

**Minutes of the meeting of the
West of England Joint Committee
28th June 2017**

1	<p>EVACUATION PROCEDURE</p> <p>Councillor (Cllr) Matthew Riddle, Leader of South Gloucestershire Council, welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the West of England Joint Committee and made a safety announcement in relation to the fire/emergency evacuation procedure.</p>
2	<p>APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR OF THE WEST OF ENGLAND JOINT COMMITTEE</p> <p>Cllr Riddle introduced first item for the West of England Joint Committee, having previously held the position of Chair of the West of England Strategic Leaders Board. He introduced committee members; Mayor of Bristol Marvin Rees, Cllr Tim Warren, Leader of Bath & North East Somerset Council, Nigel Ashton, Leader of North Somerset Council, West of England Mayor Tim Bowles and Mr James Durie substituting for Professor Steven West, Chair of the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and representing the business community.</p> <p>Cllr Riddle asked members for proposals to appoint the Chair and Vice-Chair for the West of England Joint Committee as a first order of business.</p> <p>Cllr Tim Warren, proposed Cllr Mathew Riddle as Chair of the West of England Joint Committee.</p> <p>Mayor Bowles seconded the nomination.</p> <p>On being put to the vote the motion was carried unanimously.</p> <p>The Chair asked for proposals for a Vice Chair.</p> <p>Mayor Bowles proposed Mayor Marvin Rees.</p> <p>Cllr Tim Warren seconded the nomination.</p> <p>On being put to the vote the motion was carried unanimously.</p> <p>The Chair congratulated the appointments and thanked members for their input.</p>
3	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>Apologies were noted from Professor Steven West, the Chair of the West of England LEP.</p>
4	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972</p> <p>There were no Declarations of interest</p>
5	<p>MINUTES</p> <p>The Chair noted that as this was the opening meeting of the West of England Joint Committee there were no previous minutes to be agreed.</p>
6	<p>CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to BAWA for the first meeting of the West of England Joint</p>

Committee. He explained that the need for a Joint Committee to oversee matters across the region of Bristol, Bath & North East Somerset, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire had been identified through a Governance Review conducted following the West of England Devolution Deal.

The Chair referred to the earlier meeting of the West of England Combined Authority Committee, chaired by West of England Mayor Tim Bowles, and welcomed Mayor Bowles to the Joint Committee.

In outlining the role of the Joint Committee, the Chair highlighted the need for continued cross boundary engagement across the West of England to ensure the success of the four West of England authorities. The Chair noted critical strategic issues such as economic development, planning and transport, and emphasised the need for continued engagement with residents, business and voluntary sectors, across all four Unitary Authorities.

The Chair outlined the responsibility of the committee to review strategic regional matters including the Joint Spatial Plan and Joint Transport Study. He applauded the pace and continued joint efforts of the authorities to complete these strategic projects and stated the importance of the committee in overseeing these matters.

The Chair drew attention to a standing item of the Joint Committee agenda; comments from the chair of the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). He welcomed the opportunity to strengthen the LEP's engagement in the key strategic issues for the region and noted the contribution of the interim Chair of the LEP, Professor Steve West, in shaping the future of the LEP with colleagues across the four unitary authorities and critically, in the business community. The Chair welcomed future working with the LEP Chair and a new LEP Board in due course.

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ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC

Public Questions:

No public questions had been submitted.

Public speakers:

Members of the public were invited to make any additional statements raising separate issues to those presented at the earlier West of England Combined Authority Committee, of which noted statements would be circulated to this Committee. The following public speakers made representations:

Ms Christina Biggs – Friends of Suburban Bristol Railway (FOSBR)

Ms Christina Biggs, representing Friends of Suburban Bristol Railway (FOSBR) submitted a written statement to the Committee. Ms Biggs addressed the committee on a number of transport issues and stated her view that there was a lack of recognition of rail infrastructure issues and a predominantly bus and highways focused strategy. Ms Biggs urged the committee to develop a rail strategy to demonstrate the authorities' commitment to rail travel.

The Chair thanked Ms Biggs for her comments and confirmed that the written statement

would be included with the minutes of the meeting. The Chair noted that rail infrastructure had been and continues to be crucial for the West of England and that rail investment was a crucial aspect of transport infrastructure.

Ms Julie Bosworth – Friends of Suburban Bristol Railway (FOSBR)

Ms Julie Bosworth, representing Friends of Suburban Bristol Railway, addressed the committee on transport issues across the West of England. Mrs Bosworth urged decision makers to promote a positive message for rail investments.

Ms Bosworth urged that the committee members help to promote the awareness of rail investment and invited decision makers to travel with members of Friends of Suburban Bristol Railway via bus and train, in an effort to promote these methods of travel.

The Chair thanked Mrs Bosworth for her comments and confirmed that her written statement would be included with the minutes of the meeting.

Mr David Redgewell, Southwest Transport Network, Bus Users UK and TSSA

Mr David Redgewell, representing Southwest Transport Network, Bus Users UK and TSSA submitted a written statement to the Committee. Mr Redgewell addressed the committee on rail and bus issues across the West of England. In support of his statement Mr Redgewell stressed his view that the West of England's bus network should be across all four authorities and therefore North Somerset must in his opinion be part of a future bus strategy.

Mr Redgewell requested that future West of England Combined Authority strategies must ensure equality in the heart of their policy development.

The Chair thanked Mr Redgewell for his comments and noted the range of information and detail provided. The Chair confirmed that the written statement would be included with the minutes of the meeting.

Mrs Angela Essex

Mrs Angela Essex addressed the committee on transport related issues across the West of England. In her opinion the priority was to deliver Henbury Station, enhanced bus services to Cribbs Causeway and to redevelop land behind Temple Meads as a bus station.

The Chair thanked Mrs Essex for her comments and confirmed that the written statement would be included with the minutes of the meeting.

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PETITIONS FROM MEMBERS

None received.

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COMMENTS FROM CHAIR OF LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERHSIP

Mr James Durie presented a statement on behalf of Professor Steve West, Chair of the LEP, outlining the crucial role of the LEP in bringing business and university voices to the committee to inform discussion s the future of the West of England region. Mr Durie

	<p>highlighted his view that there was a need to fully understand the LEP's role in working to shape economic growth and the skills agenda across West of England, and confirmed the LEP's support for the development of the West of England strategy.</p> <p>The Chair, thanked Mr Durie and the LEP Chair for his representation. The Chair supported the statement and noted the need to ensure the understanding of the function of the LEP moving forward.</p>
10	<p>LEP ONE FRONT DOOR FUNDING PROGRAMME</p> <p>The Chair introduced a report on the One Front Door Funding Program and noted that the report was asking members to endorse the thematic allocation of funding for Growth Deal Round three and to consider business cases seeking approval for funding through the Local Growth or Economic Development Funds.</p> <p>The Chair introduced Pete Davis, Major Scheme Co-ordinator from the West of England Combined Authority, to answer any questions on the report.</p> <p>The Chair referred to earlier comments from Mr Redgewell in the public statements to the committee, and noted that funding had been made available to reduce the time taken to undertake the repairs to Bromley Heath Viaduct, an important route through the West of England. The Chair noted that the additional funding would help reduce the period of works from 52 to 33 weeks.</p> <p>Mayor Tim Bowles endorsed the Chair's comments for Bromley Heath Viaduct, outlining the importance not to see the issue solely as a South Gloucestershire project as it tackled the issue of congestion across the whole West of England.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Pete Davis and all officers involved in the work. The Chair proposed to consider the recommendations on block.</p> <p>The Chair moved the recommendations</p> <p>Mayor Tim Bowles seconded the recommendations.</p> <p>On being put to the vote the motion was carried unanimously.</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The West of England Joint Committee agreed the recommendations of the LEP One Front Door Funding Programme Report of the 28th June 2017 as follows: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That in event of a shortfall in 16/17 grant claims, LGF payments are made to the schemes as set out in paragraph 3.3. 2. Endorse the approach and thematic allocations for Growth Deal 3 funding. 3. That subject to securing funding from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), a £10m funding allocation is made to IAAPS and an FBC is requested for this scheme. 4. Approve the FBC for the Sustainable Transport Package 17/18. 5. Approve the FBC for the Portway Station subject to a) securing planning consent and b) provision of a detailed cost plan (including the amenity building), programme and risk register. 6. Approve the FBC for the Weston College Construction Skills Training Centre

	<p>subject to a) securing planning consent and b) supply of updated design and costings. A Monitoring and Evaluation Plan to be produced.</p> <p>7. Approve the FBC for the Health and Active Living Skills Centre subject to a) securing planning consent and b) supply of updated design and costings. A Monitoring and Evaluation Plan to be produced.</p> <p>8. Approve the FBC for the BEMA scheme. A Monitoring and Evaluation Plan to be produced.</p> <p>9. Request an FBC is produced for the Colston Hall Phase 2 Transformation Project which should set out the link between this project and the wider regional context and other cultural assets.</p> <p>10. Approve the Bath Quays Phase 1b (North) FBC.</p> <p>11. Approve the Bromley Heath Viaduct Maintenance and Improvement Programme FBC. The Monitoring and Evaluation Plan to be finalised. EDF substitution to be through Avonmouth/Sevenside infrastructure.</p> <p>12. Approve the change requests set out in Appendix 3.</p>
11	<p>NEXT STEPS FOR REGIONAL STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT</p> <p>The Chair introduced a report on the next steps for the development of a West of England Regional Strategy and noted the recommendation that a draft Regional Strategy be published in July.</p> <p>The Chair introduced Patricia Greer, interim CEO of the Combined Authority, to answer any questions on the report.</p> <p>Cllr Tim Warren commented on the importance of a West of England Regional Strategy in moving forward in dialogues with central government. The Chair supported this comment adding that the importance of the regional strategy was also apparent in dialogue with prescribed bodies and key stakeholders. Mr James Durie again reinforced what members noted highlighting the importance of involvement of the business community.</p> <p>The Chair moved the recommendations.</p> <p>Cllr Nigel Ashton seconded the recommendations.</p> <p>On being put to the vote the motion was carried unanimously.</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <p>1. The West of England Joint Committee agreed the recommendations of the ‘Next Steps for Regional Strategy Development Report’ of the 28th June 2017 and will publish a draft West of England Regional Strategy discussion paper in July for discussion with partners across the business community, public and community sector.</p>
12	<p>TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR DEVELOPMENT OF A JOINT LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN</p> <p>The Chair invited members to note the proposed Terms of Reference for the development of the Joint Local Transport Plan, covering the Combined Authority area and North Somerset. The Chair outlined that this plan follows on from the work that the four unitary authorities have been doing collectively on the Joint Transport Study and the Joint Spatial Plan and is also something that is a duty of the West of England Combined Authority.</p> <p>The Chair outlined that the paper reiterates a commitment to delivering the plan as four Councils. It was noted that the Infrastructure Advisory Board would have opportunity to input</p>

APPENDIX ONE – PUBLIC STATEMENTS

Statement 1:

David Redgewell, TSSA, Bus Users UK

Statement from South West Transport Network with support from Living Easton to WECA 28th June 2017 and Joint Leaders Board 28th June regarding heritage buildings in Greater Bristol

We are very concerned about in the way many historic buildings in the WECA area are being allowed to decay or become derelict. Immediate examples of this include Speedwell Baths in Bristol of which demolition is being opposed by the 20th Century Society and local residents and Greater Fishponds Neighbourhood Partnership for poor quality housing, in the Temple Meads area as well as the station itself which is in need of major regeneration with modern shopping facilities and a transport interchange for buses, taxi's and ferries, we have the Cattle Market Tavern, George and Railway P.H. and the Grosvenor Hotel all under threat but are opposed to demolition by conservation groups.

Other buildings under threat are the Gaumont cinema, Baldwin Street (frontage only being saved, the derelict buildings around Castle Park, Westmoreland House, Portland and Brunswick Squares together with the appalling state of Stapleton Road station without full disabled access. Montelier, Lawrence Hill and Patchway are also in a poor state and require regeneration with full disabled access.

In Kingswood, the high quality Edwardian Arts & Crafts style Shant P.H. is an example of a community pub under threat and there is the on-going issue of the Wesley chapels which although they are admired by visitors worldwide are subject to planning wrangles with South Gloucestershire and Bristol City Council's.

In Weston-Super-Mare the saga of Birnbeck Pier continues and the railway station should become a transport hub with full disabled access.

In Bath the issue of restoring Bath Spa station and bus station with modern passenger facilities.

We call on the WECA and North Somerset Council to come up with a plan that conserves the historic buildings and regenerates them for future generations.

These issues are being discussed at TFGBA, Railfuture and Living Easton meetings

DAVID REDGEWELL

Statement 2

David Redgewell, TSSA, Bus Users UK

SWTN statement to WECA 28th June 2017 and Leaders Board 28th June 2017

We would urge the combined authority board not to cut services or local rail investment at a time when we are trying to build MetroBus and Metrorail. We are pleased to see new entries into the market in the form of Stagecoach Group in buses.

We hope the authority will look at bus, rail and ferry integration with Smart ticketing and transport hubs and will note the comments below:-

1) the Buses Bill and the Combined Authorities powers over the 1985 Act to support bus services and cross boundary issues with North Somerset Council which would require a permit system if the buses were franchised or special regulations for advanced quality partnerships.

2) with Rail powers we need to include over the Portishead line and Henbury loop and existing station improvements on the current rail network to Bristol, Bath and Weston-Super-Mare including access to the disabled schemes and DIA's through a memorandum of understanding with ORR and Network Rail including disabled access at Lawrence Hill, Stapleton Road and Patchway.

3) Cross boundary rail services with Somerset, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire.

4) Budget transfer supported bus budgets from Bristol City Council, BANES and South Gloucestershire Council and the combined authorities powers over bus services let by Bristol City Council on the 7th March 2017 and 19th June 2017. To work on a bus strategy especially routes 16 and 18 in Bristol and oversee South Gloucestershire's supported bus services consultation and report to the Metro Mayor.

5) maintenance of bus shelters and bus stations.

6) to urgently set up the West of England public transport forum and reconstitute the rail forum from South Gloucestershire Council.

7) maintain the BTP in Bath, Bristol and Weston-Super-Mare and neighbourhood policing similar to the Avon and Somerset Police on the bus network and stations.

8) reopen the Portishead line and Henbury loop as a priority for WECA and North Somerset and the Metro Mayor.

DAVID REDGEWELL TSSA, Bus Users UK

Statement 3

David Redgewell, TSSA, Bus Users UK

Statement from South West Transport Network to WECA Board meeting and Joint Committee
28th June 2017

There are four additional items which need to be addressed at the WECA meeting :-

- 1) The University master plan for Temple Meads needs to address the issue of access to the station including public transport interchange and the walkway underneath.
- 2) The Temple Meads/Temple Gate roundabout scheme needs to address the needs of bus/rail interchange and shelters during the works with First Bus/Rail and Network Rail including disabled assistance. A proper plan needs to be drawn up for Temple Meads.
- 3) We support MetroBus works at Bromley Heath viaduct and additional money but need a proper plan for bus services in the area around Downend and Fishponds.
- 4) With Trams in Bath proposals it needs to be part of a network in Greater Bristol.

DAVID REDGEWELL (SWTN)

Statement 4

David Redgewell, TSSA, Bus Users UK

CRIBBS CAUSEWAY and MetroWest - SWTN comments on CRIBBS CAUSEWAY plan update MetroWest

We are concerned about the new siting of Filton North station in respect of interchange with MetroBus and the A38 showcase bus routes to Thornbury and Patchway and the need to interchange with bus route 18 to EmersonsGreen/Southmead Hospital and Avonmouth and route 82 to Yate.

The new station site does not provide a transport interchange as supported by Railfuture, TFGBA and Friends of Bristol Suburban Railways and the four rail unions.

We ask the Council to reconsider the Filton North station site as this was rebuilt only a few years ago. Clearly the plan needs to link with the rail service through Henbury North to Avonmouth and Severn Beach and the new Cribbs Causeway development whatever that plan may be following the planning inspectors report.

We expect the plan to be fully designed with bus stops, shelters and raised kerbs and mobility impaired pavements and services including the public realm strategy.

We are very concerned that MetroWest Phase 2 Henbury line and Gloucester line are progressed as a top priority for the Bristol Mayor and Metro Mayor including Ashley Down, Charfield, Stonehouse and Gloucester.

The Henbury loop should also be included with Filton North, Henbury for Cribbs Causeway, Avonmouth and Portway Park and Ride. Our top priority is to see the Portishead railway line reopened for 100 million pounds including stations at Portishead and Pill protecting the site at Ashton Gate.

We need value engineering at Network Rail and these projects must be submitted for CP6. Saltford, St Annes and Corsham should be looked at as part of the study by Bristol City Council. The Metro Mayor needs to make a submission to Government.

It should be noted that Lawrence Hill, Stapleton Road, Patchway, Pilning, Nailsea and Backwell and Parson Street are not disabled accessible nor is Weston Super Mare and Cheltenham without lifts.

On integration, we are very concerned after discussions with Transport Focus and First Group (RAIL and BUS DIVISIONS), Network Rail about bus/rail ferry integration at Temple Meads within the Temple Quarter Enterprise Zone scheme. We note that Cambridge North station is fully integrated with local and MetroBus unlike Bedminster at present.

Integration should be at the heart of what WECA does.

DAVID REDGEWELL SWTN

Statement 5
Cllr Mark Weston, Bristol City Council

West of England Combined Authority
will be held on Wednesday 28th June 2017

PUBLIC FORUM STATEMENT TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE (Item 7; to be taken on the rise of the WCA) from Conservative Leader Councillor Mark Weston

It is vital that pressure is maintained at both the Central Government and West of England level to deliver new or updated rail infrastructure. We have all been disappointed by the announced delay in electrification of the Great Western Line from Bath to Bristol. This must remain a long-term objective in future phases of the MetroWest modernisation programme.

I am concerned that the escalating costs of restoring the Portishead Line to passenger travel (Metrowest 1) will thwart this long held ambition entirely or result in a much reduced construction. I remain convinced this track could make a significant impact on commuter road volumes in the south of Bristol.

MetroWest Phase 2 – is proceeding towards the next stage of development with design and engineering assessments. These are projects scheduled to be completed by May 2021. As well as including upgraded and fully accessible stations at Ashley Down, North Filton and Henbury, these stops should be equipped with ‘real time’ travel information like the ‘Vivaldi system operating on Bristol’s showcase bus routes. I believe it is essential that the option of eventually converting the planned Henbury ‘spur’ into a proper loop line be retained. Here, transport planners need to work with the Port of Bristol on engineering solutions which will satisfy all stakeholders and not affect the future profitability of the docks.

The Port Company remains a key player in the economic success of the sub-region. I would hope the Combined Authority will be supportive of their aspiration to build a deep sea container terminal. This development is essential to secure its long-term competitiveness, profitability and viability.

Despite some of the funding setbacks, there is still a great deal of investment to celebrate and public transport enhancements which are ‘on track.’ I would only ask that we now plan for further improvements that could form part of a MetroWest Phase 3. Although this might seem a distant consideration at this point in time, it is never too soon to start to plan for the sort of major strategic objectives or developments we all want to really transform our local rail network.

COUNCILLOR MARK WESTON
Conservative Leader, Bristol City Council

Statement 6

Christina Biggs, Friends of Suburban Bristol Railway (FOSBR)

Friends of Suburban Bristol Railways (FOSBR)

Statement to WECA Weds 28 June 2017

BAWA, 589 Southmead Road, Filton, Bristol, BS34 7RG

1. The case for rail

a. FOSBR notes that in the newly published December 2016 Joint Transport Study consultation, the 700 respondents to this consultation overwhelmingly favoured rail improvements over road. This is confirmed by our own January 2016 rail map survey (attached) to which we had 800 respondents.

b. The merits of a region-wide local rail network, properly resourced and maintained, should be obvious, both from the point of view of short and reliable transit times, connectivity, independence of the rail network from road congestion and air quality improvements from electrification of rail lines. The benefits to social mobility and physical and mental health of an easy commute to work are well known. As evidence of the scale of the problem, the Mayor of Bristol has recently launched a Congestion Task force and Sustrans are leading a Clean Air campaign.

c. FOSBR notes that the recently completed South Bristol Link Road, hailed as necessary to reduce congestion in the South Bristol area, is already heavily congested in rush hour. This has long been predicted in our statements over the years.

d. FOSBR notes that in the Joint Transport Study it was stated by Network Rail that the local rail network is congested and does not have capacity to take many more passengers. However, FOSBR argues that, with suitable investment in schemes such as Filton Bank four-tracking, Bristol East Junction remodelling and redoubling of the Severn Beach Line, the capacity for local rail services will be much enhanced, especially with the double capacity Class 165/6 trains on the Severn Beach Line and the new smartcard scheme. FOSBR notes that the Severn Beach Line currently carries more than a million journeys a year.

e. FOSBR has invited other rail groups and private citizens across the West of England area to submit statements to WECA to illustrate the public and political support for investment in cross-regional rail. We have also drafted the attached FOSBR Rail Manifesto 2017 which summarises the different rail projects that are currently being considered.

f. FOSBR therefore requests WECA to make rail, with effective rail-bus interchange and a Park and Ride network, the first priority for the transport component of the devolution deal as this is the only truly cross-regional network that can reduce road congestion and improve air quality.

2. One example of what FOSBR can offer: data challenging the Port of Bristol's use of freight a. FOSBR understands that a major component of the £100m over-run in costs on the Portishead line is due to the 50 weekend closures necessary for the works to take place concurrently with the freight trains that are supposed to be running on the Portbury Line during every week day.

b. Subsequent to this FOSBR has been monitoring the use of the Portbury freight line every day over four months. The attached table shows that only 5% of the purchased freight paths have been used over this period, and also shows that the freight paths are usually used on a Tuesday and Thursday. This means that at the very least, the line possessions for the Portishead line works could take place over a 4-day weekend, from Thursday to Monday inclusive. This will less than

halve the 50 weekend possessions deemed to be necessary, as more work can be done in between moving machinery in and out.

c. In our statement to JTB in March, FOSBR suggested that savings on construction costs could be made by challenging the Port of Bristol on their use of the freight line to Portbury. Therefore it should be possible to negotiate full possession of the line in order to carry out rail construction work for longer periods of time without excessive charges. We suggest that WECA should urgently hold talks with the Port and Network Rail to facilitate the detailed re-scoping of the Portishead Line.

3. The future of MetroWest – Phase 3

a. FOSBR supports the existing MetroWest Phase 1 and 2 schemes, but urges WECA to plan now for an ambitious cross-regional scheme that benefits the whole West of England area. This is why we have invited residents of Thornbury, Corsham and Pilning to make representations today. We have visited each of the stations on our Phase 3 map and commend these three stations in particular. We would suggest that WECA initiates an in-house study of our Phase 3 station reopening plan, together with our suggestions for rail services and rail-bus interchange that would fit into the existing timetable.

b. The largest component of Phase 3 would be the reopening of the Thornbury Line. We consider that this will not have the complications that have been encountered by the Portishead line with the Avon Gorge. For the Thornbury Line, both rail tunnels under the A38 and M5 still exist (see photos). There are two level crossings on the Thornbury Line which might at first glance appear to be a major problem - as has been found with Severn Beach Line (with the conveyor belt at St Andrew's Level Crossing) and the Portishead Line (with the Winterstoke industrial estate next to the Cumberland Basin flyover). However because these crossings on the Thornbury line are in the open country they could be replaced by road or rail bridges much more easily. We are confident that the MetroWest team will soon have the experience to overcome these challenges.

4. FOSBR Requests:

a. FOSBR has one immediate request to make of WECA. We have noticed that at every meeting of the Joint Transport Board, the road and MetroBus schemes are first on the agenda and the MetroWest rail schemes are always last on the agenda. FOSBR and our allies here today therefore request WECA to, as evidence of willingness to put rail as their immediate top priority for this first term of the devolution deal, to put rail as the first item on the agenda of each WECA meeting, and to include on the agenda the details of the nearest rail and bus service to all WECA meetings which are open to the public. For example the public need to know the nearest bus to BAWA Filton, 589 Southmead Road, Filton, Bristol BS34 7RG for the meeting on 28 June at 9.30am.

b. Finally FOSBR has a suggestion for WECA governance. We have over the years witnessed the endless difficulties of hiring consultants for every aspect of rail planning and the resulting lack of expertise and dependence on Network Rail dictats. We would much rather that WECA had its own in-house rail planning team, headed up by a rail industry professional, and a formal relationship with Network Rail as contractor. Please consider this as an important investment and expression of serious intent that the devolution deal will be a real game-changer for public transport in the West of England region.

NB - We realise that rail is not the only part of the WECA remit, and accordingly we commend to WECA the Good Transport Plan produced by Sustrans for the Green Capital year, the TfGB Mini-Manifesto, and the appeal from the Save the Libraries campaign to use some of the 19+ Adult Skills devolution fund to save local libraries in Bristol, S Glos and BANES from closure.

Christina Biggs (FOSBR Secretary), Tuesday 27 June 2017