

The panel that will decide the fate of future road projects in Wales

Members of a panel that will assess the Welsh Government's future road investments set against its carbon emission reduction target, has been named.

Consisting of climate change and transport specialists from across the UK, the roads review is being led by Dr Lynn Sloman, a transport consultant who previously been part of the Lord Burns Commission – set up by the Welsh Government to look at alternative transport options to relieve traffic on the M4 after its decision not to proceed with an £1.3bn motorway relief road south of Newport.

All future planned projects, including a scheme to improve safety on the A487 in Ceredigion and a new 13 kilometre carriageway in Deeside, will be covered by the review.

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The Welsh Government said in light of the climate change emergency, the panel will be asked to consider whether new roads are the right solutions for transport problems, or

whether there are alternative sustainable modes of transport like bus, rail and active travel, that would work better.

Only those projects under construction will not be covered by the review. Those exempted are:

A465: Dowlais Top to Hirwaun (sections 5 and 6);

A465: Gilwern to Brynmawr (section 2);

A483: Llandeilo;

A487: Caernarfon to Bontnewydd bypass;

A487: new Dyfi Bridge;

A494: River Dee Bridge;

A55: Abergwyngregyn to Tai'r Meibion improvements; and

M4: Junction 48 Hendy pinch point scheme.

Deputy Minister for Climate Change, Lee Waters said: "Transport generates around 17% of all our emissions, so must play its part if we are to reach our target of net zero emissions by 2050.

"We need to move away from spending money on projects that encourage more people to drive, and redirect this money on maintaining our existing roads and investing in real alternatives.

"We recognise that these decisions throw up tensions, but we have to confront that if we're going to make a real difference. We're not saying this is the end of road construction in Wales, but the panel of experts will ensure that this is no longer the default response to a transport problem.

"Instead money saved by not building new roads will be used to improve existing infrastructure, helping to create new bus and

cycle lanes that give people a meaningful alternative choice for travel.”

Dr Sloman said: “The panel will bring a wealth of experience and diversity of perspectives to this review. The climate emergency makes it imperative that we avoid any investment that increases carbon emissions, especially in the next 15 years when most cars on the road will still be petrol and diesel vehicles.

” But we also need to understand the problems that road schemes have been designed to address – whether safety, air quality or unreliability – and consider how those problems can be tackled without increasing carbon.”

The panel will provide its final report next summer.

As well as its chair the panel consists of:

Julie Hunt – A chartered civil engineer and chair of the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (Wales).

Professor Glenn Lyons – University of the West of England who specialises in future mobility;

Geoff Ogden – director of planning, development and advisory services at Transport for Wales;

John Parkin – Professor of transport engineering and deputy director of the Centre for Transport and Society at the University of the West of England;

Professor Andrew Potter – Cardiff Business School and a expert in freight, logistics and operations management;

Helen Pye – Head of engagement at Snowdonia National Park Authority with involvement in traffic and parking management; and

Eurgain Powell – a transport specialist with the office of the

Future Generations Commissioner.

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