

P-06-1353 Devolve responsibilities and budgets for trunk roads in North Wales to North Wales - Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 20 September 2023

North Wales' economy is fundamentally different from South Wales. We have a historic relationship with Liverpool and the neighbouring regions. North Wales has excellent connections to the international market through two international airports (Liverpool and Manchester) and access to a good motorway network connecting it to the rest of the UK market. Sadly the trunk road networks in North Wales have not been developed to cater for economic growth. There are no motorways in North Wales. This is the very reason that the vast majority of our highly successful industries have decided to set up their operations in North East Wales right at the English border, so they can have access to more up-to-date and suitable road networks. I believe the population of North Wales, its six local authorities and the business community have a much better understanding of the type of Trunk Roads which would deliver a more efficient transport network relevant to North Wales' economy and social needs.

A devolved power to North Wales, with an appropriate budget to maintain and develop its own road network, will reduce costs, and help to support the creation of a prosperous economy and employment. We are very fortunate in North Wales in having Anglesey as a freeport. The freeport has the potential to transform North Wales's trade and tourism. Unfortunately, the present road network will stifle this opportunity too. The present policy of making the decisions for North Wales road development centrally without consulting the stakeholders and the citizens has not worked so far. It's high time to change course and devolve this responsibility to North Wales.

1. Has the Deputy Minister discussed devolving responsibilities and budgets for North Wales Trunk Roads with regional leaders?
2. Has the Deputy Minister told the North Wales Transport Commission that he will reject such a recommendation, should the Commission make it?
3. Is spending on the Strategic Road Network available by region, in the interests of transparency?
4. In principle, does the Welsh Government support the notion that people in North Wales should determine investments in all roads in North Wales?
5. Has the Welsh Government ruled out devolving responsibilities for trunk road investment to the Corporate Joint Committee?
6. Would the Welsh Government agree to at least consult with the people of North Wales over the devolution of responsibilities for trunk roads?

Kind regards,