

PUBLIC STATEMENTS

QUESTIONS AND REPLIES

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WEST OF ENGLAND COMBINED AUTHORITY COMMITTEE – STATEMENTS – 1 JULY 2022

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Statement 1 - Dave Redgewell

We are concerned that statements on the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council Public Transport Facebook site suggest that it could take 3 year to bring public transport interchanges and infrastructure up to a safe maintenance standard.

Passenger in North Somerset council and the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority need these repairs to bus shelters in Weston super mare, Ellenborough park both side of the park Atworth road Weston super mare.

Graffiti removal on the A370 From Bristol bus and coach station to Weston super mare via Hotwells ,Backwell, Cleeve , Congesbury, Worle and Weston super mare bus and coach.

A369 Bristol bus and coach station city centre Hotwells road Bower Ashton,pill , Portishead.

Shelters damaged at the suspension bridge and Graffiti on shelters in Portishead, Portbury , Gordano and pill .

A4 Bristol bus and coach station Bristol Temple meads station,Arnos vale Bristlington ,keynsham, Salford Newbridge,Weston and Bath spa bus and coach

Part of South Gloucestershire around kingswood

Realtime information displays not working in key locations including west on super mare town centre.

This is giving a very poor impression of public transport and is a maintenance issue is the metro mayor Dan Norris and his team raising the issue with The city and county of Bristol mayor , Banes leader Kevin guy council leader of South Gloucestershire council Toby savage leader and North Somerset council leader .councillor steve Bridger.

We need a van type services to maintain public transport interchanges and infrastructure.

But can not wait 3 years for basic public transport interchanges and infrastructure maintenance.

Bath spa bus and coach station need seats repaired and Tourist information point in the Travel centre as Does Bristol.

Bristol bus and coach station has broken Doors at the Entrance panel missing on the Glass roof at the Taxis stand entrance.

and No cleaning machines working.

The question of bus station maintenance is some think that should be addressed by the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and especially with North Somerset council joining the combined Authority with the local Enterprises partnership.

The Bristol Temple meads Temple quay leveling up money also needs to look at Ferry interchanges and infrastructure at the Railway station and disabled access.

The ferry boats also need disabled lifts fittings.

The company is keen to work with Bristol city council west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and metro mayor Dan Norris on a services from the city centre to Bristol Temple meads to Netham for st Anne's and to Hotwells.

In Bath from the city centre to Weston riverside.

Ferry service can play a key role in journey to Net zero along with bus services and metro west railway services.

But for this we need a clear delivery team of co production of the city regional transport plan.

With the city and county of Bristol.

North Somerset council, Banes and South Gloucestershire council

And west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council.

The metro mayor Dan Norris should chair a Transport Board with Members and officers from North Somerset council councillor Steve Bridger, councillor Don Alexander city and county of Bristol Sarah Warren Banes council.

Councillor Steven reade South Gloucestershire council.

On marketing we still need a campaign for more bus drivers, cleaners and Engineers, inspectors for the bus service's

And a marketing campaign to get passenger back on public transport in Greater Bristol, Bath Somerset, Wiltshire Gloucestershire and South west England this summer.

We have a working party looking at both bus service marketing and recruitment

And one for interchanges facilities and hubs

At Bristol city council.

And at Banes the journeys to net zero forum

In South Gloucestershire council a working party on Thornbury high street.

And Rock street which we need to progress for public transport interchanges facilities.

Public transport Network forum for yate and chipping sodbury.

and equalities groups

With the bus service changes to support bus service Network and bus service improvements plan Networks

We need a meeting of the bus users forum.

On region bus services with the Bristol bus and coach station to Bristol Temple meads, Hengrove
Whitchurch, pensford Clutton Farrington Gurney chewton mendip wells bus and coach station
Glastonbury and street.

376 is failing now to connections.

At Glastonbury town hall 77 to street and yeovil bus and coach station.

29 Street and Taunton Town centre.

75 To Bridgwater hospital and Bridgwater bus and coach station.

Can this be raised with Somerset county council and First group.

DAVID REDGEWELL SOUTH WEST TRANSPORT NETWORK RAILFUTURE SEVERNSIDE.

IAN BECKEY GLOUCESTERSHIRE CATCH THE BUS CAMPAIGN.

PETER TRAVIS SOMERSET BUS PARTNERSHIP AND CATCH THE BUS CAMPAIGN.

Statement 2 – Cllr Claire Young

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

Alveston Hill Cycleway and Yate Spur schemes

On behalf of the Liberal Democrat Group on South Gloucestershire Council I would like to express our support for the Yate Spur and Alveston Hill Cycleway schemes.

The Alveston Hill scheme will greatly improve cycle access between the A38 and Thornbury, where the narrowness of the road and the lack of land to widen it has been a major barrier to cycling in the area. Parents don't let their children cycle to Marlwood School from Thornbury because the hill is seen as dangerous, so good habits are not learnt early. The concept of a new cycle path on land nearby, emerged many years ago but this proposed funding is the only realistic opportunity we've seen to acquire the land needed to make the scheme a reality. If this bid fails it will be a major blow to the aim of increasing active travel around Thornbury and Alveston. It will also mean that any investment in the A38 cycleway improvements will not be utilised to the maximum.

My Liberal Democrat colleagues and I have been campaigning for the Yate Spur cycle path for many years and have attended numerous meetings with officers and consultation events. With progress slowing, in 2014 we launched a petition calling for the completion of the route. I submitted the first batch of signatures to South Gloucestershire Council later that year, and asked for it to be passed to the LEP Investment Board, who approved the next stage of funding and referred our petition to the Strategic Leaders Board who had to sign it off formally. That funding wasn't enough to complete the path though and we kept the petition open, submitting more signatures to South Gloucestershire Council in 2015.

Sadly land ownership and drainage issues have proved challenging. We hope that the decision made today will mean that the route will finally be completed. This will multiply many times the benefits of the investment in the previous stages and open up the Bristol Bath cycle path to more people.

Having a well-connected network of off-road cycle routes would make cycling attractive to a wider range of people. I would urge you to consider next other routes that would enlarge the network, such as the route of the old Frogmore Lane Colliery dramway, which would link Coalpit Heath to the Yate spur and which we have already discussed with South Gloucestershire's Executive Member for Regeneration, Environment and Strategic Infrastructure.

Buses

While we welcome investment in the A432 corridor for active and sustainable travel, residents are more concerned about the lack of frequent, reliable bus services than they are about the stops they have to wait at. In the statement I submitted to the April meeting, I explained about the impact the loss of services like the Y2 and T2 and the curtailment of the Y4 service were having on local bus users. We have gathered over 700 signatures on our bus petition, which is attached to this statement.

People have made it very clear what they want from local bus services. They need to be reliable – turning up at the expected time, not by-passing parts of the route or flying past stops without stopping if they are running late, and not being cancelled without warnings on the real-time information signs. People try the buses, get frustrated and vow never to do so again.

They need to be frequent – over the years we have seen services cut repeatedly. On key routes and at Park and Rides, you should not need to worry about a timetable, whenever you arrive there should be a bus along soon.

They need to go where people want to go – which isn't just Bristol city centre. People also need to travel to:

- shops and employment in the East and North Fringes, Avonmouth, Cribbs Causeway, Yate, and Thornbury
- Southmead hospital and health facilities in Downend, Emersons Green, Kingswood, Patchway and Yate
- transport interchanges, like Bristol Parkway, Filton Abbeywood, Patchway and Yate stations
- UWE, the SGS College campuses, and schools like KLB
- the growing number of tourist destinations, including Wild Place, Aerospace Bristol and the Wave
- other local towns and villages

Within our communities, buses need to serve all areas. A key time to change people's travel habits is when they move house, yet we see new homes being built in Yate and Thornbury without easy access to a bus service, embedding car use as the norm. It affects our established communities too, we cannot expect everyone to be able to walk to the main roads to catch a bus.

Finally bus users need straight forward and reasonable pricing. Passengers don't want to have to work out which sort of ticket is best, they want to be able to jump on buses and know the total cost will be capped at a reasonable amount. It shouldn't cost as much to travel around the rural parts of South Glos for a day as it does to travel all the way down to Street.

[NB that the petition is not reproduced here as it contains personal details]

Statement 3 – Geoffrey Allan

STATEMENT OF GEOFFREY JAMES ALLAN, on behalf of BRISTOL FRIENDS OF THE EARTH









1. I am Geoffrey James Allan, of 49 Arnos St, Bristol BS4 3BS, and a member of Bristol Friends of the Earth, on whose behalf this statement is submitted.
2. We wholly support the motion proposed by the Metro Mayor that WECA should fully divest from all fossil fuel stocks.
3. The main argument put forward previously against divestment has been two-fold: firstly that fossil fuels are a sound investment and that it is contrary to fund managers's duties to act in such a way as to disadvantage pension fund members, and secondly that it is better to 'engage' with the fossil fuel companies and persuade them gradually to redirect their activities.
4. As regards fossil fuels being a sound investment, this is no longer the case, certainly in the medium to long term, as the world moves away from petrol and diesel. Managers will, on the contrary, be seen as grossly in dereliction of their duty to safeguard the funds that members rely on for their future security if they continue to be invested in stocks whose value - despite current fuel shortages - is inevitably in decline.
5. As regards the second argument, 'engagement' has proved to be a pipedream. Whatever spin the fossil fuel companies put on it, in reality they are on a relentless drive to exploit every last unit of oil and gas that they possibly can. They have had 40 years to adapt and move away from fossil fuels, yet they show no sign of doing so. According to the International Energy Agency's World Energy

Investment Report 2022, the overwhelming majority of oil and gas company capital spending continues to be on fossil fuels. Just 5% of their investment is in clean energy.

In other words, 95% of fossil fuel company spending is going towards fossil fuel production, including in many cases, more exploration and new extraction projects that the IEA has made clear will be catastrophic for the planet. Here is what's really happening according to Oil Change International:

BIG OIL REALITY CHECK:

UPDATED ASSESSMENT OF OIL AND GAS COMPANY CLIMATE PLANS

	Ambition					Integrity				People-centered transitions	
	Stop exploration	Stop approving new extraction projects	Decline oil and gas production		Set explicit end date for oil and gas extraction and long-term production phase-out plan, aligned with 1.5°C	Set absolute target(s) to reduce all its emissions, including value chain emissions	Do not rely on carbon sequestration or offsets	Be honest about fossil gas as high carbon	End lobbying and ads that obstruct climate solutions	Commit plans and funding to support workers' transitions into new sectors	Uphold human rights and Indigenous Peoples' rights, including to Free, Prior, and Informed Consent
			Starting now?	By 2030?							
	Only in new countries	No	No	<30% drop by 2030, forecast not pledged	No	Partially intensity-only, unresolved Scope 3 loopholes ^a	No	No	No	No	Policy lacks meaningful safeguards
	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	No	No	No	Plateau by 2025, decline only for oil	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	Policy lacks meaningful safeguards
	No	No	No	No	No	Partially intensity-only	No	No	No	No	Policy lacks meaningful safeguards
	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	No	No	No	No	No	Partially intensity-only	No	No	No	No	Policy lacks meaningful safeguards
	No	No	Drop forecast, but not pledged	Drop forecast, but not pledged	No	Partially intensity-only	No	No	No	No	Policy lacks meaningful safeguards
	No	No	No	No	No	Partially intensity-only	No	No	No	No	Policy lacks meaningful safeguards

COLOR CODE FOR RATING COMPANY COMMITMENTS AGAINST CRITERIA

Grossly insufficient	Insufficient	Partially aligned	Close to being aligned	Fully aligned
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Read the full report: priceofoil.org/big-oil-reality-check-2022



5 The verdict on the progress of oil and gas companies towards the action needed to keep global warming below 1.5% is that their actions so far are 'grossly insufficient'.

6. WECA authorities have passed motions declaring a climate emergency. How can it be consistent with their commitment to effective climate action for them to be at the same time actively investing in the very business which is primarily responsible for driving the climate emergency?

7 Pension fund members need not only a sound financial future to look forward to, but also a planet that they and their children will actually be able to live on.

Statement 4 – Brendan Taylor

Public statement Somerset catch

the bus campaign and Somerset bus partnership.

We are very concerned about the proposed the first group bus service Network review in the west of England mayor combined transport Authority and North Somerset council.

First group bus service review with the new unity Somerset council .

AT meeting last night we had representatives from Bath and North Somerset council area , North Somerset council and mendip District council.

Stakeholders and passengers

were worried about the following services.

With a number of cross border services

Such as 126 from weston super mare bus and coach to locking, Banwell Winscombe,Axbridge cheddar,Draycott and wells bus and coach station.

D1 Bath spa bus and coach to Bathampton limpley stoke Winsley Bradford on Avon Trowbridge Westbury warminster and Salisbury 24 connections.

D2 Bath bus and coach station to Midford Norton st Phillips, Rode Beckington and Frome sainsbury's.

Services 20 .

Berrow,Brean,uphill hospital Weston

Berrow!,Brean uphill hospital, weston

super mare bus and coach station

With connections from Taunton town ,Bridgwater bus station,Highbridge and Burnham on sea services 21 .

174 ,173 Wells bus and coach station to shepton mallet, interchanges or chilcompton,Midsomer Norton ,Westfield Radstock, peasdown st john ,Bath spa bus and coach station

376 Street Glastonbury, wells bus and coach station,chewton mendip Farrington Gurney Clutton pensford whitchurch Hengrove knowle Bristol Temple meads and Bristol bus and coach.

At wells bus and coach station and not Glastonbury Town hall these services connect with services 29 To street and Taunton Town centre and musgrove park hospital.

75 to street and Bridgwater bus and coach station.

77 Wells bus and coach station to Glastonbury hospital Town hall somerton , ilchester and yeovil bus and coach station

These cross boundary services are very important in the historic county of Somerset.

At the cheddar meeting the issue of the lack of a Sunday and Evening services to on 126 from wells bus and coach station to Draycott , Cheddar Axbridge winscombe Banwell locking and Weston super mare Somerset bus and coach station was addressed and link to Bristol and Taunton.

The Falcon coach services from Bristol bond street to Bristol Airport ,churchill East Brent ,Bridgwater ,Taunton Wellington , cullompton,Exeter,Newton Abbott and Plymouth coach station.

Was of concern about connections.

And Connections from the cheddar valley cheddar, locking Banwell and winscombe.

Passenger information on bus stops and interchange were very important in North Somerset. Bus shelters being cleaned

Timetable information repairs and bus shelter cleaning.

Between sidcot , winscombe Banwell and locking Weston super mare bus and coach station have the I point not working.

Ellborough park and Ashworth road need repairing .

On The Bristol bus and coach station Bristol Temple meads station Farrington Gurney corridor the local councils want better realtime information systems and displays and realtime information from chewton mendip Wells bus and coach station, Glastonbury and street.

173 via chilcompton,174 Bath spa bus and coach station to peasdown st john Radstock Westfield midsomer Norton paulton chilcompton wells bus and coach station or 174 via shepton mallet interchanges

171 172, 173, 174 corridor is very important better Bath spa bus and coach station, Peasdown st john Radstock Westfield midsomer Norton paulton.

And to shepton mallet interchanges and well bus and coach station.

The 376 Street, Glastonbury, wells bus and coach station, chewton mendip Farrington Gurney Clutton pensford whitchurch Hengrove knowle Bristol Temple meads and Bristol bus and coach station.

Stockwood/ whitchurch Hengrove knowle Bristol Temple meads station Bristol Cabot circus city centre park street, Clifton Down station ,Westbury Henbury ,Henleaze, Southmead hospital bus station cribbs causeway bus station.

These are important city region Transport corridors and where they cross the corridor Borders in Somerset the Somerset Authorities need to work together.

On the bus service improvements plans

We need to see discussion on the services reviews between the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council and Somerset county council.

On First group services reviews .

and bus shelters improvements information and realtime information systems.

Especially at bus and coach station like wells in Somerset. Glastonbury and street, Radstock ,midsomer Norton paulton shepton mallet.

We also need Somerset cross boundary marketing campaign for public transport bus timetable booklets and maps for the historic county of Somerset.

SUPPORT CATCH THE BUS CAMPAIGN

IN SEPTEMBER IN SOMERSET AND SOUTH WEST ENGLAND.

in September we have Somerset and National catch the bus campaign we are hoping the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and mayor Dan Norris and North Somerset council leader Steve Bridger will support the campaign with the leaders of South Gloucestershire council Toby savage, Kevin guy from Banes council and mayor Malvin Rees from Bristol city council.

Transport executive councillor Don Alexander, sarha WarrenBanes ,stephen reade ,south Gloucestershire and steve Hodges North Somerset council.

We Do hope the mayor of west of England mayoral combined transport Authority Dan Norris and councillor steve Bridger/ will call a bus forum to talk about the Network services review as will Somerset county council after their review Bus Advisory Board meeting on the 14 th April 2022 .

We also want to see better bus link to Frome railway station and castle cary station from the mendip towns and the city of wells.

And Highbridge and Burnham onsea station.

Brendon Taylor disabled passenger Somerset catch the bus campaign

Statement 5 - Jonathan Maytham

Please ask the members to vote in favour of divestment.

It is surely ludicrous that an organisation set up to help ensure the well being of its members in the future should actively support the undermining of that future for short term profits and greed.

Let's not hear a load of disingenuous propaganda from our representatives who should know better (and probably do)

Statement 6 – Nigel Shipley

I would like to submit this statement in support of WECA's resolution to Avon Pension Fund to "divest entirely from fossil fuel stocks" and commit to 2030 carbon neutrality.

What is the case for divestment?

Almost all of the arguments in favour of fossil fuel divestment fit into two categories: moral and financial.

First, the moral argument, which is rooted in basic maths. Scientific research shows that in order to keep to international targets to limit global warming to a 2C rise and thus prevent catastrophic levels of climate change, between two-thirds and four-fifths of fossil fuels need to remain in the ground. But fossil fuel companies are currently banking on these targets not being met so are extracting these reserves and selling them – and are actively prospecting for more. In doing so they are setting the human race on a route to irreversible climate change that will cause rising seas, flooding, droughts, rising disease, increased conflicts and refugee crises. The UN has lent its "moral authority" to the divestment campaign, while Desmond Tutu has said that "people of conscience need to break their ties with corporations financing the injustice of climate change".

Second is the financial argument, which rests on the premise that if international agreements on climate change are met, the investments will become worthless. The theory that these "stranded assets" are creating a trillion dollar "carbon bubble" that could plunge the world into another

economic crisis is now the subject of an investigation by the Bank of England, after Governor Mark Carney said publicly that “the vast majority of reserves are unburnable.”

The World Bank has come out in support of the financial argument for divestment, with president Jim Yong Kim stating that: “every company, investor and bank that screens new and existing investments for climate risk is simply being pragmatic”.

Although the impact of divestment on share prices may be relatively small, the reputational damage can have serious financial consequences.

Statement 7 – Tim Weekes (attached)

Statement 8 – Elaine Ashley

I would like to submit this statement in very strong support of the following motion:

In light of the climate emergency and the West of England’s 2030 net zero target, the West of England Combined Authority calls on the Avon Pension scheme to match this ambition by committing to having a carbon neutral pension fund by 2030 or earlier; and to divest entirely from fossil fuel stocks.

As a member of the pension fund I am distraught that my money is being invested to support the continued exploration of Fossil Fuels. The climate emergency is now beyond critical and I don't know what more we can do to get the powers that invest our money to understand. Divestment of our pension funds is one the the most powerful acts we can all take to avoid the worst catastrophe. This motion gives me hope - please vote for it.

Statement 9 – Mike Birkin

Statement on behalf of Climate Action West of England

As an alliance of community climate campaigning groups from the WECA area, we declare our support for the motion tabled by Metro Mayor Dan Norris, calling on Avon Pension Fund to commit to a carbon neutral pension fund by 2030 or earlier; and to divest entirely from fossil fuel stocks.

A 2021 report by Friends of the Earth and Platform found that Avon Pension Fund continues to invest around £100 million in the fossil fuel industry [1]. This includes more than £20m of direct investments in Shell, BP, Glencore, Anglo American, BHP and Mitsui.

Local pensions investment in fossil fuels is fuelling climate change and air pollution, contradicting local, national and international commitments to tackle climate change. It is also putting members' pensions in jeopardy as fossil fuel investments now pose a dangerous long-term financial risk to investors.

The International Energy Agency's roadmap to net-zero [2] made clear that, if we are to have any chance of keeping global warming below 1.5C, we must end all new investment in fossil fuels now. In other words, we already have all the fossil fuels that we need in developed, operating fields. Yet fossil fuel companies are continuing to look for even more unburnable oil, gas and coal, and our government is granting them permission to do so.

Fossil fuel companies are not and will not be the world leaders in renewable energy. Contrary to their squeaky-clean marketing, oil and gas companies are still putting the overwhelming majority (95%) of capital expenditure towards fossil fuels. And, even with a tenfold increase in investment in green technologies anticipated over the next five years, oil companies are not anticipated or equipped to become the major investors of renewable technology.

The net-zero plans of a number of the companies Avon PF invests in contain either an incredibly weak commitment or no commitment at all to stop new exploration, stop approving new extraction projects, or to decline oil and gas production at the necessary pace. An up-to-date analysis shows that the climate promises of major U.S. and European oil and gas companies still fail to meet the bare minimum for alignment with the Paris Agreement [3].

Divestment works: a peer-reviewed study from the University of Augsburg found that divesting from high-carbon companies actually drives down stock price and results in a decrease in carbon emissions by the divested company, in comparison to stewardship and shareholder engagement. We need to vote with our feet.

Divestment is better for pension holders: Global action by governments to limit carbon emissions in line with the Paris Agreement will leave fossil fuel reserves unburnable. This 'carbon bubble' has the potential to leave over €1 trillion worth of assets 'stranded' in Europe alone. Experts like Mark Carney, the former Governor of the Bank of England, have warned of these risks: he has cautioned that fossil fuel companies face 'potentially huge' losses from action on climate change that could make vast reserves of oil, coal and gas 'literally unburnable'. Similarly, the Executive Director of the International Energy Agency has discouraged continuing to put money into oil and gas projects, referring to them as potential 'junk investments.'

In the midst of an energy security and cost of living crisis, we need to invest in green alternatives. Here in the UK we have immense capacity to produce our own renewable energy locally, potentially creating thousands of local green jobs at the same time and bringing down the cost of household bills for ordinary families. Instead of investing money in deadly, costly fossil fuels, our local authorities should be investing in our future.

The companies that have done the most to cause the climate crisis cannot be trusted to meaningfully confront it. Fossil fuel companies will not manage their own decline and there's no time left to wait and hope they do. In our efforts to halt climate breakdown, and necessarily to phase out fossil fuels, local authority pension funds have two equally important roles to play: reflecting public opinion and shaping central government action. It's time for Avon Pension Fund to make a local decision with truly global consequence, and commit to ending costly and unpopular investments in fossil fuel companies.

We urge you as local authority leaders to support the motion.

[1] Divesting to protect our pensions and the planet, UK Divest, February 2021
https://www.divest.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/UKDivest_Report.pdf

[2] Net Zero by 2050: A Roadmap for the Global Energy Sector, International Energy Agency, May 2021 <https://www.iea.org/events/net-zero-by-2050-a-roadmap-for-the-global-energy-system>

[3] Big Oil Reality Check — Updated Assessment of Oil and Gas Company Climate Plans, Oil Change International, May 2022 <https://priceofoil.org/2022/05/24/big-oil-reality-check-2022/>

Statement 10 – Louise Branch

North Somerset UNISON branch would like to support the following motion submitted by Dan Norris for the meeting on 1st July:

In light of the climate emergency and the West of England's 2030 net zero target, the West of England Combined Authority calls on the Avon Pension scheme to match this ambition by committing to having a carbon neutral pension fund by 2030 or earlier; and to divest entirely from fossil fuel stocks.

Our branch is fully committed to measures to stop global heating as environmental catastrophe affects our working lives as well as our family and personal lives. It is imperative that we reach net zero by 2030, at the very latest, and essential that organisations like our pension fund need to contribute to achieving this.

Item 11 – Ian Watkins

I write in support of the motion proposed by The WECA Mayor in relation to Avon Pension Fund realigning its investment strategy to meet a carbon neutral target by 2030.

Whilst I acknowledge the great strides APF have made in their strategy on divesting away from fossil fuels, the present 2050 target date for achieving this is too late and does not match the ambitions of many of the employers who contribute on behalf of their staff.

For example, Bristol City Council aim to become carbon neutral by 2025. It would be a nonsense for them to continue to invest in a pension fund, that at present, would continue to fund fossil fuel extraction for a further 25 years.



Campaigning for rail at the core of an integrated transport network for Bristol, Bath and the West of England

Portishead Branch Line – MetroWest Phase 1 Statement to West of England Combined Authority Committee - Friday, 1st July

FoSBR were pleased to see a diverse cross-section of local groups and individuals attend our recent event at Pill in support of the Portishead Railway reopening. All were united by a desire to see the MetroWest Portishead project completed. Local councillors, residents and transport campaigners were there. We also received messages of support from MPs whose constituencies the line will serve. There can be no doubt that project is widely supported.

We now call on the West of England Combined Authority, North Somerset Council and the DfT to ensure that this scheme is funded. This is a generational opportunity to transform travel in the region, which must not be lost.

Here are a few of the comments we received:

Reintroducing passenger services on the Portishead line is part of establishing a modern transport network for our area, similar to those being developed in other city regions in the UK. If we are to take the environment and climate change seriously then modal shift to connected trains, trams and buses is essential. Re-opening the Portishead line to passengers is one of the easiest ways to start this vital process.

Martin Garrett, Transport for Greater Bristol

I'm supporting FoSBR in reopening Portishead Rail line.

Cllr David Wilcox, Lockleaze

Local residents and indeed rail travellers from the Bristol region as a whole have been kept waiting long enough for this new embodiment of an old line. It is now vital from many viewpoints, from ease and convenience for local commuters to feeding into the wider West Country and indeed nation-wide response to the current and worsening state of Climate Emergency. Thank you Central Government for what you can do to facilitate this, as locally it has (mainly for funding reasons) come to an impasse! -

Anna G, local resident

Railfuture welcome the proposed reopening of the Bristol Temple Meads to Bedminster, Parson Street, Pill and Portishead railway and call on Grant Shapps to fund the missing £15.5 million to allow the line to open as part of MetroWest .

David Redgewell, Rail Future Severnside

Climate change is most serious and needs cars off the road soonest. This vital MetroWest project will support employment opportunities. It is ready to go and has been delayed twice without good reason. It would be utterly shameful to lose it now. Delivering Portishead is key to unlocking MetroWest. This is a major opportunity to deliver a significant change in rail provision in the West of England.

Roger English, Portishead Railway Group

This is important environmentally as it will enable a shift of commuter traffic into Bristol from cars to rail, giving 50,000 people access to low-carbon transport.

Simon Baughen

The Clean Air Zone is coming and we need more positive options to get people out of their cars. This is vital for our economy - as well as keeping Bristol a comfortable place to live. The Portishead line is a key, much-awaited-for next step in our transport revolution - please just get on with it!

Nikki Jones, local resident

In addition, we received these messages of support from people who were unable to attend. The line passes through Bristol South as well as North Somerset. Both local MPs strongly support this investment:

"As you know, for over 20 years I have campaigned tirelessly to see Portishead's railway restored. I believe we are within touching distance now as I set out in the Commons last week. For a relatively small sum of money from the Dept of Transport we can bring environmental, transport and economic gains not only to the people of Portishead but to our wider area. It can and should be a real win-win. Thank you to all of you who have kept faith and given your support.

Dr Liam Fox, North Somerset MP

Local rail is crucial to provide low carbon travel options. The re-opening of the passenger line to Portishead would transform travel for those living near Parson Street and Bedminster stations, including for the hundreds of new residents who will be occupying the homes already under construction in BS3. I thank Friends of Suburban Bristol Railways for highlighting this important issue. This week I pressed government to do more to get the line open, and I welcomed the Minister's commitment to reconnecting communities to the railway.

Karin Smith, Bristol South MP

"The Portishead line is an essential element in Bristol's plans to tackle congestion, pollution and carbon emissions. We hope it will go ahead as soon as possible." -

Cllr Don Alexander, Cabinet Member for Transport, Bristol

Thanks FoSBR for another reminder about how important delivering the Portishead Line remains and how govt funding critical to resolving engineering/ecology/service etc issues.

Cllr Mark Bradshaw, Bedminster

West of England Combined Authority Committee meeting on Friday, 1 July 2022

Questions received from the public

Item 1 – Kim Hicks

Question 1: Bristol and Bath Green Belt

With the demise of the SDS, communities in the region are waiting to hear of WECA's plans. A review of the Bristol & Bath Green Belt was commissioned and unlike other technical reports has not been published. Why has it not been published and when will it be published?

Response:

The Green Belt Assessment can be published as soon as practicably possible subject to agreement with Unitary Authorities. Please contact the West of England Combined Authority if you would like to be informed on its publication.

Question 2: South Bristol Corridor

The WECA area has:

- A lack of a unanimous agreement between the councils regarding the SDS.
- A JLTP4 that needs updating.
- A climate emergency
- An ecological emergency
- A desperate lack of funds available which needs to be spent wisely.

In the light of all of the above, when will the South Bristol Corridor be dropped, from the already out-dated JLTP4?

Response:

As Metro Mayor, I and the leaders of Bristol, and Bath and North East Somerset reached agreement on an evidence-led approach to housing numbers across the West of England. Unfortunately there was not unanimous agreement as required. There is a climate and ecological emergency which we must tackle with urgency. Since I became Metro Mayor we have created a £50 million Green Recovery Fund with a big focus on retrofitting; changed the Combined Authority's position on Bristol Airport; set up a Climate Action Panel and launched a brand new Climate Action Plan.

As the Action Plan makes clear the scale of the challenge is daunting. It will involve taking action locally, regionally, nationally and globally. We will all have to do things differently. We will need much, much more Government support and there will be trade-offs, compromises and we will need to make some very big choices

Importantly I have also secured around £2/3 billion for transport improvements. These will be crucial to meet our ambitious net zero targets. Now we must deliver.

The South East Bristol Orbital Low Carbon Corridor currently remains in the Joint Local Transport Plan 4.

The Combined Authority is committed to addressing orbital connectivity and to improving public transport. The first priority will be to do so through public transport, cycling and walking with a step change in sustainable transport provision.

Item 2 – Niall Phillips

Question: Expansion of CA to incorporate North Somerset Council

Does the West of England Mayor support the expansion of the West of England Combined Authority to incorporate North Somerset?

Response:

There are no current proposals to expand the West of England Combined Authority to incorporate North Somerset.

Item 3 – David Redgewell

Question 1: Enhanced Quality Partnership Board

Question 1 With the make up of the enhanced quality partnership Board.

We note the lack of of passenger representation on the Board. But of more concern is the make up of the Board with 2 places for First group plc west of England buses. 1 each for the smaller operators. and one only for the metro mayor Dan Norris staff or the mayor and one for North Somerset council. We believe as this a public Board dealing with Taxpayers money £ 105 .5 million pound 2nd bus service improvements plan money in the country. £540 million of Regional transport plan corridors. We need the public sector and the metro officers to have a higher representation on the Board .

How does the Enhanced quality partnership Board fit in with bus service Advisory Board and The passenger/ bus Forum. Has a date been set for the Next bus forum in conjunction with the bus service review for West of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council.

Response:

The voices of passengers, and would be passengers, are absolutely vital to designing good public transport.

The Bus Passenger Forum is not a formal part of the governance structure of the Enhanced Partnership but the Combined Authority is committed to continuing to hold regular Bus Forums. The next one will be in September. There will also be important public involvement in the forthcoming Network Review.

The governance structure for the proposed Enhanced Partnership was designed in line with Government guidance.

The Enhanced Partnership itself is a framework that formalises the relationship between the Combined Authority and bus operators.

Representatives of bus passenger groups will have a key role to play in the work of reviewing its operation.

Question 2: City Region Transport Plan Corridor

What progress is being made on co productions of the city region transport plan corridors. With West of England mayoral combined transport Authority mayor Dan Norris and The transport leads and officers Of the city and county of Bristol Councillor Don Alexander, Councillor Sarah, Warren Banes councillor Steve reade South Gloucestershire council Steve Hodges North Somerset council.

On the Bristol bus and coach station Bristol Temple meads, Arnos vale, Bristlington ,keynsham, Salford Newbridge ,Weston and Bath spa bus and coach station.

A37 Bristol bus and coach station to Bristol Temple meads, knowle, Hengrove whitchurch, pensford ,Clutton ,Farrington Gurney, chewton mendip wells bus and coach station, Glastonbury and street.

A367 Bath spa bus and coach station, Peasdown st john Radstock, Westfield midsomer ,Norton paulton ,shepton mallet interchanges, chilcompton and wells bus and coach station.

Stockwood, whitchurch, Hengrove, knowle, Bristol Temple meads park street, Clifton Down station Westbury, Henbury, Henleaze, Southmead Brenty cribs causeway bus station

Bristol bus and coach station Hotwell road , pill and Portishead.

Bristol Hotwells road , Bower Ashton cleve , worle, Weston super mare bus and coach station sea front .

Bristol bus and coach station,

Nalisea and Backwell station, Nalisea, clevedon

Bristol Bond street, Bristol Airport, churchill, East Brent ,Bridgwater Taunton Wellington ,cullompton, Exeter ,Newton Abbott and Plymouth coach station

Bristol city centre to yate bus station and chipping sodbury.

Bristol city centre to Thornbury.

What corporate design will be present for bus shelters interchanges facilities.

Timetable displays realtime information systems and tickets machine.

There is a need for clear branding and maintenance contracts in the west of England mayoral mayoral combined transport Authority including North Somerset council for a public transport infrastructure.

Will a Delivery plan be put in place .

Including sustainable transport corridors and work to Bridges and access to ferry interchanges in Bristol Harbour and bus rail cycle and E scooters interchanges.

Response:

Work is taking place on the important corridor schemes outlined. They are at different stages of development and are all subject to business cases to ensure value for money and that residents and organisations including bus operators can help to influence decisions and be kept informed . The current aim is to deliver these improvements by 2027, in line with the funding timescales for the City Region Sustainable Transport Scheme.

The parts within North Somerset, are set to be completed by March 2025 as they are being delivered by funding from the Bus Service Improvement Plan. They are being co-ordinated with the Combined Authority.

An exciting new brand for transport is under development as it is high time West of England people got a recognisable, co-ordinated brand. The days of a rainbow of different colours buses, trains and scooters needs to end.

There will be detailed delivery plans for all elements of this work.

End