WLGA • CLILC

Transforming Transport – A Shared Transport Service for North Wales?

Stephen Jones

27th January 2011

Introduction

- Who am I and what do I do?
  - Employed by the WLGA
  - Based in North Wales
  - Work with a board of Leaders and Chief Executives from the six North Wales Councils
- The Welsh Context: Wales is Different
- Making the Connections
- Modernising Transport in North Wales
- Transforming Transport
- Overview of early findings
- Data pack
- Case Study

The Welsh Context: Wales is Different

- Twenty two, mostly small unitary local authorities, formed in April 1996 serving a population of 2.9m
- Highly rural outside the North East and the M4 corridor (Newport, Cardiff, Valleys and Swansea)
- High levels of urban deprivation and rural poverty
- Fragmented, small scale services in many councils
- Devolution – No CPA, distaste for league tables
- Small country – easy access to senior politicians
- High prevalence of independents and nationalism in the rural areas, coalition politics – local and national
- Language and culture

Making the Connections

- The Welsh programme for public service improvement and modernisation
  - Collaboration not competition
  - Beecham Review/Citizen Centred
- Largely voluntary, some pump priming funds, regional boards – WLGA sub committees
- Slow progress through small scale experimentations with shared services plus WAG sponsored consortia (Transport and Education)
- One Wales Government strongly committed to promoting Collaboration in service delivery

Modernising Transport in North Wales

- Welsh Assembly Government Initiatives
  - Improve buses, (response to an accident)
  - Learner Travel Wales Measure
- North Wales Chief Executives identified transport for modernisation and collaboration in 2006
  - Savings
  - Service improvements
  - Improved Management and deployment of IT
- Taken three reviews to make progress
  - 2006/7 Collaboration Review
  - 2009 Procurement Review
  - 2010 Transforming Transport

Transforming Transport

- Opportunity to transform transport derives from a step change in the commitment to collaboration
- Six North Wales Councils: Anglesey, Gwynedd, Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham committed to a radical vision for change including collaboration
  - Response to Public Sector Funding reductions
  - Programme Boards set up
  - Funding for Collaboration Projects
- Transforming Transport Project will Deliver Efficiency and Improvement in: -
  - Home School Transport, SEN and Mainstream
  - The public, subsidised bus network
  - Social Services transport

Key Work Streams

- Demand Reduction
  - Review of Policies
  - Review Statutory and Non Statutory Transport
  - Review of Practice and application of policies
- Improved Management
  - Structures, presumption in favour of shared services
  - Improved use of IT
  - Better metrics
- Improved Procurement and Scheduling
  - Increase the deployment of procurement best practice
  - Review routes
  - Pilot and experiment with new ways of tendering and work with new sectors

Delivery

- Appointed Consultants – WYG and Sian Thornthwaite Associates (WYG lead, Richard Burley)
- Working October 2010 – September 2011
- Case Study in issues facing small scale Welsh Local Government – fragmentation, parochial, corner shop operations, mixed practice, lack of management information - Making the case for shared services
- Couple of months behind schedule due to data not being available in a usable form
- Overview reports produced
- Work programme agreed – policy, structures (shared services) the priority

Key Findings To date

- 2002/03 – 2009/2010 50% increase in expenditure on home school transport
- Need to improve budget control and performance management including accountability for the service
- Need to improve use and deployment of IT systems
- Need to review high cost transport packages more regularly
- Examine opportunity to use the public network more for home school transport
- Use of escorts higher than average
- Experiment with different procurement models and supply sectors
- Review discretionary transport

Data Pack - Population

North Wales	
Population 678,000	School Population 101,000 in 500 schools
30,000 daily movement of school pupils	57,000 Primary 44,000 Secondary 1,100 Special
18,000 SEN pupils	College/6th Form 6,000+

Data Pack - Money

North Wales Spending Statistics	
Concessionary Fares £12.4m 24%	Primary Schools £4.1m 8%
Secondary Schools £11.3m 22%	Local Bus Subsidy £7.4m 15%
SEN £8.5m 17%	**Total: £43.7m** + Social Services £4m guesstimate

Target Model

- Integrated transport Management
- Strong Visibility to the client – education, social services and transport policy for various components of transport services delivery
- A shared service
  - single IT system
  - Professional Leadership centrally for the region
  - Performance Management and Analysis
  - Procurement specialism
  - Delivery hubs based on pairs of authorities (3)
- Delivery Hubs based on recent developments within authorities e.g. Conwy and Denbighshire joint services

Case Study

- There are too many local authorities in Wales leading to fragmentation of services and difficulties in delivering services with the right level professional leadership and financial and technological support
- Shared services can improve leadership, management and accountability without dismantling the democratic structures
- Transport illustrates the need for change and shared services, Its long history also illustrates the difficulty of delivering voluntary change
- If change for shared services is driven centrally, how is it different from re-organisation?

WLGA • CLILC

Transforming Transport – A Shared Transport Service for North Wales?

Stephen Jones

WLGA (stephen.jones@wlga.gov.uk)

27th January 2011