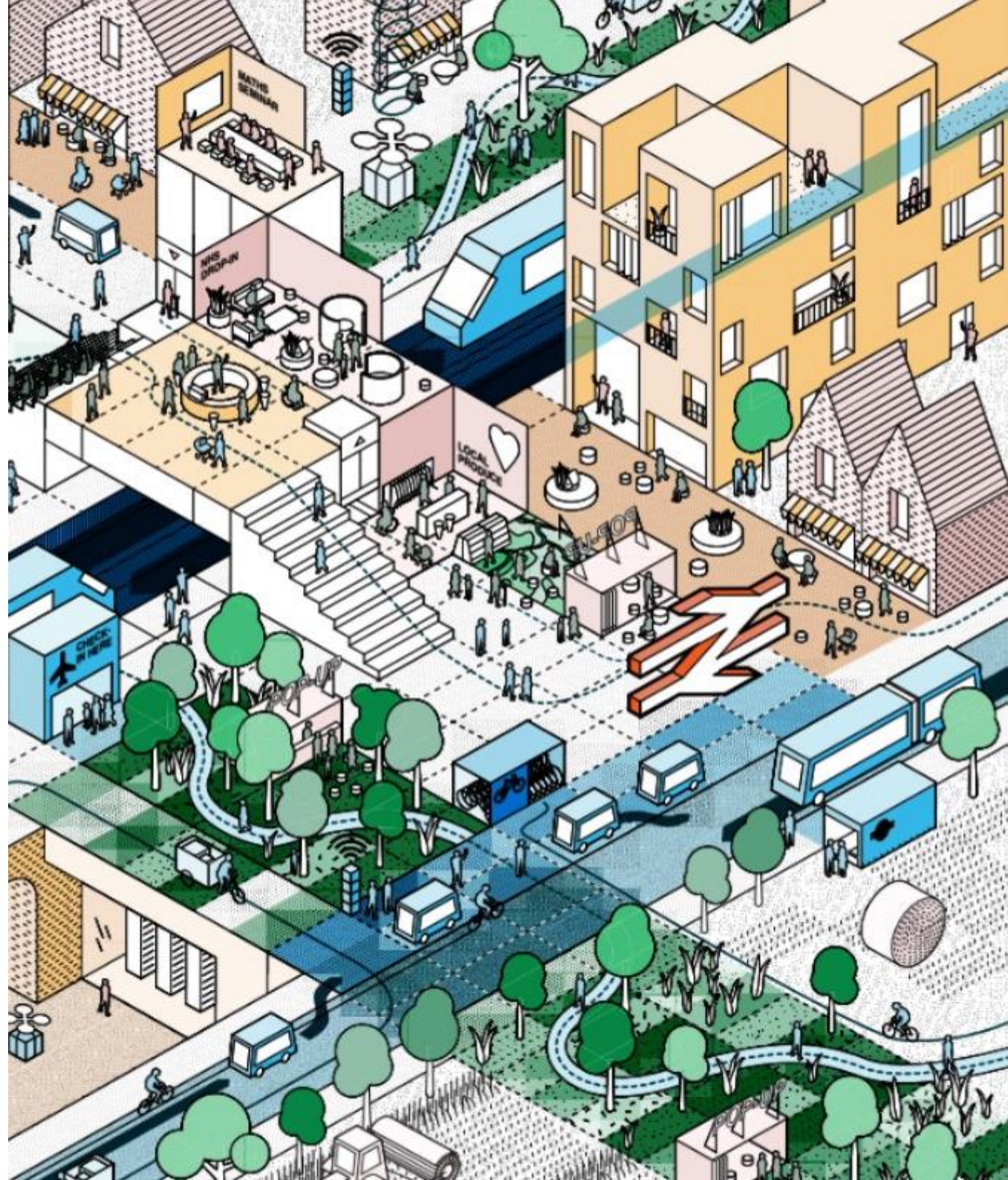


Hunt/Medi Group

Place Based Development Advisory Group

Final Report

June 2024



Source: Arup

Opening remarks

Across Wales we all want to improve well-being by thinking more long-term and taking a more joined up approach that can achieve inclusive, socially connected and vibrant communities throughout Wales.

This Group, supported by the Design Commission for Wales, a Secretariat of Welsh Government officials, Transport for Wales and technical support from Arup, has worked to understand the barriers to sustainable development and make recommendations for improved ways of working to deliver better outcomes for all.

We have listened to people involved in transport, planning, placemaking and economic development, with experience across Wales and further afield.

It is clear to us that Wales has a strong national policy direction, which sets the framework for a place-based approach to planning and delivery. We think there are already sufficient tools and guidance to help enable these outcomes at national, regional and local levels, and in all parts of Wales. However, we often find that results don't align with the intended outcomes due to resources, skills, funding and other pressures.

It is clear to us that there are tensions in the system between those involved in plan-making and delivery at all scales and geographies, but there is a willingness to improve the way we work together, especially in the ongoing environment of budgetary and resource constraints.

The work of the Group has focused on identifying ways in which we can make better use of existing resources and find efficiencies that will help ensure we can achieve a more prosperous, equal and greener Wales.

- **Councillors Anthony Hunt and Llinos Medi, Group Co-Chairs, June 2024**



**Hunt/Medi Group
Members:**

Colan Mehaffey – Head of
Data & Digital Innovation,
Cardiff Capital Region

Neil Murphy – Founding
Director, TOWN.

Rob Thomas – Chief
Executive, Vale of
Glamorgan Council



Sue Flack – Independent
sustainable transport and
development consultant.

Contents

1. Introduction & Context	4
2. Recommendations and Actions	5
3. Initial Action Plan	6
4. Concluding Statement	16
Appendix A	State of the Nation
Appendix B	Participation Report

1. Introduction & Context

Introduction

The Welsh Government’s response to the Roads Review committed that:

“we have asked Councillor Anthony Hunt and Councillor Llinos Medi to lead a group to develop guidance on delivering place based economic development enabled by transport solutions that support the growth of a prosperous, green, and equal economy and are consistent with the future tests for road building and the Wales Transport Strategy.”

The Group is considering how economic development schemes, housing and land use planning processes are, and could be, aligned to achieve the goals of Future Wales: the national plan 2040 and the Economic Resilience and Reconstruction Mission in a way that also contributes to the delivery of the Llwybr Newydd: Wales Transport Strategy and the associated transport decarbonisation targets set out in Net Zero Wales.

As part of the work, the relevant legislative and policy framework has been considered alongside existing guidance, studies and reviews. These have informed the context and recommendations made by the Group.

In particular, the Group recognises the relevant body of work that has already been undertaken, for example the OECD Study on ‘Regional Development and Public Investment in Wales’ and the ‘Keeping regional partnership working under review with local partners’ report.

Experts spanning transport, planning, placemaking and economic development have come together to consider the existing interfaces between developments and a series of relevant national and international case studies to demonstrate successful approaches achieved elsewhere with lessons learned. Stakeholders representing a wide range of sectors and interests have been involved in a series of workshops and interviews to help:

- Understand current ways of working.
- Understand future strategic context (including Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs) and their newly-adopted statutory powers across economic well-being, regional transport and strategic spatial planning).
- Understand resources, people, and budgets.
- Develop recommendations on the efficacy of current arrangements and how interfaces can be improved to achieve collective objectives.

Recommendations for a new way of working

Considering the established current ways of working, challenges, opportunities, and lessons learned from elsewhere, this report presents the final recommendations of the Group.

In order to develop the recommendations and consider how they could be realised, the Group has agreed actions linked to the recommendations, which are presented in this report. The Group has also considered the possible timing, management and deliverability of each action, acknowledging there will be a shared responsibility between stakeholders to help progress and monitor the key recommendations made.



Source: Arup

2. Recommendations and Actions

Three recommendations are made, focused around collaboration, coordination of skills, resource and data and taking a place-based approach. We also suggest actions to achieve the recommendations. More details and findings of our work are set out on the following pages.

1 Recommendation: Facilitate joined up working and collaboration where all parties are working together for a better Wales.

Improved collaboration between those involved in economic development, transport and land use planning, across and between all levels of government and geographies can help achieve both shared and individual objectives. Integration of the public, private and third sectors can also help integrate plan-making through to delivery. This can be achievable within limited resources through multi-disciplinary teams collaborating on priority issues within mutually aligned geographies.

2 Recommendation: Coordinate and share skills, best practice and data to better plan and deliver sustainable developments.

A co-created and integrated skills plan, and alignment of land use, transport and economic policies would make better use of existing resources and help shift from a position of short-term firefighting to future proofing and long-term sustainability. By better engaging people in strategic planning, there would be more opportunities to share best practice, data and information that will inform more sustainable decision making. This would also support a longer-term culture change towards a place-based approach to development underpinned by bold leadership and a skilled workforce.

3 Recommendation: Take a place-based approach to funding and delivery.

CJCs and local authorities should be empowered to plan and deliver strategic and local development in accordance with their needs, whilst ensuring national outcomes and placemaking principles are achieved. This could be facilitated through innovative approaches to funding and delivery, which should involve improved public, private and third sector partnerships and focus on unlocking and progressing sustainable development.

Action 1: Break down siloed working using a place-based approach

Action 2: Better inform people about regional plan-making across Wales

Action 3: Skills development and long-term resource planning

Action 4: Update Technical Advice Note 18 (Transport)

Action 5: Create an open-source resource of best practice and tools for place-based development

Action 6: Share data with a national transport-social model

Action 7: Align plan-making at national and regional levels

Action 8: Prepare regional level place-based estate strategies

Action 9: Develop strategic development funding strategy

3. Initial Action Plan

Actions have been identified to outline how the recommendations should be progressed. This considers at a high level, which stakeholders should be tasked with overseeing and supporting their implementation, alongside matters of management and delivery, helping prioritise and focus resources. A ‘traffic light’ system seeks to help illustrate which actions can be quickly progressed with limited resources, and others which may require additional levels of effort and coordination.

1. Facilitator / Partners: The ‘facilitator’ is the organisation primarily responsible for delivery/coordination of the action. ‘Partners’ are other stakeholders whose involvement would be required to implement or progress the action(s).

2. Timescales: The estimated timescales for the implementation/delivery of each action have been identified in line with the table below:

Low	Medium	High
0-1 years	2-4 years	5 years +

3. Resource: Resources have been considered in terms of the likely level of effort and/or investment required to progress and implement each action, taking into account the likely staffing and financial implications involved categorised as ‘low, medium or high’ as set out in the following table:

Low	Medium	High
-----	--------	------

4. Deliverability: The likely level of complexity and acceptability of delivery, considering the scale of change needed compared to existing ways of working in line with the following categories:

Quick Win	Medium	Challenging
-----------	--------	-------------

As summary is provided of the likely ‘**outcome(s)**’ of each of the actions identified to explain the **rationale** and opportunities for better and smarter ways of working. Where appropriate, a ‘**Lessons from...**’ worked example is provided to assist understanding by setting out similar successful approaches achieved elsewhere and best practice case studies which offer lessons to be learned.

Action 1: Break down siloed working to focus more on a place-based approach

Action

Organisational and behaviour change should ensure joined up officer teams in local, regional and national government, with economic, planning and transport teams working together in an integrated way, during business case, plan-making, project development and delivery. Efforts should be made to communicate and align, as well as join up, decisions being made across sectors. That would help all involved to work towards shared and individual objectives across geographies and disciplines. Options for this could be single or integrated teams pooling skills and resources within organisations across all levels of government, or secondments or job share opportunities. In particular, the Welsh Government, Transport for Wales, CJs and their local authorities should maximise collaborative working opportunities, which will see integrated resources progress Regional Transport Plans (RTPs) and Strategic Development Plans (SDPs) holistically.

Rationale and outcome(s)

The OECD Study found that the Welsh Government and local authorities could take stronger action in effective policy design and co-ordination, building capacity for policy implementation and learning by and at all levels of government. Organisational change would help to remove silos, share perspectives, skills and experiences and focus activities on places rather than disciplines. Integrated teams would then be better placed in plan-making and project delivery, which would help find efficiencies. In the longer term, the Welsh Government should explore a pathway towards establishing an office for regional development and investment. It is also challenging for the public sector to respond to existing demands for wide-ranging specialist services and inputs. CJs provide an opportunity to coordinate shared resources.

Management and Delivery

Facilitator/ Partners	Timescales	Resource	Deliverability
Welsh Government, CJs, local members and officers.	Short	Low	Quick Win

Lessons From... Transport for Wales and the Welsh Government secondments programme

A key objective for Transport for Wales has been to support a programme of secondments with the Welsh Government, with a view to minimising overall costs and headcount. The Welsh Government has challenged Transport for Wales to change to a multi-modal organisation. As part of that approach, a representative of local government has been put onto the board as a formal observer, as well as the Welsh Government's Director of Transport, to sit alongside a trade union representative as part of a multi-agency leadership body.

As part of the effort to break down barriers (and silos) the first cohort of secondees from Transport for Wales joined Welsh Government in March 2024. This is an opportunity for operational reality to influence policy and vice versa. The approach seeks to ensure there is a skilled team that is evolving into a centre of excellence for Councils and Welsh Government to draw on. The approach has begun to see Transport for Wales and the Welsh Government better support CJs with their RTP preparation through integrated resources and collaborative ways of working together, and with land use, transport and regeneration colleagues.

Action 2: Better inform people about regional plan-making across Wales

Action

CJCs should establish websites to clearly set out their requirements, key documents and organograms with points of contact within the Welsh Government, the CJC and local authorities. The Welsh Government should work with CJCs to facilitate the necessary digital support if required.

Rationale and outcome(s)

As the CJCs are still in their infancy, there is an opportunity to provide single sources of information for all groups of people, including the public, about the emerging regional plans, functions and roles associated with the CJCs. A depository of the regulations, guidance and advice, alongside the emerging regional planning documents will help increase transparency and accountability throughout the plan-making process.

This could build on the existing online resources of the city and growth deal partnerships in the Cardiff City Region, Swansea City Region, and North Wales (with its Economic Ambition Board), especially where they are transferring their functions into the CJCs.

It is acknowledged that there are existing arrangements between the CJCs, their local authorities, the Welsh Government and Transport for Wales which facilitate regular discussion and opportunities to share information. Access to key points of contact and records of key meetings will also help ensure the right people are involved and engaged in decision making across Wales. This should also help the CJCs demonstrate progress taking into account the recommendations of Audit Wales on the progress of the CJCs (November 2023).

Management and Delivery

Facilitator/ Partners	Timescales	Resource	Deliverability
CJCs / Welsh Government, local authorities.	Short	Low	Quick Win

Lessons From... Combined Authorities in England

The [West of England Combined Authority \(WECA\)](#) and [Greater Manchester Combined Authority \(GMCA\)](#) in particular have both established helpful websites that provides public information including their functions, strategies and plans, details of democracy, funding, procurement and the constitution. This includes committee information and details of meetings and decisions, latest news and case studies. They also have information on key partners and points of contact including the leadership and senior management team. The WECA website also allows people to sign up to a regular newsletter and links to its social media.

Action 3: Skills development and long-term resource planning

Action

A co-created skills plan for development in Wales should be developed, with tailored leadership programmes. Professional institutions such as the Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE), Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI), Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), Royal Society of Architects Wales (RSAW) and the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation (CIHT) should be supported with private consultancy inputs to inform the plan and roll out a programme of training to help share best practice and develop skills across the industry. Professional institutions, alongside Welsh Government, could also work with universities to better long-term plan for existing skills in demand and those that may be needed in the future. The Placemaking Wales Partnership could be a helpful coordinated group to facilitate this.

Rationale and outcome(s)

All professional institutions have significant concerns around short and long-term resources and skills across a range of relevant disciplines. In the shorter term, a skills plan and leadership programmes would help individuals have the right behaviours and experiences, as well as skills, ensuring intelligent clients. In the medium term, the emergence of appropriate training and opportunities to better retain and attract resources into development professions will help address existing and future skills and personnel gaps. It is acknowledged that skills development and culture change is a longer-term process.

Management and Delivery

Facilitator/ Partners	Timescales	Resource	Deliverability
Welsh Government or Placemaking Wales Partnership / CJs, local authorities, statutory bodies, professional institutions and education providers.	Short	Medium	Quick Win

Lessons from... RTPI 'Building Capacity through Collaboration and Change'

The RTPI published a [report](#) which explores the ways in which existing resources in the planning system in Wales can be used as efficiently and effectively as possible. The project builds on other recent projects, such as RTPI Cymru's [Big Conversation](#), that make a case for improved resourcing of the planning system. The report's findings are based on a recent review of planning services and a series of workshops with selected stakeholders. The project identifies existing practices and potential changes to the planning system that could support greater effectiveness and efficiency within current resources. The report identifies the importance of political and professional leadership, as well as collaboration between different organisations, in developing a collective response to the challenge of resource constraints in planning.

Action 4: Update Technical Advice Note 18 (Transport)

Action

An update to Technical Advice Note 18 (Transport) (2007) should be made to help planning decisions and practitioners apply the current transport policies in their work. This should be a concise note that helps planners contribute to transport objectives through their work, such as modal shift and decarbonisation.

Rationale and outcome(s)

Technical Advice Notes (TANs) provide detailed planning advice in Wales. They are taken into account when preparing development plans and planning applications. The existing TAN 18 provides guidance on:

- integration of land use and transport planning
- location of development
- regional transport plans
- parking
- design of development

An updated TAN 18 (Transport) would provide a streamlined series of prompts, or ‘signposting’ to ensure plans and projects deliver the latest national policies and facilitate transit orientated development (TOD). Such an approach would help to ensure the integration of land use, transport and economic planning. Transport assessments as part of the planning application process would be refocused around the Welsh Transport Appraisal Guidance (WelTAG) principles to encourage integrating transport planning throughout the scheme development and to consider impacts and benefits in the context of the Wales Transport Strategy and other relevant plans and policies.

Action Matrix

Facilitator/ Partners	Timescales	Resource	Deliverability
Welsh Government / Transport for Wales	Short	Low	Quick Win

Further opportunities for implementation...

In the medium to longer term, a wider review of the TANs could be carried out holistically to ensure alignment across different sectors, helping better integrate policies seeking to achieve sustainable development outcomes. In particular, a future review and potential update or replacement of the following TANs could facilitate this approach seeking to align transport, land use and economic development policies:

- TAN 2: planning and affordable housing (2006)
- TAN 3: simplified planning zones (1996)
- TAN 4: retail and commercial development (2016)
- TAN 6: planning for sustainable rural communities (2010)
- TAN 12: design (2016)
- TAN 13: tourism (1997)
- TAN 16: sport, recreation and open space (2009)
- TAN 20: planning and the Welsh language (2017)
- TAN 23: economic development (2014)

Action 5: Creating an open-source resource of best practice and tools for place-based development

Action

Create an open-source resource to include themed case study examples and tools available to all, which will help facilitate place-based development.

Use of this type of resource could be referenced within existing guidance to ensure it is 'signposted' within these documents (see Action 4 regarding TAN 18).

Rationale and outcome(s)

Having an open-source resource containing best practice, could help bring together existing best practice such as that advocated by the Design Commission for Wales, Centre for Cities and Connected Places Catapult among others.

There is potential for this resource to be interactive utilising Microsoft Copilot or other AI technology to allow people to ask questions of the document to quickly find relevant information and data.

The resource could be used in expert panel workshoping with the right skills profiles involved, which would help collaboratively and expertly problem solve difficult sites and decisions. This would help learn lessons from best practice elsewhere and consider how this could apply to specific places across Wales.

The resource should be regularly updated to help all involved make better and more informed decisions as part of plan-making and projects.

Sharing best practice will also help advocate the value of planning.

Management and Delivery

Facilitator/ Partners	Timescales	Resource	Deliverability
Design Commission for Wales / Welsh Government, CJs, local authorities, private sector consultancies and professional institutions.	Short	Medium	Quick Win

Lessons from... Places for Life, Design Commission for Wales

Places for Life was the theme of the Design Commission for Wales's autumn 2016 conference. The event explored the connection between the places where we live and our health, well-being, relationships, access to work, social life, and impact on the environment. The conference brought together a multi-disciplinary group of professionals to engage with the subject and challenge the status quo. The corresponding documents provides a summary of the event, distils and further explores some of the key themes in more detail. Places for Life includes a number of case study developments, including residential, commercial, cultural etc., the majority of which are in Wales. The clients are similarly diverse, spanning both public and private sectors.

The case studies draw the way in which client needs were explored and met, the sustainability principles that the development addresses, and how the development represents good design. This provides a central resource of good examples of placemaking, sustainable design, and accessibility.

Action 6: Share data with a national transport-social model

Action

Building on Transport for Wales's regional transport models, create a national transport-social model designed to be an open-source tool. This will allow everyone working across Wales to access and share relevant transport, economic, social and environmental data, as well as test potential interventions to better inform plans and projects. This should incorporate the emerging Wales National Travel Survey results.

Rationale and outcome(s)

Traditional modelling fails to mirror the complexities of life and the rapidly changing transport sector. Assumptions on how people move and behave have grown increasingly inaccurate over in the past decade as choices have expanded in number and complexity.

A move towards a transport-social model, building on the existing regional transport models in Wales, using Agent Based Modelling (ABM) approaches will help to simulate everyone's day more accurately and rapidly than previously possible. We will be able to model each individual, each with a plan, each making decisions on where to travel, when to leave and what mode of transport to use. Unlike traditional simulation, that will allow us to model the 'why' as well as the 'what', gaining insights into complex behaviours.

This allows us to better understand shifts in travel behaviour, establishing a truer perspective on the impacts of policy decisions, planning and new transport schemes enabling more fair, equitable and sustainable decisions across Wales. Easy access to data and a national model would help better understand needs and opportunities in rural and urban contexts, which particularly should help CJsCs produce their SDPs and future RTPs.

Management and Delivery

Facilitator/ Partners	Timescales	Resource	Deliverability
Welsh Government and Transport for Wales / CJsCs, local authorities, private sector consultants and professional institutions.	Medium	High	Medium

Lessons from... a model for a nation, New Zealand

New Zealand's Ministry for Transport developed a national-scale agent-based model (ABM) to examine the impacts of transport system changes in a unified and systematic manner. The model replicates the daily activities of residents with plans to travel for work, leisure, or other purposes in collaboration with a model of the transport network to define how and where the agents travel. As they learn and evolve, new behaviours emerge enabling greater analysis of the impact of policy changes on transport.

Further opportunities for implementation...

CJsCs could utilise the Department for Transport's Connectivity Tool to help identify and consider key transport challenges and opportunities in a consistent way. The tool helps score the accessibility of places that inform decisions around future transport interventions and investments.

An app-based tool could also be considered to allow people to access real time travel information similar to existing tools such as '[Citymapper](#)' used in London. That would help address existing barriers to modal shift and encourage behavioural change by providing people with the information they need to make more sustainable travel choices.

Action 7: Alignment in plan-making at national and regional levels

Action

Alignment of land use, transport and economic policies at the national and regional plan-making levels following the current Plan-making cycle. A pathway should be developed to better align the timescale and plan periods for development of the next RTPs, SDPs and Local Development Plans (LDP), and/or move towards more plan integration.

Rationale and outcome(s)

Those involved in plan-making are currently required to allocate resources to multiple plans at national, regional and local scale spanning topics including land use, transport, economic strategy and energy separately. Despite best intentions for these plans to be complementary, the volume and programme misalignment makes it challenging for different groups of people who wish to make, understand and apply their policies.

Notwithstanding the existing legislative requirements and regulations attached to the preparation of existing plans, there is an opportunity to establish a pathway towards a more integrated approach to plan-making at all levels. For example, considering SDP adoption is around five years away, in the future, there may be an opportunity to move towards a single regional plan that covers land use, transport, economic development and energy in an integrated and holistic way. This should help ensure policy implementation is better focused around the placemaking principles. This would also help focus resources, ensure integration between specialists and make it easier for developers and decision-makers to understand the strategic regional policy framework and requirements.

Management and Delivery

Facilitator/ Partners	Timescales	Resource	Deliverability
Welsh Government/ Welsh Ministers, CJs, local members and officers.	Long	Low	Medium

Further opportunity at the local level...

Welsh Government guidance to CJs has clarified that adopted and emerging Replacement Local Development Plans (RLDPs) will form the initial building blocks in terms of the strategy and scale, and location of growth for the early part of the SDP plan period. It will be important to reflect on the timing of where Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) are in preparing their RLDP and how resources are balanced between the two tiers of plans. When an SDP is adopted, LPAs within the SDP boundary should prepare an LDP Lite (LDPL). However, resource constraints within local authorities has typically seen different personnel allocated to RLDP and SDP (and RTP) preparation, or worse has led to delays in regional plan preparation. There is an opportunity to find efficiencies by accelerating the option for LDPLs during SDP development, ensuring each is focused on its own requirements. It is acknowledged that this approach would require the Welsh Government to fast track the LDPL Manual or provide similar advice.

Action 8: Preparation of regional level place-based estate strategies

Action

Estate strategies should be prepared at a regional level, building on existing local authority knowledge and experience, and considering the national development plan. These should identify a range of types and sizes of development sites and opportunities as part of a mixed land and property portfolio. Development of regional estates strategies would help to better unlock and market development sites that align with wider national, regional and local priorities (e.g. the delivery of TOD). This should include consideration of national assets e.g. airports and freeports, and their development opportunities. The strategies should be co-created to help ensure a place-based approach is embedded into the process. In particular, there could be significant opportunities in the Metro programme to help ensure land use developments create sustainable places and lock in sustainable transport demand, utilising land value capture funding mechanisms for investment.

Rationale and outcome(s)

Estates strategies would better plan for sustainable growth of key settlements, as well as capture benefits and value from investment in the Metro programme. They would also contribute to the 'call for sites' process to inform national, regional and local development plans by being better able to demonstrate a ready-made portfolio of deliverable sites, coordinated at a strategic scale. This would help attract investment from the private sector and encourage improved partnership and involvement between the public private and third sectors. This action would also help contribute towards achieving the recommendations within the Audit Wales '[Making best use of brownfield land and empty buildings](#)' report.

Management and Delivery

Facilitator/ Partners	Timescales	Resource	Deliverability
CJCs / Welsh Government, local authorities and Transport for Wales	Medium	Medium	Medium

Further opportunity for implementation...

It is recognised that the functions of existing regional bodies are transferring to some of the CJCs, such as Cardiff Capital Region and Ambition North Wales, this will help ensure synergies are transferred from those who have been overseeing the development, coordination and successful delivery of the Growth Deal programmes and other projects spanning energy, digital infrastructure, regional skills partnerships etc. Building on those partnerships, a development corporation type body or function could help to facilitate and deliver regional and strategic development opportunities in line with place-based estate strategies. A development corporation would be responsible for business cases, attracting / leveraging finance and investment, and develop / implement an estates strategy in connection with the Metro programme and wider public sector land portfolios (existing and future). A public/private partnership approach could help ensure sufficient skills and capacity is attached to the delivery vehicle, for example bringing together the necessary range of specialists across economics, planning, transport, urban design and placemaking.

Action 9: Development of a strategic development funding strategy

Action

Develop a strategic level funding strategy to support the autonomy of regions and embed key placemaking principles into funding criteria. CJsCs should learn lessons from City and Growth Deals around challenge funding mechanisms, skills and experiences, and develop their capacity as a funding broker further to the move away from Welsh European Funding Office distributional funding, post-Brexit.

Rationale and outcome(s)

There is a need to address existing and future funding gaps and help ensure that the projects identified in the regional plans are sufficiently funded to support the delivery of the national, regional and local policies. Funding strategies could help to maximise wider benefits from TOD and allow revenue generation to be invested across regions to deliver their plans and subsidise services. A regional levy or similar could be considered and should be linked to placemaking criteria to ensure sustainable development outcomes.

A CJC led funding strategy should involve improved public/private and third sector partnership and consider alternative/complementary mechanisms, including but not limited to the Mutual Investment Model (MIM). The role of existing funding mechanisms (e.g. Section 106 Agreements) and new approaches (e.g. a regional infrastructure levy) could be considered between CJsCs and local authorities to understand best practice in unlocking investment in infrastructure and services as a result of, and early on in, new developments. It is acknowledged that a regional Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charge or similar would require longer term changes to legislation, there would need to be political will and resources to implement this.

Management and Delivery

Facilitator/ Partners	Timescales	Resource	Deliverability
Welsh Government and CJsCs / Local Authorities	Medium	Medium	Medium

Lessons from... The Scottish Futures Trust (SFT)

In 2008, the Scottish Government established the SFT as a centre of expertise to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of infrastructure investment in Scotland. The SFT also carries out reviews for the Scottish Government on innovative financing mechanisms and works with Scottish local authorities to reinforce capacity by transferring knowledge and carrying out independent expert reviews at various stages of investment projects. In 2010, the SFT launched “Hub” programmes, specifically to improve the planning, procurement and delivery of smaller public infrastructure projects that support community services across Scotland (primarily in the education and health sectors). This programme was tailored to meet the specific needs of five designated hub territories in Scotland (North, South East, West, East Central and South West). It operates through joint venture arrangements between local public sector organisations and the private sector in each territory. The objective is to increase efficiency and reduce the cost of community infrastructure procurement. In addition, it provides an opportunity to share skills and experience across several public sector organisations (health boards, local authorities, police, fire and rescue services, and other public bodies) and projects, enabling knowledge transfer and increasing investment and procurement efficiency.

Concluding Statement

Should these recommendations and associated actions be successfully implemented across Wales, we would benefit from:

- Organisational change that will help to remove silos, share perspectives, resources, skills and experiences, and focus activities on places rather than disciplines.
- A pathway towards establishing an office for regional development and investment, supporting the OECD recommendation to ensure political and practical coordination.
- An online depository of the regulations, guidance and advice, alongside the emerging regional planning documents to help increase transparency and accountability throughout the plan-making process.
- A skills plan and leadership programmes, helping individuals have the right behaviours and experiences with appropriate training and opportunities to better retain and attract resources.
- An updated TAN 18 (Transport) ensuring plans and projects deliver the latest national policies and facilitate TOD.
- A resource with themed case study examples and tools available to all to help facilitate place-based development supporting collaborative problem-solving.
- A national transport-social model, allowing us to better understand shifts in travel behaviour, establishing a truer perspective on the impacts of policy decisions, planning and new transport schemes.
- A pathway towards a more integrated approach to plan-making at all levels to help focus resources, ensure integration between specialists and make it easier for developers and decision-makers to understand the strategic policy framework and requirements.
- Regional level place-based estates strategies to better plan for growth, ensuring land use developments create sustainable places, and lock in transport demand.
- A strategic level funding strategy supporting the autonomy of regions and embedding key placemaking principles into funding criteria.

Our proposed changes would represent a significant positive outcome for all involved in transport, land use planning and economic regeneration across Wales. With these changes in place, we will be better equipped to deliver place-based development through joined up working and collaboration, with coordination of skills and sharing of best practice and data. Those involved in funding and delivery will be empowered to think innovatively to deliver strategic and local development that will achieve a more prosperous, equal and greener Wales.



Source: Arup