

ROCP 13, Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen (ASLEF)

Senedd Cymru | Welsh Parliament

Pwyllgor Newid Hinsawdd, yr Amgylchedd a Seilwaith | Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee

Adolygiad o flaenoriaethau'r Pwyllgor ar gyfer y Chweched Senedd | Review of the Committee's priorities for the Sixth Senedd

Ymateb gan ASLEF | Evidence from ASLEF

Your views

1. What are your views on the Committee's three strategic priorities: Climate Change; Sustainable Communities; and Protecting and enhancing the natural environment?

The three strategic priorities are sensible and holistic in their ambition to address climate change whilst ensuring that the citizens of Wales have improved places and futures through strategic planning and investment to help create a modal shift and enable further placemaking.

2. To what extent are the Committee's three strategic priorities still relevant, reflecting on social, economic and environmental developments since they were set at the start of the Sixth Senedd?

The Committee's three strategic priorities are still relevant and if anything needed more than ever, with the recent extreme weather events and the UK Government's wavering commitment to addressing climate change highlighting the need for Wales to continue to pursue these three strategic priorities to ensure that the citizens of Wales have a government that is fighting climate change and planning for their children and grandchildren's futures.

With regards to transport, since the priorities were set we have seen the return of rail users with TFW recording the third and the largest increase across train operators, in the average journey length compared to March 2019 and March 2020. This highlights an increase in passengers using the railways for journeys beyond their previous shorter distances and a change in use with demand on Sundays being 107% up on pre-pandemic levels. There has been some great work by TFW to integrate ticketing across buses and trains along with the launch of their 'The Real Social Network' campaign to further encourage a modal shift to

public transport use. All of this highlights the progress made and the need to continue to build on priority 2 of sustainable communities and continue to invest in public transport and connect this with planning, as seen with the scrapping of major road schemes for greener alternatives.

The UK Government has been in disarray since Summer 2022 which has resulted in multiple Transport Ministers, Prime Ministers and Chancellors of the Exchequer all holding differing views on investment in the UK for the greater good of the public's health and to combat climate change. This has been ongoing whilst a cost of living crisis has impacted on the whole of the UK, allowing the UK Government an excuse to roll back on climate change commitments due to their cost. This has further highlighted the need for the strategic priorities to be kept and worked on to ensure that Wales is resilient and develops an affordable integrated public transport system connecting people to family, work and leisure to continue to fight climate change since transport has become the largest emitter of greenhouse gases in recent years, driven mainly by private motor vehicle use and HGVs for long distance journeys. It is essential in battling climate change that the committee sticks to transport as part of priority 2 to continue to encourage a modal shift to public transport as well as rail freight for goods making long distance journeys.

The recent moves by the UK Government to shut all ticket offices and plans to further de-staff the railways in England and at stations involved with cross-border services in Scotland, highlights a lack of care for public transport from Westminster and it is important that the Committee continues to buck the UK's anti-environment trend and continues to build on transport as part of priority 2 to ensure that TfW offers an attractive, accessible and affordable alternative to private car journeys.

With TfW taking control of the Core Valley Lines and investing in the infrastructure to develop the South Wales Metro, electrifying routes and opening new stations it is essential that priority 2 is stuck to ensuring that slippage of the project is avoided and that the South Wales Metro along with the North Wales Metro and Swansea Bay and West Wales Metro are properly developed with them all feeding in to the priority of sustainable communities.

3. What are your view on the Committee's detailed priorities/outline programme of work for Years 3 to 5 of the Sixth Senedd (set out in its report, [Priorities for the Sixth Senedd?](#))

The Committee's detailed priorities / outline programme of work for years 3 to 5 are well rounded and keep the strategies focused on tackling climate change

whilst investing in Wales for future generations.

As part of the years 3 to 5 plan there could be space to add in a review of the progress of the National Transport Delivery Plan and the Regional Transport Plans as these should be moving along and beginning to deliver on their intended outcomes. This will coincide with the plans to continue to work on modal shift and placemaking. Great British Railways (GBR) should, be in place during this time period as well which, depending on the shape of the UK Government could present a good opportunity to review the National Transport Delivery Plan to highlight any possibilities to work with the UK government and GBR to encourage and develop cross-border rail travel of people and goods which helps reduce the volume of private car and HGV journeys from England in to Wales and further reduce the potential for emissions from cars to impact on the environment in Wales.

4. To what extent are the Committee's detailed priorities/outline programme of work still relevant, reflecting on social, economic and environmental developments since they were set at the start of the Sixth Senedd?

No response.

5. Are there any other matters related to the Committee's priorities/work programme/ways of working that you would like to comment on?

No response.

6. Other information

No response.
