

South East Wales Transport Commission

Summary meeting note

Tuesday 15 October 2019, 10:30 – 14:30 at the Riverfront Centre, Newport

Present: Lord Burns (TB), Lynn Sloman (LS), Elaine Seagriff (ES), James Davies (JD), Beverly Owen (BO), Stephen Gifford (SG) and Jen Heal (JH)

Commission apologies: Peter Jones (PJ)

Secretariat: Peter McDonald (PMc), Matt Jones (MJ) and Alex Theophilus (AT)

Other attendees: Gareth Potter, Transport for Wales

1. Introductions and approach

The Commission are seeking alternatives to alleviate congestion on the M4, in the light of the First Minister's decision not to proceed with the 'Black Route'. The Commission will not just consider congestion and transport, but will also think about the wider socio-economic issues in the South East Wales area. Fundamentally, the purpose of interventions is to make people's lives better.

The Commission discussed its intention to recommend a number of interventions in a package of measures. It would be important for the interventions to cover the short, medium and long term. In addition, they should be tested against different scenarios to confirm they are future-proof.

A Christmas update will be provided to Ministers. This will include some fast-track measures for the current transport system, in particular the M4. The six month update in the spring will comprise a full interim report. The final recommendations will follow in around twelve months' time.

The Commission agreed the publication of its first document – 'Our Approach'.

2. Traffic Analysis and Key Questions

The Commission discussed the specific questions it wishes to answer in order to understand the problem and set objectives for interventions.

There is a need for the Commission to understand the causes of congestion and interventions which could overcome these.

Initial traffic analysis was reviewed. The analysis of the road considered both the Eastbound and Westbound traffic flows as in effect two separate different roads. A range of further analysis was commissioned.

The topography of South Wales may make building infrastructure difficult, not just along the M4 corridor. The Commission discussed how good reliable multi-modal

public transport and active travel infrastructure can aid congestion, as well as improvements to road network.

The Commission would like to consider how transport is planned and designed in other countries.

3. Key stakeholder groups

The Secretariat explained the range of options for engaging with stakeholders, including members of the public (in particular those who travel in the area). The Commission agreed to commence engagement swiftly and put particular attention on engaging with travellers at key destinations, such as workplaces, hospital or transport interchanges.

4. Fast-track recommendations

The Commission discussed the process for arriving at fast-track recommendations, as described in the Approach document. A long list will be evaluated at the next meeting, with a view to including recommendations in an update to Welsh Ministers by the end of this year. The Commission agreed to seek stakeholder views as swiftly as possible.

5. Next meeting

The Commission will meet once a month, with preference for meetings in different parts of South East Wales. A summary meeting note will be taken and published for all meetings.

The Commission will meet again in early November.