial phases of the multi-million-pound North Wales Metro was being carried out, setting foundations for the transformation of rail and bus services in North East Wales.

2.5 The Metro would create exciting job and leisure opportunities across North Wales and cross-border and was a vital part of the Government's vision to develop the economy of the region and develop the links with HS2 and the Northern Powerhouse.

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.

Go to <https://gov.wales/cabinet-sub-committee-for-north-wales-meeting-15-july-2021-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).

2.6 The improvements that would be delivered included the launch of the new Liverpool to Wrexham service in May 2019 via the Halton Curve, considerably improving links between Liverpool and North Wales.

2.7 In addition, an increase in the number of services on the Borderlands Line between Wrexham and Bidston would be made to two trains per hour, with fully rebuilt Metro trains. These trains would provide a faster service and more capacity as well as improved on-board facilities including air conditioning.

2.8 Direct services between Liverpool and Llandudno via the North Wales Coast would be introduced from December 2022, and between Liverpool and Cardiff via Wrexham.

2.9 Plans were in place to improve connections via improved stations, making it easier to change between rail and bus services at Wrexham General, and between North Wales Coast and Borderlands Line rail services at Shotton.

2.10 In addition, plans were being developed to improve public transport to and within Deeside Industrial Park and the wider Deeside Enterprise Zone, to provide better opportunities for local people and businesses.

2.11 The overall vision in the coming years was that Transport for Wales would be improving and enhancing the transport network in North Wales, working together with partners to deliver the Government's vision for the North Wales Metro and creating an integrated transport network for the whole of Wales. TfW's North Wales Business Unit would play a vital part in ensuring local and regional needs were met.

2.12 The North Wales Minister thanked Mr. Robinson for his presentation and welcomed the support for these proposals, which would see significant benefits delivered across North Wales.

2.13 The Committee agreed its firm backing for the North Wales Metro programme and requested further updates as the programme progressed.

Item 3: Health, Covid Response, Health Recovery

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.

Go to <https://gov.wales/cabinet-sub-committee-for-north-wales-meeting-15-july-2021-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).

and Reset

3.1 The North Wales Minister advised the Committee that due to time constraints, the item on health should be considered a priority and written updates would be provided on a Low Carbon Green Recovery and Tourism Recovery and Resilience.

3.2 Andrew Goodall provided an update on the response to COVID-19 in North Wales.

3.3 From a public health perspective, there were broader harms to consider other than the health impacts of COVID-19 and it was this balance that should be considered moving forwards.

3.4 Across Wales, cases were running at around 150 per 100k, compared to a peak during the second wave of almost 600 per 100k and there were around 150 patients in hospital with COVID-19.

3.5 The fact this third wave had resulted in lower numbers of hospitalisations and deaths was in large part due to the efforts of the NHS in delivering the vaccination programme, which was to be commended.

3.6 The weakening of the link between infection and hospitalisation meant the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board could begin to focus on recovery, with increasing routine activity, assisted by funding to address the inevitable backlogs that had developed as a result of the pandemic.

3.7 It was clear targeted interventions would be needed in the Health Board moving forwards and these would be driven by local perspectives and need.

3.8 The minister welcomed Jo Whitehead, Chief Executive of Betsi Cadwaladr UHB and invited her to provide an update on activity across the region.

3.9 It was important to reiterate the Health Board's gratitude for all the hard work and dedication of the staff across the 3 main hospital sites in North Wales, and to GPs, pharmacies, community teams and all other delivery partners who had

contributed to delivery of the vaccination programme.

3.10 The Health Board also acknowledged the huge sorrow and loss experienced across the area during the previous 18 months as a consequence of the pandemic.

3.11 In practical terms, it was noted only 40 patients were in hospital in North Wales with COVID-19 and only 3 in ICU at present. There had been some recent impact from tourism into North Wales, which was of course essential for SMEs, but could be a risk for increasing infection rates.

3.12 It was acknowledged the Health Board had now moved from special measures to a programme of targeted interventions, which would mainly focus on the recovery from COVID-19.

3.13 Alongside that work, the Health Board would focus on delivery of 4 core functions, including:

- mental health for adults and CAMHS
- strategy
- leadership
- culture and governance
- patient engagement

Improvement activities were already in action across all 4 areas.

3.14 Another area of focus was the clinical services improvement plan, which was based on the Government's 'A Healthier Wales' strategic principles. There would be a focus on prevention across primary and community care services, with consultation and co-design underpinning the plan.

3.15 In terms of recovery and reset, capacity would need to be increased to address the backlog, and greater use of outpatient clinics made. These would be reliant on the right strategies for curriculum and placements capacity, along with adequate research and revenue.

3.16 The Committee echoed its thanks to the Health Board and the wider NHS in Wales for its incredible efforts during the pandemic.

3.17 The Committee agreed its support for the recovery and reset programme across North Wales, recognising collaboration with all partners would be vital and recovery would take some time. Service change was inevitable in order to cope with demand and a commitment was given by all to work towards continuous improvement in health services across the region.

Item 4: Key Issues from Local Authority Leaders

4.1 The North Wales Minister invited the Local Authority Leaders to provide an update on key issues across their areas.

4.2 It was noted the review of road schemes recently announced by the government would have implications for several key projects in North Wales. Clarity on the way forward was requested and it was noted there were serious challenges around climate change and road use to be addressed as part of the review.

4.3 It was reported that £1.98 million had been awarded for repairs to flood risk management assets in North Wales to date.

4.4 It was noted that the issue of second homes were causing significant concern in Gwynedd in particular and the Welsh Government had made an announcement on that to the Senedd recently. Sustainable tourism ideas would also be needed to ensure the area was not overrun. Rural infrastructure needed to be considered in public transport plans as rural requirements often differ to more urban areas.

4.5 The issue of social care was raised in Conwy, which had a disproportionate impact on those areas with an ageing population.

4.6 The Leader of Anglesey Council welcomed the opportunity to engage with the Committee and raised the point on whether more regular meetings might benefit the region.

4.7 The Minister for North Wales thanked all for their attendance.

Cabinet Secretariat
July 2021

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.

Go to <https://gov.wales/cabinet-sub-committee-for-north-wales-meeting-15-july-2021-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).

About this document

This document is a copy of the web page [Cabinet Sub-Committee for North Wales meeting: 15 July 2021](#) downloaded.

Go to <https://gov.wales/cabinet-sub-committee-for-north-wales-meeting-15-july-2021-html> for the latest version.

This document may not be fully accessible, for more information refer to our [accessibility statement](#).

Get [information on copyright](#).

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.

Go to <https://gov.wales/cabinet-sub-committee-for-north-wales-meeting-15-july-2021-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).