

MEMORANDUM FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT AND THE REGIONS

ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FOR WALES: REVIEW OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT IN WALES

INTRODUCTION

1. This paper provides a brief overview by the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions of current transport policy developments as a contribution to the National Assembly for Wales Environment, Planning and Transport Committee's review of public transport in Wales.
2. Certain transport functions within Wales are now a matter for the National Assembly for Wales. Issues relating to these functions are not addressed in this paper.

RECENT POLICY STATEMENTS

3. The Government's commitment to improving public transport through the creation of a better, more integrated transport system was detailed in the White Paper "*A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone*" published in July 1998. The White Paper, together with the subsequent daughter documents listed in Annex A and the Transport Bill currently going through Parliament, creates the policy framework for these improvements.

Transport 2010: The Ten Year Plan

4. The recently published "*Transport 2010: The Ten Year Plan*" sets out the Government's vision of a modern, integrated transport system and the improvements envisaged with the level of new investment outlined in the Plan over the next decade. It aims to improve choice for everyone, to modernise public transport and improve the road network.
5. The Plan covers all surface transport in England, and railways in Great Britain.
6. It is based on public and private sectors working together in partnership, leveraging in new sources of investment to deliver a step-change.
7. It will enable delivery of the solutions identified from the current programme of multi-modal studies on our main transport corridors, a major expansion of funding for local transport plans, and extensive improvements to the rail network.

Investment

8. All modes of transport will benefit from greatly increased public and private funding over the next ten years. Total public spending and private investment will be £180bn. This represents a 42% real increase on the previous ten years. Public spending will be £132bn, representing a 22% real increase on the previous ten years. Capital investment (public and private) will be £121bn, almost a 75% real increase on the previous decade.
9. The £180bn is made up of:
 - £60bn for rail
 - £59bn for local transport
 - £25bn for London
 - £21bn for strategic roads
 - £15bn for future projects and other transport areas

Total roads spending (including local roads and London roads): £59bn

1. The 10 year programme of investment is expected to deliver:
 - reduction in road congestion below current levels
 - 100 new by-passes
 - widening of 360 miles of strategic roads
 - all roads maintained in good condition
 - 50% increase in rail use (measured by passenger kilometres)
 - 80% increase in rail freight
 - modernisation and upgrading of rail lines, including East Coast, West Coast and Great Western Main Lines
 - improvements in rail service quality; more punctual and reliable trains, less overcrowding

 - better integration of rail with cars, buses, taxis, bicycles and better links to airports

 - improved services on the London Underground and London buses
 - up to 25 new tram lines in major cities and conurbations
 - 10% increase in bus passenger journeys
 - better rural transport
 - a safe and secure transport system

Bus Services

1. The Government aims to drive up service standards so that buses provide a high quality service for those who already use them, and an attractive alternative for people who currently drive for short journeys.
2. The Government is bringing forward powers in the Transport Bill to strengthen the role of local

authorities in planning and promoting bus service improvements. Quality Partnerships will be placed on a statutory basis through the Transport Bill. These aim to build on existing voluntary partnerships, in which local authorities and bus companies work together to improve bus services and related facilities. They have seen substantial investment by bus operators in recent years, resulting in fleets of new buses, improved services and passenger growth of typically 10-20 % on partnership routes.

3. The Transport Bill introduces a national minimum standard for local authority concessionary fare schemes, guaranteeing all pensioners and disabled people at least half-fare on buses.

Local Transport Plans

4. The Bill will create a statutory obligation for local authorities to produce Local Transport Plans. These provide a strategic planning framework, linked to local development plans and regeneration proposals, and cover five-year periods, thus offering greater certainty of funding for local authorities. They take a partnership approach, involving local communities, local businesses and transport providers, and place a greater emphasis on targets, performance indicators and monitoring. The emphasis of the Local Transport Plans is on integrated solutions, looking across all types of transport.
5. Local authorities will be given powers to introduce road user charging and workplace parking charges to tackle pollution and congestion, with the money raised going back into transport improvements in their areas. Plans for such schemes in Wales must be submitted to the National Assembly and must be in support of an authority's local transport plan.

Railways

6. Government funding for rail over the next decade includes, amongst other things: £12 billion of revenue support for passenger and freight train operators; a new £7 billion Rail Modernisation Fund which will lever in private capital to secure the biggest rail expansion programme for more than a century; and £4 billion of capital payments for renewal schemes.
7. The Strategic Rail Authority (SRA) will be established under the Transport Bill and is currently working in shadow form. It will decide what quality and capacity improvements are needed and will monitor the delivery of the obligations placed on passenger franchises to provide these improvements. Longer franchises for passenger and freight operators will demand higher standards and more investment. New incentives for all parties to deliver quality, performance, investment and growth will include doubling the rates of performance payments and penalties applying to train operating companies.
8. Some progress has already been made in improving Britain's railways. Since 1997, there has been a 17% increase in rail passenger journeys and 1300 more trains run daily to meet demand. Nearly 2000 stations have been improved and 17 new stations built, and private sector rail investment has more than doubled. Old slam-door carriages are being replaced and it is a requirement that all new rolling stock is accessible to disabled people.
9. On 29 September 1999, the Deputy Prime Minister issued the Franchising Director with new Instructions and Guidance asking him to deliver service improvements through re-negotiations in

the terms of franchise agreements. The Franchising Director will give due weight in franchise replacements to current performance, customer services, innovation, investment and efficiency, initiatives to promote integrated transport, and also to the extent which passengers will be given a greater voice in the level and standard of service.

Aviation

10. The Integrated Transport White Paper announced the Government's intention to prepare a new UK airports policy looking 30 years ahead and referred to the need to bring forward new policies on civil aviation. This work will be brought together in an Air Transport White Paper, which will follow the decision on Heathrow Terminal Five. The White Paper will provide a long-term framework for the sustainable development of air transport in the UK. The White Paper will be preceded by a national consultation document and a series of regional consultation documents, including a study of issues in the south-east which will follow on a later timetable. This will provide an opportunity for all interested parties to consider the main issues and put forward their views.
11. The Integrated Transport White Paper also stated that the level of investment and efficiency needed in our National Air Traffic Services (NATS) could be best achieved through a partnership between the public and private sectors. The Transport Bill will provide for a part sale of NATS, resulting in a 51% holding in the private sector (including employees) and 49% remaining in public ownership. The legislation provides for NATS to be separated from the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). This separation will ensure that safety regulation and safety provision are undertaken in separate organisations. Subject to the legislative process, the Government expects the PPP to be in place by April 2001.

Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, September 2000.

"A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone."

(Published, July 1998)

- **"A New Deal for Trunk Roads"** Trunk roads policy: outcomes of the reviews for England and Wales. (Published, August 1998.) £16.00
- **"A New Deal for Railways"** Railways Policy: a response to the third report of the Environment, Transport and Regional Affairs Committee on the proposed Strategic Rail Authority and railway regulation. (Published, July 1998) £5.90
- **"From workhorse to thoroughbred - a better role for bus travel."** (Published, April 1999) FREE
- **"Breaking the logjam"** Charging policy - a consultation paper on implementing road user charging and workplace parking charges. (Published December 1998, consultation now finished.) FREE
- **"Charting a new course"** Shipping policy a response to the recommendations of the Working Group on Shipping. (Published, December 1998) £10.00
- **"Sustainable distribution: a strategy"** Freight Policy (Published, March 1999)

£16.00

- **"Guidance on Provisional Local Transport Plans"** (Published, April 1999) FREE
- **"Guidance on Full Local Transport Plans"** (Published, March 2000) FREE
- **"Road Safety Policy: Strategy and targets for beyond 2000"**

(Published 1 March 2000) FREE

- **"Encourage Walking: advice to local authorities"** (Published, March 2000) FREE
- **"Waterways For Tomorrow"** (Published, June 2000) FREE

Not yet published

- **Ports daughter document** (*due: Autumn 2000*)