

## West of England Joint Committee

4 October 2019

Items from the public



## Agenda item 9 – Items from the public

### Statements received:

1	Name: Sandy Hore-Ruthven & Mark Coates Subject: Creative Youth Network's plan for redeveloping Bristol's old Victorian Magistrates Courts (agenda item 12 – One Front Door funding programme report – recommendation 4)
2	Name: Dave Redgewell Subject: WECA Bus Strategy
3	Name: Nigel Bray Subject: Bath - Warmley light rail consultation
4	Name: Christina Biggs Subject: Local Transport Issues
5	Name: Leeza Awojobi Subject: The Courts Project



## STATEMENT 1 – Jnt Ctte

Question from Creative Youth Network for scrutiny by the WECA Joint Committee on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2019.

### Supporting Statement:

Re: Agenda Item 12, recommendation 4

The LEP Officers have reviewed Creative Youth Network's plan for redeveloping Bristol's old Victorian Magistrates Courts (The Courts) and agreed it is strong project that is well aligned with WECA priorities.

We know the creative industries are a growth area, but disadvantaged and diverse young people are not benefiting from the jobs and opportunities available. Each year, The Courts will deliver skills training and pathways into employment in the creative sector for 580 young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

It will also meet the evidenced demand for high-quality inner-city workspaces for the creative industries, generating £4.68m GVA.

Creative Youth Network has so far raised £950k of the £2.2m match-funding required to trigger an additional £4.3m capital grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) and we have applied to a range of trusts and foundations for more than £1.2m in other funding. An application for the NLHF grant must be submitted in November and we are expected to have 80% of the match-funding in place.

We are asking WECA to underwrite the project to £850k, which would guarantee we reach the 80% threshold necessary to secure the £4.3m NLHF award.

We acknowledge the officers have not been able to recommend fully funding the project at this stage, as the LEP does not have the funds to dedicate to it. However, we ask the Joint Committee to underwrite part of the match-funding, to ensure Bristol and the West of England does not miss out on the opportunity to draw down investment worth £5.5m.

Creative Youth Network will continue to fundraise over the next two years during The Courts development period. The underwrite would not be required until 2022, if at all.

### Question:

Creative Youth Network asks: Will the West of England Combined Authority underwrite a proportion of the funds necessary for The Courts project that will attract more than £5.5m in inward investment, support more than 100 jobs, upskill more than 500 young people per year and deliver more than £4.6m GVA?

*(NB the question has been dealt with under the appropriate Standing Orders for submitted questions)*

## Statement 2 – Jnt Ctte

### Statement for Friday 4th October 2019 meeting & Monday 7th October 2019

I am concerned that the WECA bus strategy is not being delivered. There are a lack of a supported bus services to Bristol hospitals (an hourly 17 service to Southmead hospital and a limited 92 service to South Bristol hospital) with other evening services reduced to hourly including the 5, 6 & 7. The 76 service is also turned at Henbury town centre instead of going to Cribbs Causeway (the Mall). Therefore, WECA and Bristol City Council should improve the frequencies of bus services to Southmead, BRI, RUH and Weston General hospitals as well as other destinations.

Service 2 Stockwood - Cribbs Causeway should stop at Southmead hospital and the new service 2A from South Bristol Hospital (Hengrove Park) - Knowle - Temple Meads City Centre could be extended to Southmead Hospital.

There is also the issue of bus stop flags showing wrong information including Gloucester Road with the 78/79, Bath Road with the 57 and Fishponds Road with the 47/X47 and there are other examples. This can lead to confusion with tourists and vulnerable users of the Greater Bristol bus network. Many flags don't even show the Y2/Y5 services and others are damaged (bent, display boards pulled down), others are unreadable due to graffiti attack or no working shelter lighting and some have slipped down in their casings. Therefore, a comprehensive audit of all Greater Bristol Network bus stops is needed. An audit of bus stop rutting is also required as this is still an issue for passengers & cyclists.

One of the major concerns affecting cyclists and bus users is the lack of maintenance of street trees and bus shelters in part of the WECA area I'm particularly concern of the lack of pollarding / branch cutting on major bus routes across the area. Whilst we are aware of some of the issues on the 173/174 In the area of binagar, which we would be grateful if the Mayor could be in contact with Somerset & mendip councils about it is become very apparent in the last few weeks that many major bus routes in south Gloucestershire there has been simply no maintenance on these resulting on buses clipping trees, specially in the Yate area around Shire Way and Chipping Sodbury area and around Kingswood Area, broad street near Page Park.

Specially with first Group & stagecoach using more double deckers there is more of a risk to the traveling public of tree branches falling on buses, at the moment we've had no incidents involving any injuries but I am concerned that one of these branches are going to fall on a bus shelter / on roof of a bus. I must remind the Mayor that there was an incident between Bath & Devizes a few years ago where a driver was killed and tree maintenance is top priority

Whilst we welcome the governments £230million pound grant for buses; £30 million for main line, and £20 million for rural buses / demand responsive, that could be used in the chew valley area link in with the 376 & 179 corridors to Bath/Bristol and rural areas of South Gloucestershire, we are concerned despite the PMs love of buses and modern buses, our bus buses have contactless and integrating ticketing with rail we are very concerned about the level of vehicles that have come into the Bristol area without refurbishment or reconditioning from others area, there needs to be a similar deal to Cornwall county council where by buses refurbished and painted, with WiFi and better facilities because as a lot of the fleet is indeed of major refurbishment.

Other projects that the Mayor needs to address is the doors / signage / cleaning and connectivity to the railway station at Bath Bus Station.

All of this needs to fit in with an improvement to integrate with the metro west rail services to Gloucester / Westbury / Severn Beach & Henbury and we are still concerned about the lack of progress of the refurbishment of Bristol Temple Meads (major refurbishment and poor bus integration, due to lack of signage and agency's involved, Alex Parry in first group and mayors office are trying to rectified) Stapleton Road and Nailsea and Blackwell, and Weston Super Mare with disabled access's

We welcome Weston Super Mare new bus station proposal but still need better integration between Bus & Rails Stations, there is still need to resolve the Nailsea, Yatton, Clevedon Bus link and a Sunday service on the Wells Weston service.

We also need for a better bus plan to service BRI & Southmead Hospital, Whitchurch, Royal United Hospital and Weston Super Mare.

We hope these items will be addressed and we can improve the public transport in the Bristol / Bath & Weston super Mare area and would like to see North Somerset join WECA.

There's 2 rail urgent issues;

to sign the contract / franchise is to sign the deal with First Group / GWR to extend the franchise and provide more HSTs within the contract and similarly for Arriva more HSTs for the cross country contracts.

David Redgewell ( Equalities Representative - Bristol Mayor's Transport Board & South West Transport network

### **Statement 3 – Jnt Ctte**

#### **Bath - Warmley light rail consultation (Light rail around Bristol and Bath)**

*We want to see the budget for the light rail consultation studies in the Greater Bristol area to be fully protected and support the principles of a light rail route to Bristol Airport as a top priority and later to Bath especially from Lambridge across the City to Newbridge which could then make use of the light rail corridor to Bristol through Bitton, Salford, Kelston, Warmley to Yate and East Bristol via Mangotsfield, Staple Hill and Fishponds as well as linking into the RUH at Weston, the new Bath Spa Art & Design College at Weston Lock and Park & Ride sites which need to be co-ordinated with the Bristol Mayor's rapid transit project. The two schemes must link to Warmley and Emersons Green. Retention of Avon Valley Railway steam services at weekends. Provision should be made for a continuous cycle/walkway between Bristol and Bath where possible. The implementation of light rail will help bring the City region into line with EU emission and clean air targets together with clean fuel buses and taxi's.*

*A future extension of the light rail line towards East Bristol would provide economic and employment benefits to those living in the Bristol BS5 area (which still has higher than average levels of unemployment and social deprivation) by improving access to employment/study opportunities around the North Fringe and the Emersons Green Science Park.*

*The corridor to Odd Down is welcomed however the majority of the traffic is to the Somer Valley at Peasedown, Radstock and Mid Somer Norton and therefore an extension of a rapid transit system to this area would be beneficial. What evaluation of the Somerset and Dorset railway corridor has been carried out as Norton Radstock is an enterprise zone and needs public transport improvement.*

*A new light rail station at Warmley could be an interchange for buses for the Kingswood area.*

#### **Bus/Rail integration**

*This is required at Bath Spa station and other locations where light rail might possibly connect with buses. Across Europe and Greater Manchester/London rapid transit is fully integrated into the bus network. We need to make progress on bus/rail integration at Temple Meads as the Temple Gate stops do not work for passengers as they are too far away.*

*On rail we welcome the work on disabled access at Stapleton Road and Patchway.*

*There should be investment in MetroWest between Westbury, Bath and Bristol currently out for consultation with the DFT as part of the GWR franchise with First Group as the operator until 2022. This could include a business unit for Bristol and Bath, Somerset, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire & Greater Bristol.*

*We wish to see the GWR franchise kept as one complete business unit and not split up as proposed by the DFT. The GWR IEP electrification programme should also be completed in the shortest possible time to assist with high technology rail job creation opportunities in the region together with the Henbury loop rail project serving the proposed Arena.*

*There should also be a Greater Bristol business unit within the GWR franchise with devolved powers similar to the West Midlands and Greater Manchester PTE's.*

*Bus proposals can be included as should future schemes eg light rail integration and the Overground rail project in Bristol.*

*We would like to see fully accessible landing stages at all ferry terminals in Bristol Floating Harbour with shelters, easily readable timetables and RTI including Temple Meads station. Examples of best practice include Newcastle and Falmouth.*

#### **Arena issues**

*The Mayor and Metro Mayor should draw up a full transport plan with First Group and YTL if the Filton arena proposals are taken forward.*

*Regarding a shuttle train from Bristol Parkway to Temple Meads, taxi ranks, ferry terminal, service coaches and car parking including disabled spaces.*

*Construction of Station Street and bus interchange at the Friary is required as part of the new University campus development at Temple Meads.*

**Brabazon hanger**

*This location would need coach parking, MetroBus stops, coach stops, bus stops at this location and on Park & Ride services to Brislington, Parkway, Portway, Ashton Vale, extra trains from Bath and West Wilts, Taunton, W-S-M, Cardiff, Newport, Patchway, Filton, Yate, Gloucester, Cheltenham, Severn Beach via Clifton Down, Henbury loop, Portishead and Swindon. There should be 15 minute frequency services on the Henbury loop serving the Arena and 10 minute shuttle bus service on main routes to it.*

*The Class 800 IEP trains should operate from London and South Wales via Parkway to Filton North station for the arena, services from the South West, West Midlands to the Henbury loop station, coach parking will need to be provided, taxis, bus links Greater Bristol wide, links to Cribbs Causeway and hotels will need to be addressed.*

*If the Filton arena plans fall through for any reason then a Temple Meads Arena would need coach parking, MetroBus stops, coach stops in Avon Street, bus stops at this location and on Bath Road Park & Ride services from Brislington, Parkway, Portway, Ashton Vale, extra trains from Bath and West Wilts, Taunton, W-S-M, Cardiff, Newport, Patchway, Filton, Yate, Gloucester/Cheltenham, Severn Beach via Clifton Down, Henbury loop, Portishead and Swindon.*

*We urge the City Council, WECA and Bristol Mayor's to address a full integrated transport plan for the Arena similar to those at Manchester Victoria/Wembley.*

*The Arena rail services will need to be included in the new rail franchise.*

**Bus strategy**

*Whilst there has been some investment in the rail network including Stapleton Road, Patchway station car park and Portway Park & Ride we are concerned over the lack of an overall bus strategy. Some bus shelters need upgrading, bus flags require repair/replacement and many don't have working lighting or real time information screens. There shouldn't be any further cuts in bus subsidies but more investment in the local bus network instead so the Metro Mayor must address these issues alongside any light rail proposals for Bristol and Bath especially where services like the 16 from Bristol Parkway to Longwell Green via Lodge Causeway have already been cut leaving residents with no buses. The 10 Lyde Green - Southmead hospital bus service should be reinstated as part of an improved orbital bus network. We are also concerned about the limited frequencies on routes 36, 96 and 179 to Radstock and reduction of the 17 service from Kingswood to Southmead to hourly (Monday - Saturday evenings) and cut on the later Sunday evenings.*

*Passengers interchanging between bus/rail routes should have accessible toilet facilities on key routes with money for maintaining/cleaning bus shelters/bus bays. These should include facilities at Shirehampton Green, Eastville Park and Fishponds Park. One way to fund public transport would be to use money raised by parking fees instead of spending it on non transport infrastructure projects like pavement repairs. These toilets are also used by bus drivers and passengers on routes around Bristol. Has an Equalities Impact Assessment been carried out regarding the closures and any new facilities. Of course in South Gloucestershire, BANES and North Somerset have protected these facilities as part of the network.*

*We remind you that the tourism industry in Bristol is worth £1.3 billion and we do not want the reputation damage to Bristol so these facilities including community toilets and private sector transfers must work.*

**WECA Transport Forum issues**

*We are concerned about the lack of progress for a rail and transport forum and the need to merge the congestion task force within any WECA group. We also must address the proposed Regional Transport Board.*

*On integration we are concerned about the lack of integration between MetroBus and the background bus network especially around North Bristol (Bradley Stoke Way).*

*Nigel Bray (Railfuture Severnside)*





## 1. Filton Bank and the green light for MetroWest Phase 1A

- a) FOSBR urges WECA to urgently conclude negotiations and **implement MetroWest Phase 1A, initially half-hourly from Temple Meads to Avonmouth and hourly to Severn Beach, in the May 2020 timetable at the latest.**
- b) We appreciate the urgency (and the political necessity to WECA) of a half-hour service to Keynsham, Oldfield Park and Westbury, but as we understand this is dependent on the remodelling of Bristol East Junction, we would urge WECA to implement the Temple Meads to Severn Beach service first, as soon as possible, and not wait for Bristol East Junction as this is not yet approved.
- c) It is in any case advisable to test the resilience of the half-hour timetable on a small scale before linking to a through service to Westbury. It is quite possible that with knock-on delays through the single-track section of the Severn Beach Line, there will be delays and cancellations initially, much as for the Class 166 introduction in 2017-18 (see reliability chart for evidence of this completely unacceptable disruption to the service)
- d) We have accordingly launched an online (via Change.org, link on our website) and paper petition for this half-hour service which we will present to the September WECA meetings. We appreciate that it is not solely in WECA's gift to implement the service and so the petition calls on all decision makers, including WECA and DfT, to work together on this.
- e) In the mean time we urge WECA to press the DfT to approve funding for the remodelling of Bristol East Junction so that MetroWest Phase 1A can be extended to Westbury, and to initiate discussions on selective double-tracking of the Severn Beach Line.
- f) In the light of the climate crisis FOSBR would recommend that **no fare rise** be discussed, negotiated or implemented at this point as i) the reliability of the new service cannot be guaranteed, ii) the running costs to GWR should be covered by the subsidy agreed by the Outline Business case of £1.1 million, much as in 2008 by BCC, and iii) that the resulting rise in ridership together with smart ticketing may well cover the running costs after the proposed 3 years of pump-priming.
- g) As WECA has already committed £9m for capital delivery and the timetabling work is complete, there is no reason to be negotiating with DfT or GWR about service delivery. WECA should honour its Outline Business Case agreement to subsidise the MetroWest services for the first three years and not haggle over service delivery at this point.

***MetroWest Phase 1A should be considered as WECA's highest priority contribution to combat climate change and air pollution, and if implemented by May 2020 would fall well within the current timescale of Bristol's Clean Air Plan.***

**2. MetroWest Phase 2** – We welcome the WECA decision passed on Friday 14 April to proceed MetroWest Phase 2 (Henbury Line plus services to Yate and Gloucester) to GRIP 4 and would urge that plans for a full station at North Filton are developed with YTL, a direct connection to Bristol Parkway across the E-W chord on the Filton Diamond, and at least a half-hour service. We would continue to urge WECA to hold talks with Bristol Port Authority to resolve the issue of road access at St Andrew's Gate, and suggest a study into a bridge at St Andrew's Rd station and/or internal roads linking to Holesmouth Bridge. In the meantime we seek assurance that Henbury East station is future-proofed for through running onto the Henbury Loop.

- a) FOSBR notes that the JSP has been recommended for rejection by the Inspectors on the grounds that the criteria for selecting Strategic Development Locations (SDLs) were not robust. FOSBR also notes that the Inspectors were not required to consider the JLTP4 alongside the JSP. We would urge WECA to consult externally on suitable sustainability criteria for choosing SDLs, and to include the JLTP4 in the remit to be considered by the Inspectors. FOSBR continues to support the “transport-focussed” approach and suggests that any sustainability criteria should include rail station access (present or potential) and not be dependent solely on MetroBus provision.
- b) FOSBR therefore recommend that the JSP, JLTP4, and the ongoing WECA rail study, should include our FOSBR Rail Plan 2018 proposals for stations at Coalpit Heath, Long Ashton/Flax Bourton, Chittington for Severnside, Uphill/Locking, and to include the remodelling of Westerleigh Junction, investigating the Westerleigh Oil Depot freight line and reinstating Ram Hill Loop, to facilitate the delivery of the Thornbury Line, initially as a Park and Ride from Tytherington Quarry. In the mean time we commend Pilning to be restored as a Park and Rail for Thornbury, as Pilning (unlike Charfield) is to the south of Thornbury.
- c) FOSBR notes that the “WECA Investment Programme” (Agenda item 10 in the WECA Scrutiny papers of Weds 2 October), previously named in WECA Joint Committee papers of November 2018, as the “WECA Investment and Infrastructure Delivery Plan, IIDP” was originally earmarked for funds solely to progress the JSP, rather than JLTP4, and do not seem to be subject to any sustainability criteria. We welcome the appointment of a Rail officer and urge that any transport projects funded by this route are considered on robust sustainability grounds, and that the known impact of road-building to increase congestion is carefully considered before road projects are progressed. We note the severe bias towards road-building in the JSP “Emerging Findings” transport proposals of January 2019 and urge that this is rectified in light of the public’s stated desire in the JLTP4 consultations for better public transport.
- d) FOSBR continues to commend our FOSBR Rail Plan 2018 and awaits with interest the outcome of our recent postcard campaign; we urge WECA to release the analysis of the preferred options and a postcode map of the respondents.
- e) FOSBR notes with curiosity the “Placemaking champion” post being considered by the West of England Committee today (Agenda item 13), would like the relationship with the JSP to be clarified, and suggests that such a post must be filled by a person who is qualified in architecture and committed and publicly accountable to the principles of affordable housing and sustainability of location and provision of public transport.

4. FOSBR supports bus travel and bus-rail interchange as part of the complete public transport solution. We note with alarm that WECA have made a policy decision to only support capital schemes with their devolution deal funding. ***We suggest that in the light of the climate emergency, WECA should amend its policy for WECA Investment Fund and/or WECA Investment Programme projects to include annual bus and rail subsidy, including maintenance of bus real-time information (RTI), not simply one-off capital investment.*** We note with concern the many road-building and “soft” Skills 19+ projects being presented for funding approval by WECA Committee today (Agenda item 12) and urge that these and future transport projects are robustly scrutinised for sustainability criteria and public benefit in the light of the current climate emergency.

Christina Biggs, Friends of Suburban Bristol Railways [www.fosbr.org.uk](http://www.fosbr.org.uk)

# FOSBR Rail Plan 2018 – car-free travel from your door



## A reliable half-hour train service:

- WECA to have rail powers and operational oversight;
- **Longer** trains with more seats and **room for cycles**;
- Rail-bus interchanges at Filton Abbey Wood for Southmead Hospital and Nailsea & Backwell for Bristol Airport, accurate real-time bus information at stations;
- Multi-modal **smart ticketing**, with guards on all trains;
- Delivery of MetroWest Phase 1A **half-hour train service between Avonmouth and Bath**, hourly to Severn Beach;
- 30 min service for Patchway, Parson St and Bedminster;
- Future 15 or 20 minute frequency.

## Robust infrastructure to unlock capacity:

- Completion of Filton Bank four-tracking;
- Bristol East and Westerleigh Junction remodelling;
- Replace footbridge at Pilning for Severnside commuters;
- Emission-free trains: electrification to Bristol Temple Meads and battery or hydrogen-fuelled local trains;
- Extra platforms and bus hub at Temple Meads;
- Selective double-tracking of Severn Beach Line.

## Reopening stations across the network:

- Deliver Portishead line with an initial hourly service with planning for half-hour service;
- Henbury Spur extension to Henbury Loop;
- Welcoming WECA's proposals for Horfield (at Constable Rd), St Anne's, Salford, Ashton Gate & Charfield;
- Consideration of further stations at Coalpit Heath, Chittening, Uphill/Locking, Corsham & Long Ashton;
- Exploring an extension of Tytherington line to Thornbury.

## Statement 5 – Jnt Ctte

### Statement from Leeza Awojobi

I am a young artist who has been supported by Creative Youth Network and believe that The Courts project is crucial in enabling many more young people to overcome barriers and find employment in the creative sector.

I would like to stress:

- The opportunities that Creative Youth Network's Creative Futures programme have opened up for me, enabling me to begin making a living as an artist.
- The number of young people who do not currently have such opportunities, and the doors that The Courts project would therefore open for hundreds of disadvantaged/excluded young people each year.

## **JOINT COMMITTEE – 4 OCTOBER 2019**

### **QUESTIONS AND REPLIES**

The following questions were submitted by the deadline (full details enclosed):

1. Question from: Christina Biggs  
Subject: FOSBR Rail Plan 2018 postcards
  
2. Question from: Christina Biggs  
Subject: WECA Rail Study
  
3. Question from: Sandy Hore-Ruthven  
Subject: Creative Youth Network - The Courts project (with reference to One Front Door funding programme report – agenda item 12)

**4 October 2019**

**Question from: Christina Biggs**

**Subject: FOSBR Rail Plan 2018 postcards**

**Question:**

Has the analysis of the FOSBR Rail Plan 2018 postcards been completed, and what was the number of postcards received and processed? Could WECA please publish a bar-chart of the "My priority" suggestions and a postcard map of the respondents in time for the WECA Committee and WoE Joint Committee on Friday 4 October?

**REPLY:**

We do welcome the considerable support for rail demonstrated by the Friends of Suburban Railways (FoSBR) postcard campaign but as this was not part of a formal WECA consultation we are unable to provide the detailed analysis requested. Rail proposals were, however, a key part of the Joint Local Transport Plan 4 consultation undertaken over February to March 2019. Enhancing local rail services attracted a good deal of backing and in this respect FoSBR's detailed and informed response was a valuable contribution.

**4 October 2019**

**Question from: Christina Biggs**

**Subject: WECA Rail Study**

**Question:**

What was the outcome of the WECA Rail Study into existing rail service enhancement? Given the JSP Inspectors' letter of Weds 11 Sept 2019 and the presenting issue of air pollution at the base of the M32 in Bristol, will WECA now include in the JLTP4 the rail stations that could serve the JSP SDLs of Coalpit Heath, Thornbury and Pilning, and the Severnside employment location of Chittening via a refreshed Henbury Loop study?

**REPLY:**

The final version of the joint Department for Transport and WECA rail study (known as the Greater Bristol Area Rail Feasibility Study) is still awaited. The study's approach has been to identify those corridors which will achieve the greatest modal shift towards rail rather than new station sites.

**4 October 2019**

**Question from: Sandy Hore-Ruthven & Mark Coates**

**Subject: Creative Youth Network - The Courts Project**

**Question:**

Creative Youth Network asks: Will the West of England Combined Authority underwrite a proportion of the funds necessary for The Courts project that will attract more than £5.5m in inward investment, support more than 100 jobs, upskill more than 500 young people per year and deliver more than £4.6m GVA?

**REPLY:**

As set out in the Local Enterprise Partnership One Front Door report (agenda item 12), the strategic fit and positive outcomes which could be delivered by this project are recognised, as is the opportunity to lever match funding. However, the Local Growth Fund (LGF) stands some £11.8m overprogrammed, which is considered an appropriate level, and currently there is no certainty regarding funding arrangements which may follow it in 2021/22.

In addition, from the submitted business case, the call on funding for The Courts project (or the underwriting of this funding) would fall outside the LGF timeframe (to March 2021) ruling out the use of this fund in any event.

On this basis, it is recommended the project is not awarded funding at this time but remains in the LGF pipeline.