

West of England Combined Authority Committee meeting on  
8<sup>th</sup> April 2022

Statements and questions

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Statement from David Redgewell – 8<sup>th</sup> April 2022

We note with deep concern plans by Bristol City Council, North Somerset Council, Bath and North East Somerset Council and South Gloucestershire Council to remove the West of England Mayor Dan Norris and the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority from the West of England Joint Committee.

This decision is going in a totally different direction to Central Government and Department for levelling Up and Communities. Michael Gove the Secretary of State in his white paper on regional devolution wanted to see the Local Enterprise Partnership become part of the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority.

Setting up a joint committee without the Mayoral Combined Authority is not in line with Government white paper. The 4 unitary authorities in the West of England should by now be carrying out a governance review to allow North Somerset Council to join the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority.

by the first past the post level 3 Authority Mayoral Elections in 2025. This will require orders in both houses of Parliament.

The Transport user groups and trade unions understand the value of the West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority and North Somerset Council becoming a full member subject to a regional devolution deal.

An Integrated transport Authority can plan bus and coach services through advanced quality partnerships or franchising maintenance of bus infrastructure and transport interchanges, can plan the strategic route network, set up a railway executive to manage and build the local railway network, plan and build new stations, integrate public transport services, ie buses, coaches, trains, ferries and mass transit light rail systems.

Joint transport plans

All the public transport staff, key transport staff from the 4 unitary authorities should transfer to West of England Mayoral Combined Authority including North Somerset Council. The West of England Mayoral Combined Authority is also the regional planning body and to plan the Bristol Bath City Region it needs to have North Somerset Council to be part of the Combined Authority within the city region.

In the last few months, Mayor Dan Norris and the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority are working in partnership with North Somerset Council

It has been awarded £ 540 million pounds in City Region Transport Plan funding. Just last week, North Somerset Council and the West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority were awarded a bus service improvements funding of £105.5 million pounds the biggest bus service improvements plan in South West England and second biggest award in the country. This is money for mobility hubs but the pilot list of sites at Portway Park and Ride site, Ridingleaze

Cheswick, UWE bus and coach station, Southmead hospital bus station, Kingswood town centre, Mangotsfield centre, Lockleaze Gainsborough Square,

Filton Abbey Wood retail park and station is unaffordable at this stage.

Metro West railway project is projected with support from the West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority and North Somerset Council and we are awaiting a development consent order for the Bristol Temple meads to Pill and Portishead line from the Secretary of State for Transport.

We ask the unity authorities and the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority to work together with Metro Mayor Dan Norris and not spend time trying to reset the Regional Joint Committee without the Mayoral Combined Authority and The elected mayor. Michael Gove issued a letter about the future of the Local Enterprise Partnership becoming a committee of Mayoral Combined Authorities and to reset the boundaries in line with the Combined Authority with North Somerset Council joining.

With regards to the Western Gateway Partnership, this is an important regional body operating jointly with local government in South Wales but the report fails to mention the Western Gateway Sub Region Transport Board working with the Department for Transport and the South West Peninsula Transport body.

As the Joint Committee report and Michael Gove letter had no scrutiny or public consultation with stakeholders, we would ask for full scrutiny and stakeholder consultation to take place over the future of the Joint Committee.

We need strong regional bodies to work with the Metro Mayor Dan Norris.

such as the Joint Committee and Western Gateway partnership and Transport Board to work together on major investment projects like Bristol Temple Meads station and Temple Quay, a mass transit/light rail system, Metro Bus network and Metro West railway network.

We must have a strong unified regional voice.

We therefore ask you to rethink the current Joint Committee proposals and we note that this report was produced by Bristol City Council and not the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority chief executive. We must work in-line with the Department for Transport and Department for levelling Up and Communities for the people of the Greater Bristol, Bath City Region and North Somerset.

David Redgewell South West Transport Network and Railfuture - Severnside

Good afternoon, my name's Amy and I'm speaking on behalf of Bristol Students for Transport because we think 16-18 year olds, students and apprentices should have ½ price bus tickets. The climate crisis terrifies me and Bristol must lead the charge against it. However, I'm sure you're aware that the fight is pointless if it ignores the needs of the most vulnerable. That's why affordable buses are important because they improve our air quality and reduces our emissions but they also reduce educational inequality and would help ease the current cost of living crisis.

To reduce the scale of the climate emergency we must do everything we can to be carbon neutral by 2030 and right now the transport sector is the most polluting in Bristol. Making public transport more accessible for young people wouldn't just reduce the number of cars on the road right now but create sustainable habits that can last lifetimes. After all, if you've been taking the bus all your life and it works for you, why buy a car?

The climate crisis will mean, however, that we are forced to face a future that is unimaginably bleak and our generation will need all the support we can get. In many of Bristol's most deprived areas there are not even schools that offer the qualifications you need to go onto higher education. This means that in areas like Hengrove where 22.2 per cent of pupils get the grades at GCSE which should allow them to go onto higher education only 14.2 per cent do. Meanwhile, almost 100% of students in Clifton go onto higher education. An affordable bus ticket won't only help students access the schools that will get them the best tools to succeed in life; it will mean they can travel to see friends, learn skills and participate in community projects. In other words, it will help them grow into confident, independent and resilient Bristol citizens.

Right now, though, as I'm sure you are all aware there is a cost-of-living crisis. Reducing bus prices would be most beneficial to people on lower incomes who make 206% more trips by bus and coach.

Making public transport affordable for young people means creating a sustainable future. I have been told often that young people will solve the problems past generations have caused and I know you're aware that instead we need to fight the climate crisis now, through reducing emissions. However, as a generation we will have to adapt and face huge challenges and so need every opportunity we can get. Half price public transport for students, apprentices and 16-18 year olds will reduce emissions, inequality and give young people the opportunities they deserve and need.

# Statement to WECA Committee – 8<sup>th</sup> April 2022

Steve Dale, CEO of Community Led Homes West

With support from Tiny House Community Bristol, Sorrel Housing Coop and Furze Housing Coop (see end)

## *Relating to:*

**Item 13: CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCY STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN 1**

**Item 14: GREEN RECOVERY FUND**

**Item 15: REGIONAL RECOVERY & ADAPTATION FUND**

## **Summary**

*Community Led Homes West (CLH West) <https://communityledhomeswest.co.uk/> is the community led housing enabling hub for the West of England. We provide advice and technical support to a pipeline of over 20 community led housing projects, representing over 400 homes in development across the region and have helped to establish the West of England as a leader in CLH.*

*With pump-priming funding from central government coming to an end in June 2022 we are working with public and private sector colleagues to secure the practical, political and financial support our sector needs to grow and thrive.*

*We are working with stakeholders to produce a 10 year strategy for the CLH sector, and we would welcome the involvement and commitment of Dan Norris, Metro Mayor, and the leaders of the local authorities.*

*Whilst we have some engagement from all local authorities, we need more. At present we currently receive no political, financial, strategic or practical support from WECA - despite contributing to many of its stated aims. AT WECA Scrutiny Committee on 4.4.22 Dan Norris indicated that he would be willing to support our work. This paper offers some clear ways in which WECA, and the leaders of the local authorities can support our efforts to build additional homes as well as build resilient communities and reduce carbon emissions.*

## **Background**

Community-led housing worldwide is generating inclusive, regenerative models of housing, changing the daily lived experience of people and entire neighbourhoods. It enables people to create, deliver and manage their own housing solutions together in the ever growing gaps where market and state do not, can not or will not provide.

CLH is an approach that involves local people taking an active part in the planning, development, ownership or management of land and homes – often through a community land trust or a cooperative. Typically, this results in ***genuinely and permanently affordable homes, of a high environmental specification, on sites which are unavailable or unattractive to mainstream developers or housing associations.*** This generates diverse and sustained social, environmental and economic benefits to a degree unseen elsewhere in the housing sector.

Community Led Housing improves skills, builds social cohesion and trust, increases community resilience, addresses structural inequalities and keeps resources circulating in the local community and local economy. Every £1 invested in community led housing yields a £3 return on investment in terms of improved health and wellbeing. Furthermore, CLH projects are typically built to a much higher environmental specification than traditional homes.

The West of England is now a national leader in CLH. This is thanks, in large part, to central government funding which has led to the creation of ***Community Led Homes West***, the CLH enabling hub for the West of England and a range of supportive policies and practices in local government. The CLH West service is hosted by Bristol Community Land Trust and works with public and private landowners to make land available for housing. It provides the technical support those communities need to be able to obtain land and to secure the finance to develop it.

Today there are over 20 live CLH projects in the West of England, which represents a pipeline of around ***400 homes***. These include initiatives in Clevedon, Churchill, Corston, Marshfield, Pill and in Bristol: Hillfields, Knowle West, Lawrence Weston, Lockleaze, Sea Mills, and Southmead to name but a few.

## **Challenge**

The pump-priming funding for the sector ends in June 2022, so this pipeline - the strongest in the UK - is at risk. We need all stakeholders to work together to ensure the continued success of CLH West and the wider CLH sector. Some local authorities and impact investors are realising the benefits of CLH and are investing in our sector. But we need greater political and financial support.

When Steve Dale met with Dan Norris prior to his election, Dan saw the potential for CLH to help meet WECA's goals, and laid down this challenge: we as a sector would need to be able to work at pace and scale. We are ready to meet that challenge and would welcome the opportunity to plan a joint approach with Mr Norris and his team.



Although our sector has been proven to meet many of WECA's stated aims, at present, we receive no strategic or financial support from WECA. We invite Mr Norris to think creatively about how we use existing resources and how we work together to attract further investment. We have a one-off opportunity to keep the momentum going. Let's not waste it.

We'd like the committee to encourage Metro Mayor Dan Norris to meet representatives of our sector and visit CLH projects. We think it fits his role to attract that investment, to provide political leadership on this issue and empower his officers to proactively support our sector. With an acute shortage of affordable housing across the West of England, and too much poor quality new housing not fit for the future still being given planning permission, we need a counterweight: communities are ready to organise to create their own housing solutions, fit for the future, and WECA is part of the solution.

### **Action**

We would like Dan Norris, the 4 leaders of the local authorities and their teams to do the following:

- Meet with representatives of our sector to learn about how Community Led Housing (CLH) can support the objectives of WECA and the local authorities
- Help to identify and secure a minimum of £100,000 per annum to amplify and sustain the impact of the CLH West Hub, and work with them to attract investment into a £1.7 million revolving fund for community led housing
- Explore how existing resources (such as the WECA Investment Fund) could make funding available to support the growth of our sector
- Explore how WECA could help to make land available for community led housing initiatives (e.g. through the Joint Assets Board)
- Broker partnerships with Registered Providers and private developers
- Establish a task and finish group (like that which was established for Modern Methods of Construction - MMC) to look at how we can establish the West of England as a Regional Centre of Excellence in Community Led Housing
- Include an ambitious sub-target for community led housing delivery in the Spatial Development Strategy - to be collectively agreed
- Support the efforts of Bristol Community Land Trust, the CLH West hub and Community Led Housing groups across the four authorities, to lobby central government for a renewal/expansion of the Community Housing Fund

I look forward to continuing the conversation.

Thank you. [steve@bristolclt.co.uk](mailto:steve@bristolclt.co.uk)

**The following organisations were involved in preparing this statement with CLH West.**

*Tiny House Community Bristol (THCB)*

Tiny House Community Bristol has been supported by CLH West and Bristol's pioneering CLH Land Disposal Policy to bring forward the UK's first tiny house regenerative settlement. This will provide 12-15 genuinely and permanently affordable homes and a range of shared facilities. It will be a zero car, zero waste development where energy will be generated, nutritious food grown, resources shared and water saved. We will be housing people from the housing register and those whose needs are not met by the out-of-control housing system.

We are indebted to the work of CLH West and the CLH enablers who have supported us throughout. It would not happen without them. All groups like ours need support, guidance, until such a time as Community Led Housing is mainstream. We are innovating left right and centre, together, and bringing joy, security and empowerment in the process. [www.tinyhousecommunitybristol.org](http://www.tinyhousecommunitybristol.org)

*Sorrel Housing Co-operative, Bristol*

As a member of a fledgling CLH group in Bristol (Sorrel Housing Co-operative), we have benefited greatly from the knowledge and support provided from CLH West. We are currently in the process of acquiring land through Bristol City Council's Land Disposal Policy to custom-build long-term affordable, secure and sustainable homes. If successful, we will be housing those for whom the private rented sector is failing. We are indebted to the work of CLH West and their advisors, without whom we would not have made it this far and without whose continued support we will struggle to realise our goals: building homes and communities that are resilient, joyful and empowered. <https://sorrelhousingcoop.wordpress.com/>

*Furze Housing Co-operative*

Furze Housing Co-operative is one of the preferred bidders on a site in Lockleaze, and are planning to build 4 or 5 custom built shared houses where there are currently derelict garages which are an eyesore and fly-tipping site. Our project aims to bring together families and single people across generations to tackle loneliness and isolation, in a diverse and supportive community to improve mental well-being. We will build to a high level of environmental performance, with a near zero carbon design, and make best use of the cycle path adjacent to the site to minimise members' car use. Community Led Housing is an opportunity for innovation in creating long term affordable and sustainable homes. Co-operative housing has a long history of creating affordable, secure and democratic housing, Furze is progressing this model with innovations in the here and now. <https://furzecoop.org/>

**Statement to WECA Committee meeting, Friday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2022, on behalf of TRAPP'D**  
**(Thornbury Residents Against Poorly Planned Development)**

**Presented by Colin Gardner (Co-Chair)**

A draft SDS has been discussed with Local Authority leaders including a proposal to allocate 37,000 houses to South Gloucestershire, effectively exporting up to 10,000 houses of Bristol's unmet need. I must convey our profound objection to this proposal.

The council has just closed its phase 2 consultation of the new Local Plan using the Standard Methodology which generates a local need of 28,000 houses. Our analysis suggests that this is just about manageable without the need for any new large greenfield sites. Any export of Bristol's unmet need will therefore represent an increment of growth requiring recourse to the least preferred options – potentially new large greenfield development of the sort from which towns like Thornbury have suffered so acutely.

If it should be the case that an SDS includes an exported need which results in Local Plan proposals for such greenfield destruction, you can be assured that public anger will be directed at **both** WECA for this unjust imposition **and** the leadership of South Gloucestershire Council for accepting it. We would also make the case during the Examination in Public that:

1. Not only is the Council leadership on record as saying that this growth is not sustainable, but the type and tenure of housing provided is a misfit with the needs of Bristol's residents and would not be inclusive because of the cost and impracticality of needing to travel to work in Bristol. If you doubt me on this point, have a listen to the recent BBC programme [my name is Sam](#) in which a disabled man talks about being forced to "live in the middle of nowhere" (he means Thornbury).
2. The Plan will undermine the Climate Emergency mission by incorporating extra unnecessary carbon emissions through increased private car mileage. We note the irony of having to point this out on the day that the Metro Mayor is proposing a climate emergency action plan in which a key strategy is to reduce private car mileage by 40%.
3. We should preserve scarce greenfield land for people's wellbeing and for self-sufficiency of food production.

Our plea to you all irrespective of your political allegiance, is to remember who you serve. Westminster continues to say and write that the NPPF calculations are not a target and that it is for the planning authorities to decide what can be built sustainably without encroaching into protected land. Work together to agree an allocation that can be fully accommodated by an innovative Urban Living strategy within the wider conurbation of Bristol. This will also provide a plan to benefit from the highest inclusivity, the lowest private car mileage, and the most efficient public transport strategy.

If this does not happen, then the legal position is that the four leaders need to agree jointly on the SDS for it to progress to the consultation stage. If he cannot stand proudly behind the Plan, and all its ramifications, we therefore urge the Leader of South Gloucestershire Council to exercise his veto.

On behalf of the West of England Nature Partnership I would like to welcome:

- the West of England Climate and Ecological Strategy
- the detail on the Green Recovery Fund
- the investment being made into Green Infrastructure projects
- and the proposals for the Pollinator Fund.

The Climate and Ecology Strategy sets out the scale of the challenge we are facing.

We know that we are seeing unprecedented and accelerating losses of global wildlife.

Locally, loss of habitats and use of pesticides is driving ongoing loss of wildlife, including insects that pollinate our food and form the base of food chains for other wildlife

We have lost 96% of our swifts and starlings in the West of England since the 1990s and other insect eating birds have seen similar declines.

This matters not just for wildlife lovers, but for everyone as wildlife makes up the ecosystems that support all life on Earth and their collapse would be catastrophic for people and wildlife alike.

The West of England has led the way in mapping our Nature Recovery Network to show where habitats need to be improved and wildlife corridors recreated to bring wildlife back and ensure local ecosystems are resilient to climate change and planned development.

The West of England Nature Partnership welcomes the green infrastructure projects that are being funded by the Green Recovery Fund.

These will help with habitats as well as providing green transport routes and access to green space, which is so important for people's health and wellbeing.

To really help halt the decline in wildlife and rebuild our ecosystems though, we also need to invest in rebuilding habitats and wildlife corridors that will have the most impact for nature.

- We have the maps that show where these are
  - there is enormous potential to link nationally important habitats in the Mendips and Cotswolds by building wildlife corridors between them
  - we are looking at restoring rivers and wetlands throughout the West of England
  - and the Severn Levels provide an internationally important area for birds
- We have the mechanisms for bringing in investment through projects such as the Bristol Avon Catchment Market that matches landholders with people looking to invest in habitats that improve biodiversity and lock up carbon
- We have investors and companies who are keen to invest
- What we lack and where we need help is the capacity to develop business cases for the big impactful projects we need to secure nature's recovery

The Green Recovery Fund provides funding for these projects, but the risk is that without investment in development capacity, we will not have the pipeline of projects we need to restore nature and achieve our shared ambition to make the West of England the bee and pollinator capital of the UK.

So the Ask and Offer from the West of England Nature Partnership is clear:

We have the mapping, we have the mechanisms and we have access to funding.

Give us or our partners the capacity to develop a pipeline of projects and business cases and the partnership will deliver the habitats needed to restore ecosystems, bring wildlife back and achieve our shared ambition to make the West of England the bee and pollinator capital of the UK.

We would like to seek a meeting with the Mayor to discuss how we can do this.

**Statement from Cllr Claire Young, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group on South Gloucestershire Council, on public transport issues and planning in South Gloucestershire**

The bus service cuts due to come into force on 24<sup>th</sup> April are the latest in a long line of issues that are severely affecting the ability of people in South Gloucestershire to get about by public transport and as a consequence are damaging efforts to reduce carbon emissions due to transport in our region.

The loss of the T2 means that people from Thornbury can no longer get to Cribbs Causeway to work or shop there without changing buses. Without the Y2, patients at Abbotswood Surgery in Yate cannot get to the partner surgeries in Downend and those who bank with HSBC can't get to the branch they were directed to when the Yate branch closed.

Terminating the Y4 at the Park and Ride means that there will be no bus going through the middle of Frampton Cotterell that takes people to Yate Shopping Centre, a real problem for those with limited mobility who don't live close to either Badminton Road or Bristol Road. The changes to the Y services also leave us with a bus desert in the north of Yate, cutting off around 6,000 houses from the town centre and all centres of employment.

There is clearly an acute social need for these services. I ask the Mayor to reassess these services formally against the criteria for emergency support and then explain his decision.

The cuts are far from the only deterrent to bus use. Reliability is a huge issue – when your buses are less frequent than those in the city, a cancellation is all the more significant. Too many people are telling us that they have tried the buses, but never again because of the problems they experienced. With rising fuel prices this is a key time to get people thinking about switching to public transport, but if their experience is poor that opportunity is wasted.

Cost is another deterrent. Those of us to the north of the ring road do not have our own travel zone, so we are faced with the nonsense that it can cost as much to travel a few miles to our nearest market town and back as it does to travel to Street. People travelling from outlying villages may have to change at Yate, maybe even to another operator. We need a TravelWest Travel Zone for our market towns and the surrounding villages.

These issues were discussed on 21<sup>st</sup> March at the Yate & District Transport Forum, where disappointingly no one from WECA was in attendance. After the meeting, a letter was sent on behalf of members of the forum to the Mayor. I request that the Mayor meet representatives of the forum along with bus operators as a matter of urgency so that we can discuss the issues further.

I would also welcome an update on when Yate will get the half hourly trains that we have long campaigned for and that were part of MetroWest Phase 2, due to be operational by 2021.

These transport problems underline one of the reasons why South Gloucestershire does not have the capacity to deliver Bristol's housing need. The cost in time and money to the individuals and the increased carbon emissions when they are forced by the inadequate transport provision to use private cars makes it untenable. I urge the Mayor to reflect on this and ask for confirmation that the Leader of South Gloucestershire has a veto on the decision as to whether and how much of Bristol's need is delivered in South Gloucestershire.

**Statement from Councillor Emma Edwards – Item 13: Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy and Action Plan**

We welcome the clarity of WECA’s Climate and Ecological Strategy and the recognition of the daunting and immediate challenges we face. We agree that the trajectories within it show that we are still on a path and there is “much, much more to do”. *(p2 of the strategy doc)*

Last month Green Party Councillors led a Bristol City Council debate, unanimously passed by all parties, to genuinely consider and appraise all options for cutting carbon from transport, putting deliverability, carbon impact, and accessibility at the focus of criteria. We are pleased to see measures to manage demand specifically mentioned in the strategy. These can be particularly effective in helping to make our existing mass transit systems become more reliable, cheap and convenient. The Strategy also acknowledges the great success of the Greater Bristol Bus Network in achieving its 10 year targets within 18 months. *(p28 of strategy doc)*

Getting anywhere near net zero by 2030 involves hard choices, and soon. Choices like taking space away from private cars where needed to make public transit and active travel faster and safer. In the face of the climate crisis we must be clear that trying to duck choices like these is the opposite of leadership – it is cowardice. The current transport trajectory shown in the Strategy, only a 25% reduction by 2030, is nowhere near enough. The recent IPCC report states unequivocally that a shift to public transport and active travel offer substantial potential to reduce net emissions BY 2030 at a cost much lower than other mitigation options (SPM-30 IPCC report).

So promising only to start building a grand project in 2030 which will cause massive disruption to the city and region of Bristol, is not ambitious or urgent enough compared with the pace of change needed. It not only risks creating “embedded” carbon emissions at a time when we need to be reducing emissions not increasing them, but it also risks diverting resources from practical, rapid and proven solutions that can be achieved more quickly and cheaply. We must have more ambition than this – neither the climate emergency nor Bristolians can afford to wait a decade to see real action on transport.

We look forward to helping to achieve coordinated, rapid action on transport across the whole West of England in the near future, and hope that there is a genuine appraisal of all the options based on common sense and climate first criteria, without simplistically chasing the flashy solutions and personal vanity projects.

*- Bristol Green Councillors Emma Edwards, Ed Plowden and David Wilcox*

# PUBLIC STATEMENT BY MARK COATES TO WECA COMMITTEE 8<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2022



In support of the Courts project (agenda item 16)

I last attended a WECA Committee meeting in October 2019, when the Courts project last appeared on the agenda. We were disappointed at the time that WECA was unable to support the project, but fully understood the reality that capital allocations had been exhausted and that the award would have been made had funding been immediately available.

We were extremely grateful that, having been unable to make an immediate funding allocation, WECA wrote a very helpful letter of support which proved critical in our securing a pledge from the National Lottery Heritage Fund of £4.25m. This represents a substantial inward investment into our region – and was secured very much on the basis that, as WECA put it in the letter, this project was *“well placed as a strong and early contender”* for funding when available.

So we are delighted that today the project can now finally be brought back for decision – and the advantage for WECA is that the project is now far more advanced, significantly de-risked, and **almost shovel ready**.

This is a *“now or never”* moment. We are deep into RIBA stage 4 and out to tender. With inflation currently running at 8.2% the cost per 3 months of delay on the main contract is c.£90k. **We cannot afford to kick the can down the road** – delaying now means getting stuck on a fundraising treadmill where we cannot realistically fundraise quicker than costs escalate, plus a very real risk of losing the existing match funding pledges of £5.35m which will time-out if we cannot get going soon.

I am so proud of the immense team effort that has got the project this far. Our staff, our young people, our volunteers, our professional team, our network of amazing partner organisations across the region, have done so well to keep the project alive not only through a pandemic, but also in a supply chain crisis with cost inflation the like of which hasn't been seen for decades. We've navigated all that, and still come back to you with a financial request 25% lower than that made in 2019.

The value for money metrics on this project are through the roof. **For every £1 invested by WECA, more than £7 will be unlocked via match funding**. That ratio increases to more than 10:1 when you factor in CYN's own contribution. In addition the project will deliver **GVA of £3.77m in year 1 and £7.34m annually thereafter**.

But this isn't primarily about the money. It's about fairness, opportunity, the world we want our children to grow up into. The creative industries are a huge success story for our region, but they're not fair. In Bristol the BAME population is 16%, but only hold 11% of the jobs. Men dominate the sector at 63%. More than 80% of musicians and 67% of film makers are educated privately. Young people from low income households simply can't afford to take unpaid internships, so often the traditional route in. Nor do they have opportunities for work experience at the BBC courtesy of mum and dad's connections.



# PUBLIC STATEMENT BY MARK COATES TO WECA COMMITTEE 8<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2022



In support of the Courts project (agenda item 16)

The Courts project is unique. We know of no equivalent anywhere else. It will make a tangible difference to the opportunities open to our region's talented young people from under-represented backgrounds and "unpopular postcodes".

And it's really captured the imagination. You will see in your packs a letter of support signed by more than 50 key organisations and individuals from across the creative, youth and wider business community. Supporters include **Bristol Beacon, Bristol Old Vic, Boomsatsuma, Spike Island, Trinity Centre, We the Curious, Bristol School of Acting, the RWA, UWE, Creative Connex, ACE, Babbasa, Young Bristol, Youth Moves, LPW, UK Youth, Ujima Radio, Freestyle Bristol, Business West, Luke Jerram, Amanda Prowse, Inkie, Team Love, Big Talk Productions, Blak Wave, Broadmead BID, Bristol City Centre BID, Redcliffe & Temple BID, Bristol & Bath Regional Clusters, Bristol & Bath Regional Capital, Bristol Chamber of Commerce, Business West, Visual Arts South West, Bristol Creative Industries, Be On Board...and more.**

**It's now or never.** Please don't throw away all this capital funding and economic and jobs growth that this project represents – especially having secured the main Heritage Fund award on the back of WECA's expected support. But most importantly of all, don't miss this chance to make a tangible difference for our region's talented young people, who currently risk being the "lost generation" as a result of the pandemic.

This is our chance to make the creative industries fairer, more accessible, and more diverse. That's a future our young people want to see.

Thank you.

## **Statement of support for The Courts, Creative Youth Network, from emerging young creative, Carlo Hornilla**

Hello all, my name is Carlo Hornilla. I am a multidisciplinary artist, illustrator, storyteller and awkward human being- which I own wholeheartedly.

My family is from the Philippines- we moved to Bristol when I was 4. My parents tried their best to acclimate but there were still difficulties. As a result, I struggled to find creative communities and opportunities growing up. Creatives I did know were mostly hobbyists and professional artists felt completely unreachable.

I came back to Bristol after graduating at Coventry Uni in Autumn 2019 to find creative places back in my home city to put my foot through the door. Unfortunately, a global pandemic happened, and my feet, amongst other things like my mental wellbeing, were not looking great.

The Creative Youth Network was the first group to keep that door open for me as things we're slowly opening up again.

Through CYN I've been able to do lots of things: I've made a graphic novel as part of my Creative Futures programme exhibition, helped facilitate creative workshops around Bristol, I found the confidence to approach other groups and networks to establish myself in, sell at art markets and shops... I've actually just finished my first ever public mural in the city centre on Broad Street which CYN encouraged me to apply to. Ultimately, they helped make an actual start on my art career after years of going nowhere.

I support the plans for The Courts and CYN's work personally. As someone at the start of their creative career, I still face barriers to the creative industry. Having The Courts, a physical space to actively go to would make the professional world feel real. It would be the difference between me chipping away at my work in my bedroom with no access to people, places or career, to physically being in a space with professionals, helping to gratify the process I've taken and give me a tangible landmark of the progress I've made. It would give me clear cut direction into how I could progress with my career and have access to professional creative industries, which I currently struggle to obtain. It would give me an accessible destination which currently isn't available. Having access to professionals and having in person contact with them would give me someone to aspire to be like and bridge the gap into what the reality of being a paid professional is.

Not currently having The Courts and a space like this in the area makes me feel like I'm still not where I want to be. I feel like I'm still facing barriers and catching up. The mental aspect of not having this access holds me back. If The Courts existed I would have found my place and my people.

The Courts would be a direct hub that I could access and where people would be and I would have access to jobs, which is something I have struggled to find in the industry.

Thank you for your time,

Carlo Hornilla

Aged 25

Name: Hari Ramakrishnan/Pariah Khan

I am a theatre-maker, filmmaker, stand-up comedian and professional wrestling manager with a self-sardonic storytelling style underpinning them all. I was recently nominated one of the West of England's 30 most influential people under the age of 30. I have written and directed a short film through Channel 4's Random Acts scheme, taken a one man show on a 20-venue tour across the country, and entertained audiences as the Prince of Persuasion, the South Asian Sensation, the cunning villain and a wordsmith so chillin' he'd Stone Cold Stun Bob Dylan.

Despite this, I have faced a number of barriers in the creative industries. As a first-generation immigrant, my mother was not aware of the opportunities available or the creative organisations out there to help support my creative ambitions from a young age. Her cultural barriers prevented her from knowing how to support me in comparison to native Brits. Also as a resident of South Bristol (only a few minutes' walk from the 'welcome to Bristol' sign) I was detached from the city centre and the organisations and opportunities available there until my early 20s. Had I known or lived more central, my career aspirations, confidence and sense of belonging within the creative industries may have started far sooner. Growing up as a child of divorce in a single parent home added further barriers, including the financial limitations preventing me from taking part in many extracurricular activities, clubs or groups.

CYN has been a key part of building my confidence and resilience as a creative practitioner. The most valuable contribution has been conversations with Emily Bull (Head of Creative at CYN) where through her persistence she instilled in me the self-belief to go out and create something to show the world. As a result of many of the factors listed above, I did not feel I belonged, I did not feel confident I had a voice. But having regular opportunities to talk to experienced creative practitioners, those with experience navigating the Arts Council, networking and being introduced to other young creatives has been a pivotal part of my progression within the creative industries. I now feel more established and in a position where I am able to give back to those young creatives who are at the stage of their career where I first met CYN. With more resources and opportunities available to them, I feel they can continue to do work supporting diverse groups of young creatives, with that diversity spanning demographics and artistic disciplines.

I feel that The Courts is a space that will offer those resources and opportunities. I know that when I was an emerging artist, my practice would have benefited from accessible and affordable space and opportunities to work with other creative professionals. The Courts also gives me an opportunity, as a more established Creative Practitioner, to mentor and support young people at the start of their journey so that they can benefit from my networks and experience.

BIO

Pariah Khan (also known as the Prince of Persuasion, the South Asian Sensation, the Bodacious Bro with a Bebop Flow) is a comedian, playwright, filmmaker and professional wrestling manager. Recently voted one of Bristol's 30 Most Influential People Under 30 he

has written, produced and toured his phenomenally successful one man comedy show and debut production An Indian Abroad on a 20-venue tour around the nation. His short film 'Slice' has been accepted in over 10 film festivals across Europe, Australia and North America and his continued involvement with Bristol's Pro Wrestling Chaos has been a highlight for fans of the art form. From the rapping redcoat to re-enacting The Animal Batista's entrance (a cappella), his wit and charm made him go from a cunning villain to a wordsmith so chilling he'd Stone Cold Stun Bob Dylan.

Reviews for An Indian Abroad:

"A shrewd and bitingly funny send-up of the 'spiritual journey'" ★★★★★ - PubTheatres Magazine

"That Pariah Khan is a smart man. It's a jaunty hour, full of well-timed gags yet beneath the joviality, there lies an acerbic touch." ★★★★★ - Kris Hallett, Bristol Post reviewer

"The best comedy can both make us laugh and make us think; An Indian Abroad succeeds on both fronts." - Blog of Theatre Things

Kind regards,  
Hari Ramakrishnan/Pariah Khan

**To seek approval of the Full Business Case for £757K of funding for 'The Courts' led by Creative Youth Network**

**Reimagining the Old Magistrates Courts as a Creative Enterprise Hub**

**Business West Chamber and Initiative Statement of Support**

I write on behalf of the Business West Chamber of Commerce and Initiative which operates at the centre of Business West. As the leading voice and resource for business in the Bristol, West of England and wider region including North Somerset, where we are based, we represent over 22,000 businesses and employers from the smallest to the largest and across all sectors.

We write to confirm our strong support on behalf of the city region business community for this project to refurbish Bristol's derelict Old Magistrates Courts and bring it back into use as a creative enterprise hub which supports young people from across the West of England and also our important creative economy.

- The creative sector is a huge asset to the West of England economy, but we know that the sector itself recognises its need to diversify where it develops and draws talent from.
- We know that too often those who come from less privileged backgrounds face barriers to employment in this sector. This is not only a social mobility and fairness problem, but also a risk to the sector's competitiveness in an increasingly international market.
- This project enables our city region to better work together to help tackle this. The Courts will be a place where a young person's background, race, beliefs, gender, disability or economic status place no limits on what they can achieve. An open, enabling and supportive environment for our region's talented but disadvantaged or marginalised young people seeking to enter the creative industries.
- We have been supporting and helping input into this innovative scheme for the past 5 years and recognise its focus on what it can do for people and in particular young people who need routes into employment and enterprise.
- We work very extensively with the organisations across the West of England who support our young people and with many creative sector businesses and are aware of the strength of support there is for this innovative model as set out in the other submissions.
- This project represents an opportunity for the West of England to bring £4.25m HLF capital plus a further £1.1m of other funding into a derelict building in central Bristol which will then contribute to local young people, our creative economy, our construction industry and to ongoing public revenue via business rates.

As an organisation we have been involved with the original proposal for a centre for youth led by Young Bristol and led the original funding campaign which delivered the Station and then supported the Bristol Wing undertaken by Bristol YMCA. This final part of Bridewell Island on the edge of Broadmead is a place which is well located and attractive for young people and also creative businesses but is also in need of significant investment as our towns and city centres recover but also adapt as we move out of the impacts from the Pandemic. This is an 'oven ready' scheme which we believe needs support to deliver its social and also economic purpose.

We offer the project our full support and hope that it secures this final match investment funding it requires so that the refurbishment work may commence in summer 2022 and the building can open as planned in autumn 2023.

*James Durie*

*Chief Executive - Bristol Chamber of Commerce and Initiative, Executive Director of Business West*

*7 April 2022*

To Whom It May Concern

## Reimagining the Old Magistrates Courts as a Creative Enterprise Hub

As partners – past, present and future – of Creative Youth Network, we would like to confirm our support for their project to refurbish Bristol’s derelict Old Magistrates Courts and bring it back into use as a Creative Enterprise Hub.

Our organisations are **committed to the diversification of the creative sector**. Too often, those who come from less privileged backgrounds face barriers to employment in the sector – for example, those who lack family or other connections within the industry, or those who cannot afford to undertake unpaid internships.

With Creative Youth Network, we are able to work together to tackle this. The Courts will be a place where a young person’s background, race, beliefs, gender, disability or economic status place no limits on what they can achieve. An open, enabling and **supportive environment for our region’s talented but disadvantaged or marginalised young people** seeking to enter the creative industries.

We offer the project our support, and hope that it secures the final match funding it requires so that refurbishment work may commence in summer 2022 and the building can open as planned in autumn 2023.

Charlie Grier  
Engagement Manager  
**Access Creative  
College Bristol**

Darren Alexander  
Managing Director  
**Aspiration Creation  
Elevation (ACE)**

Rachel Pownall  
Founder  
**Agapanthus  
Productions**

**Amanda Prowse**  
International bestselling  
author

Ceri Wade  
Producer  
**Arcadia Spectacular**

Kathryn Chiswell-Jones  
Company Manager  
**Artspace Lifespace**

Poku Osei  
CEO  
**Babbasa**

Julz Davis  
Executive Director  
**BeOnBoard**

Tom Paine  
Director  
**Big Love**

Kenton Allen  
CEO  
**Big Talk Productions**

Michael Jenkins  
**Blak Wave**

Stuart Wood  
Executive Director Bristol  
**School of Acting and  
Boomsatsuma**

Vivienne Kennedy  
Head of **Broadmead BID**

Jack Gibbon  
Director  
**Bricks**

Phil Castang  
Director of Creative  
Learning and Engagement  
**Bristol Beacon**

Melissa Blackburn  
**Bristol & Bath Creative  
Clusters**

Edward Rowberry  
Chief Executive  
**Bristol & Bath Regional  
Capital CIC**

Julz Davis  
Director  
**Bristol Creative  
Industries**

Vicky Lee  
Head of **Bristol City  
Centre BID**

Jaya Chakrabarti MBE  
President  
**Bristol Chamber of  
Commerce & Initiative**

Lucy Hunt  
Engagement Director  
**Bristol Old Vic**

Liza Williams  
Service Manager  
**Brook**

Alistair Cameron  
Artist and Director  
**Brunswick Club**

James Durie  
Chief Executive Bristol  
Chamber of Commerce and  
Initiative & Executive Director  
**Business West**

Nicolas Young  
Chief Executive  
**Circomedia**

Roger Griffith  
Author and CEO  
**Creative Connex**

Jay Auburn  
Creative Director  
**dBs College**

Vandna Thakur  
**Diverse Artists Network and  
Vocalise Bristol CIC**

Rich Warren  
Festival Director  
**Encounters Short Film and  
Animation Festival**

Delroy Hibbert  
Managing Director  
**Freestyle Bristol**

Joshua Ben-Tovim  
Director  
**Impermanence Dance**

Helen Davies  
Co-CEO  
**In Between Time**

**Inkie**  
Bristolian graffiti artist

Luke Jerram  
**Internationally acclaimed  
artist**

Rachel Robinson  
CEO  
**Learning Partnership  
West**

Kate Yedigaroff  
Director  
**MAYK**

Jane Ivall  
Chief Executive  
**NAOS**

Malcolm Hamilton  
CEO  
**Play: Disrupt**

Matt Little  
Co-founder and Head of  
Impact and Research  
**Real Ideas / RiO**

Steve Bluff  
Head of **Redcliffe &  
Temple BID**

Helen Jacobs  
Head of Learning &  
Engagement  
**RWA**

Heather Frankham  
Founder, **Origin  
Workspace** and Incoming  
Chair of the Board, **South  
Bristol Youth Zone**

Melissa Blackburn  
**South West Creative  
Tech Network**

Robert Leckie  
CEO & Director  
**Spike Island**

Mike Tweddle  
CEO & Artistic Director  
**Tobacco Factory**

Emma Harvey  
CEO  
**Trinity Centre**

Maddie Dinwoodie  
Chief Programme Officer  
**UK Youth**

Donald McTernan  
Company Secretary  
**Ujima Radio**

Lynn Barlow  
Assistant Vice-Chancellor  
Creative and Cultural  
Industries Engagement  
**University of the West  
of England / Arnolfini  
Bristol**

Paula Orrell  
Network Lead  
**Visual Arts South West**

Donna Speed  
CEO  
**We the Curious**

Helen Comerford  
Participation Producer  
**Wise Children**

Lee J Williams DL  
Chief Executive  
**Young Bristol**

Alistair Dale  
CEO  
**Youth Moves**

## Statement on updated West of England Climate & Ecological Emergency Strategy and Plan

I welcome this updated plan, which makes significant improvements on the September 2020 plan.

- 1) Relevant data is now being collected and shared, which is a move in the right direction to having a data led approach. The process has been started of setting greenhouse gas targets for each of the priority action areas.
- 2) There are some very clear relevant asks of Government.
- 3) There are a small number of key objectives highlighted in page 7 of the document
  - Reduce carbon emissions from transport and reduce car demand (it is spelled out on p14 that the number of private car miles needs to reduce 40% by 2030).
  - Retrofit homes and other buildings.
  - Create new spaces for wildlife and pollinators.
- 4) It is positive that the Metro Mayor highlights the importance of engagement with residents and other stakeholders around these ambitions.

It is recognised that this plan is a living document and further necessary work is required to improve it. These are some further improvements that I believe are necessary.

- 1) On p6 of the plan it states that one of the five principles of the Combined Authority strategy is to 'take action now on the highest sources of emissions and causes of destruction of our natural environment' It isn't possible to see from this plan what are the highest sources of emissions. A bar chart is needed that analyses our emissions – for example how much of our individual and region's emissions relate to flying or to our food consumption. This kind of simple analysis is necessary to inform and engage local people.
- 2) The Combined Authority needs to be able to choose between different policy priorities based on the carbon reduction impact of those different priorities. It is excellent that we have some carbon reduction measurements and targets in the priority areas. These need to be developed in a reasonably consistent way across each of the policy areas so that informed decisions around funding, projects and key communications can be made.
- 3) The Combined Authority needs to decide which key measurements are going to be routinely recorded and shared over the coming years, rather than captured as occasional one off exercises. Our region's Local Enterprise Partnership has a good track record of developing simple, high quality reporting dashboards. The Authority might well be able to draw on this existing local expertise.
- 4) We need some next steps to engage local residents and other stakeholders on the scale of this challenge and the actions likely to be necessary – this could include Citizens' Assemblies.

Jerome Thomas  
7 April 2022.



Maddy Longhurst - (Urban Agriculture Consortium) on behalf of the West of England food system strategy group (informal grouping).

Statement for the WECA Committee and West of England Joint Committee.

8th April 2022

Good Food at the centre of a thriving, resilient West of England.

This statement serves as a brief update for the Local Authority and WECA leaders, on how the urgent need for food system change is becoming a West of England scale consideration.

It relates to items 13, 14 and 15 of this Agenda.

Relocalising our food economy is one of the most powerful tools in the world for climate stabilisation, social and economic cohesion and resilience, and health and wellbeing based on good nutrition that is accessible for all.

A group of food system practitioners have been developing an outline strategy for consideration by WECA, with a view to identifying and securing resources to take this work forward at pace.

Each of the local authorities are doing their own excellent work around food partnerships and strategies, and understanding is growing apace that transitioning to more localised, agroecological food supplies is a cornerstone of all our efforts to

mitigate and adapt to rapidly accelerating climate change through creating rich adaptable soils, sequestering carbon and producing during more volatile seasons

accelerate biodiversity recovery and protect pollination

to reduce growing nutritional poverty

Keep food supply going despite multi bread basket failures across the world

We welcome ongoing conversations with the Metro Mayor and leaders, officers and practitioners of all West of England Council areas to look at how we weave your strategies together and find common purpose and meaningfully resource this vital piece of work.

The bioregion - we can loosely map this over the West of England political boundary - is the most resilient scale at which we can plan to find solutions to our multiple converging crises. This gives us a lens rooted in how we can thrive together with nature and as land stewards and regenerators. We must also create meaningful livelihoods and training opportunities, and new models and pathways in the process.

We look forward to working on this with you.

**WEST OF ENGLAND COMBINED AUTHORITY COMMITTEE**  
**8<sup>th</sup> April 2022**

**PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

The following questions were submitted by the deadline:

**Q1 – Councillor Mark Weston (Leader of the Conservative Group on Bristol City Council)**

We are aware that the WECA Mayor uses a private email address [dannorris@mayorofthewest.co.uk](mailto:dannorris@mayorofthewest.co.uk) for correspondence linked to his position. Is this communication subject to the Freedom of Information Act to ensure transparency?

*All correspondence relating to the Metro Mayor's role is subject to Freedom of Information requests regardless of which email address is used.*

**Q2 – Suzanne Audrey**

It is my understanding that North Somerset Council had hoped to join the West of England Combined Authority but their request to join was vetoed by Bristol's elected Mayor in 2020.

Please can you give an update on whether there are any plans for, or discussions about, North Somerset Council joining the West of England Combined Authority?

*There are no current discussions about North Somerset Council joining the West of England Combined Authority. The Combined Authority continues to work with North Somerset Council on a number of strategic issues such as the recent highly successful Bus Service Improvement Plan bringing in £105million.*

**Q3 – Colin Gardner: Co-chair TRAPP'D (Thornbury Residents Against Poorly Planned Development)**

The Climate Emergency paper sets out a 3-point plan to achieve the goal of carbon neutrality, the third of which is to “drastically reduce the number of car journeys, facilitating a modal shift from private cars and reducing car mileage by 40% by 2030”. The need for this in the context of the binding carbon neutrality goal is both welcome and unarguable, but the test of WECA's resolve will be the willingness to enforce that principle as a priority, including in the Local Plans that are shown in the papers as being within scope of consideration for this policy.

My question is therefore, firstly, does WECA agree that spatial choices for major housing development may have a significant influence on the quantity of private car mileage? Secondly, if so, will WECA require that the forthcoming

SDS and Local Plans expressly evaluate the impact of the spatial alternatives on private car mileage on a uniform basis, and afford great weight to avoiding transport carbon.?

*If we are to meet our ambitious net zero targets there will need to be big reductions in the number of car journeys. This will not happen overnight and people will need to have reliable, affordable and convenient public transport alternatives if they are to make this change. We will also need much, much more financial support and powers from the government to make our ambitions a reality.*

*The aim of a Spatial Development Strategy is to set out broadly where and how growth will be located over the next twenty years. Its intention would be for homes, jobs and infrastructure growth to be organised around sustainable transport to meet the plan's objectives for healthy, resilient and low carbon communities.*

*The Spatial Development Strategy evidence base is evaluating the impact of alternatives to using cars as well as public transport accessibility. This work informs the Spatial Strategy and includes a Carbon Impact Assessment and Infrastructure and Investment Plan topic paper(s). The evidence base documents are published to support a Spatial Development Strategy when it is consulted on.*

**Q4 – David Redgewell Southwest transport Network and Rail future Severnside**

**In view of level of noncommercial bus service now operating in the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council.**

**with 60 plus service reductions and 5 service withdrawals from 24th April 2022 including socially necessary services like the Y2 Bristol bus and coach station Eastville park, Fishponds, Downend, Bromley Heath, winterbourne, and Coalpit heath to Yate park and ride, Railway station, Yate bus station and chipping sodbury. T2 Bristol bus and coach station, Montpellier railway station approach Gloucester Road ,Bishopton, Horfield, Filton, Patchway, cribbs causeway bus and coach station Aztec west, Almondbury, Hortham, Rudgeway, Alverston, and Thornbury. Y 3 Bristol bus and coach station to Stapleton Road, Eastville park, Stapleton, winterbourne, Frampton cotterell, Coalpit heath and yate Park and ride. no longer serving the Railway station, and Yate Town centre bus station and a 90 minute frequencies. These services had financial support from South Gloucestershire council before being transferred to the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority service x2 only operating Bristol bus and coach station to long Ashton, Backwell and Yatton and no longer serving Worle and Weston super mare.**

**Weston super mare to the chew valley service what action is the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council doing to review the Noncommercial bus Network from August 2020.**

This would be in line with 1985 Transport act and the Transport act of 2000 to produce a bus and coach Network the support the social needs of communities to access Work, Education, shopping, Health care and hospitals leisure and Tourism. needs within the bus service improvements plan n including mobility hubs and Transport interchanges, within the enhanced quality partnership with bus and coach operators within the city region.?

*Bus passenger numbers have not recovered from pre-pandemic levels and currently stand at around 76%, with concessionary travel at around 58%. This has clearly had a knock-on impact on fare revenue.*

*Commercial bus companies run routes where there is a profit and they have taken the decision to withdraw some services such as the T2 and Y2 due to long-standing low passenger numbers. Alternative services are available for passengers to reach to destinations in those areas.*

*There have been driver shortages due to sickness and an overall lack of drivers in the workforce. Training more drivers and some of the latest timetable changes should help improve reliability.*

*The Government have made clear that their latest (very late in the day) support package will be the last one. The Combined Authority will continue to support bus services where possible, within financial means, but it will not be possible to save all services. The Combined Authority will work to encourage bus use.*

*Longer term the Combined Authority is working with bus operators on building a more sustainable and reliable network. This will be helped by the highly successful award of £105m funding won by the Combined Authority and North Somerset for bus improvements. Franchising remains on the table as an option.*

**Q5 – David Redgewell Southwest transport Network and Rail future Severnside**

In view Government white paper on leaving up in England and role of Regional mayoral combined Authorities. known as level 3 Authorities. with plans to make the local Enterprise partnerships a committee of the west of England mayoral combined Authority.

What progress is being made to setting up proper integrated Transport Authority with precept Powers to transfer the transport and planning staff from the unity councils to the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority to run the Planning and Transport functions of the Mayoral Authority and to set a fully integrated transport Authority.

For North Somerset council which is part of the local Enterprise partnership. But not part of the west of England mayoral combined Authority.

To fully join the west of England mayoral combined Authority as part of a governance review in time for the 2025 metro mayor Elections.

*The Levelling Up White Paper raises a number of issues, but the direction of travel is very clear – the Government want to ‘fold in’ Local Enterprise Partnerships into Combined Authorities. The issues arising in relation to North Somerset will be considered over the next few months. Transferring transport staff to the Combined Authority is a sensible move.*

**Q6 – Leslie Forrest, Chairman South Gloucestershire District of CPRE Avon and Bristol**

According to the information made available for comment on the South Gloucestershire Local Plan, as of Monday 4th April no decisions have been made on the housing numbers to be demanded of the three authorities and the location of strategic sites to meet the totals. Which WECA committee or other decision-making entity, will adjudicate on this topic, when will it meet, and can you confirm it will conduct the debate in open forum?

*The Spatial Development Strategy is intended to be an item on the July Committee and will be a public item for discussion.*

**Q7 – Cllr Vic Pritchard, Leader of the Conservative Group on B&NES Council**

How many members of staff have left the employment of WECA since May 2021?

*As the Combined Authority has sought to ensure it has the necessary skills to deliver for the region in this next phase of its development, some staff have decided to leave the organisation. In the period of 1<sup>st</sup> May 2021 until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022, 35 staff have left the combined authority, representing a rolling turnover rate of 15.5%. This is against an average turnover rate in local government of 13.4%.*

**Q8 – Cllr Vic Pritchard, Leader of the Conservative Group on B&NES Council**

Can you please list the job titles of all members of staff that have left the employment of WECA since May 2021?

*As the Combined Authority is a small organisation, a list of job titles would be identifiable to individuals. It is in the public domain that the Director of Infrastructure, Director of Investment and Corporate Services and Director of Legal Services have left the organisation. The remaining leavers are spread across all directorates and levels of seniority.*

**Q9 – David Worskett, Chair, CPRE Avon and Bristol**

**Will WECA explain the process for developing a strategy for the rural areas as part of the overall Spatial Development Strategy and who is being consulted about it?**

***Spatial Development Strategies are prepared in accordance with the statutory regulations for Spatial Plans. This requires it to be published and formally consulted on with the public for 12 weeks.***

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