

## **DfT NEWS FOR WESTERN GATEWAY & PENINSULA TRANSPORT BOARD**

### **Organisation & Government Changes**

- The Prime Minister has confirmed that he will step down as Leader of the Conservative Party. The timetable to elect a new leader will be announced this week. He remains Prime Minister until a new Prime Minister is appointed.
- During the Conservative leadership election government business continues. Ministers remain in office and will carry out their usual activities. Unlike in a General Election, Parliament will continue to sit. However, the Cabinet have agreed they will focus on delivering existing policies and manifesto commitments. They will not launch major new policies.
- In DfT, the ministerial team is largely unchanged. Andrew Stephenson has moved to Cabinet Office as Minister Without Portfolio and now attends Cabinet. Trudy Harrison, who has also been promoted to Minister of State, taking on Minister Stephenson's old portfolio including HS2 and Integrated Rail Plan.
- A reduction in the size of the civil service has also recently been announced. DfT will be impacted like all Government Departments and this will be worked through over the months and years to come.
- Recent internal restructuring has brought all Area Leads together into one Division led by Andy Rhind (at Deputy Director level) and John Hall (at Director level).

### **Decarbonisation**

- The Local Authority Decarbonisation Toolkit was released on 13 April. The toolkit provides guidance to local authorities in planning and delivering measures to reduce carbon emissions from transport by highlighting the benefits of different interventions, setting out the key actions local authorities can take, sharing best practice and lessons learnt from case studies of successful schemes already delivering local benefits and signposting to other published guidance and methodologies. The existing measures will be updated as Government policy develops, and new content will be added to the Toolkit on a regular basis. The Toolkit has been developed in partnership with the Energy Saving Trust (EST).

### **Active Travel**

- On 6 July the second statutory cycling and walking investment strategy (CWIS2) was published, which covers the period between 2021 and 2025. The strategy includes new and updated objectives including doubling cycling, increasing levels of walking across the community, and walking to school, whilst also setting out the funding in place to achieve these. It includes the projection that a total of nearly £4 billion will be invested in walking and cycling over the CWIS2 period – delivering new and improved walking and cycling routes across England and behaviour change programmes.
- Also on 6 July, the second report to Parliament on the progress made in delivering CWIS1 was released. This shows progress made in delivering the 26 actions outlined in

CWIS1, including the delivery of the Cycle Ambition Cities programme and a range of behaviour change programmes. It also outlines the progress made on other measures, including those set out in the Gear Change plan.

- Chris Boardman MBE has been confirmed as England's National Active Travel Commissioner on a permanent basis. In addition, Danny Williams has been appointed Chief Executive and Louise Wilkinson Chief Operating Officer. Other appointments have also been made.
- On 14 May final funding allocations totalling £200m from the active travel fund, which supports local transport authorities with producing cycling and walking facilities, were announced. Announcements are expected shortly on the application process for multi-year funding settlements for active travel from 2022/23.

### **Restoring Your Railway**

- On 18 June, £15m of Restoring Your Railway funding has announced to develop nine schemes to reopen disused railway lines, services and stations. This included development funding for proposals for Mid Cornwall Metro (connecting Newquay, Truro and Falmouth) and Devizes Station between Pewsey and Westbury in Wiltshire. Construction could start on some projects in the next two years (in 2023/24).
- This funding will continue the development of schemes identified through the Ideas Fund, which has provided early-stage development funding to 38 promising schemes to reopen disused rail lines, services and stations.
- The announcement follows the successful reopening of The Dartmoor Line between Okehampton and Exeter, which marked the first reopening under the Restoring Your Railway manifesto commitment. The Restoring Your Railway fund is also supporting in further development of the Wellington & Cullompton stations in Somerset and Devon, announced at the October 2021 Budget and Spending Review.

### **Great British Railways**

- On 5 July Grant Shapps announced that Birmingham, Crewe, Derby, Doncaster, Newcastle-upon-Tyne and York will compete for the honour of being crowned the home of Britain's railways following a competition that drew applications from 42 towns and cities. The public can now make their voices heard as voting officially opens. The winning town or city will be announced later this year, bringing highly skilled jobs and investment outside of London.

### **Major Road Network / Large Local Majors**

- On 3 June 2022 the government announced 4 schemes in Newcastle, Cornwall, Greater Manchester and Southampton, which will generate an estimated £659.3 million in economic benefits for the regions through improved investment, new housing and employment opportunities. These were funded through the MRN / LLM programme and included £78.5 million for a new 3.85-mile (6.2 kilometre) road linking St Austell to the A30 – the main transport artery in Cornwall.

### **Local Transport Plan Guidance**

- Consultants working for DfT are bringing the draft guidance together which will be subject to consultation over the summer. Final revised guidance will be released in the autumn, with LAs expected to have updated LTPs in place by Spring 2024.

**David Glinos**

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