

STATEMENTS RECEIVED FOR THIS COMMITTEE ARE
ATTACHED

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Agenda Item 6

West of England Combined Authority Committee meeting on 26 January 2024

Statements received from the public:

No.	Received from
1	Jane Redman Chair, IRP
2	Lee Sharkey
3	Cllr Joanna Wright (B&NES)
4	Bill Blyth
5	Terry Stevens
6	Cllr Shaun Hughes (B&NES)
7	Ian Quaife
8	Mr Roland Birchby
9	Mrs Chris Birchby
10	Cllr Jos Clarke (BCC)
11	Emilia Melville
12	Councillor Andrew Varney (BCC) Petition
13	David Redgewell
14	Ian Beckey
15	Rosa Kell
16	Christina Biggs
17	Anna Fry
18	Cllr Tim Rippington
19	Jackie Head
20	Barbara Lawrence
21	Cllr Dr Eleanor Jackson
22	Janet Young
23	Nigel & Chris
24	Francis McGarry

Statement 1

From Jane Redman

Dear Mayor Norris

Withdrawn Local Bus Service, Keynsham

The Chocolate Quarter [TCQ] Independent Residents' Panel is an elected body, run by residents, which seeks to protect and further the interests of all residents (approaching 180) at the St Monica Trust retirement village in Somerdale, with currently 136 apartments and in due course a further 44 apartments, 18 of which are to be 'affordable'.

We wrote to you in September on the topic of the lost local bus service in Keynsham. We sent a subsequent email in September seeking a response but have not yet heard from your office. We would now ask for this matter to be addressed at the WECA committee meeting.

The services 663 664 665 operated by Stagecoach which stopped outside The Chocolate Quarter (TCQ) for Somerdale and had three loops around Keynsham and Saltford were withdrawn, due to funding squeezes.

We think this decision needs to be reviewed as a matter of urgency, given:

- the high council tax rating our apartments have,
- the push to get people onto public transport,
- planners did not allow for many parking spaces here to discourage car ownership,
- the council knows the high concentration of the elderly in Somerdale,
- the local authority has granted planning permission for a further block of 44 retirement/assisted living apartments currently under construction,
- the local authority will place people in 18 affordable units in the soon-to-be-built D Block, and they too will be isolated if they have no car.

Arguments

The loss of the 663/664/665 has been felt keenly by some of our residents and no doubt other Somerdale residents. Other Keynsham residents who are registered with St Augustine's GP practice here in The Chocolate Factory (Block C) have a long walk to get here, and we know anecdotally that it is a problem for those with no transport. Recent experience has shown that the 'Westlink' on demand service is not proving a viable alternative. Dial-a-Ride cannot possibly cope with all demands.

Mention is made of the bus stop in the TCQ sales brochure. No doubt an accessible bus service was an attraction and taken into account when people were considering Somerdale as a place to retire to, but has now been lost. Many residents feel isolated half a mile from town and without their own means of transport. A Diamond Card is of little use, if one cannot reach a bus stop. Taxis are not only expensive but also not always available, causing difficulties and stress for residents, not least when attempting to access dentists, opticians, hospital appointments, shops, and the like.

Beyond the effect on quality of life for residents, the lack of a local bus service has an obvious knock- on negative impact on local businesses and services. Any shopping on Keynsham high street and access to the nearest bus stop would necessitate a walk of

over half a mile and a potential round trip of over a mile. Too long a trail for many TCQ residents.

Also in the future, how would elderly residents access the proposed transport hub in the Memorial Park?

You may care to know that at short notice we mustered 15 residents to attend your meeting at St John's Church parish hall in September. That should be seen as an indication of the strength of feeling.

We look forward to hearing from you with regard to the reinstatement of the

663/664/665. Sincerely,

On behalf of the Panel
Jane Redman Chair, IRP

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Statement 2

From Lee Sharkey

I am writing to express my concern about the proposed cuts o bus services in the region, particularly the route 94 Trowbridge to Bath.

The 94 is a vital lifeline for the village communities and it would be devastating to lose it.

Benefits of maintaining the regular 94 service:-

1. Allows residents to cut down on using cars and parking within Bath and Trowbridge
2. The 94 is a vital bus service for pupils travelling to and from school in Bath and helps reduce the notorious school run congestion on our roads
3. The 94 bus service gives independence and mobility to the elderly residents of the villages served - vital to get to shops, to doctors, to pharmacies.
4. For elderly residents, the 94 service is essential for their mental health to be able to get out and about to decrease feelings of isolation, dependence and loneliness.
5. Villages such as Monkton Combe are surrounded by very steep hills which makes it impossible for residents to walk up Summer Lane or Shaft Rd to get access to the number 2 bus service. It is a 20 minute walk at least even for someone who is fit! For someone who is not fit and able, this steep walk could be life threatening!
6. To get to the D2 bus stop, villagers in Monkton Combe would be expected to walk down the dangerous and busy Brassknocker Hill and again it would be a 10-15 minute walk from the centre of the village. This is a very dangerous option and would without doubt cause fatalities.

I understand that you would like to promote the Westlink service as an alternative...

I am sorry but this is not a viable alternative. Firstly, the service does not run from Monkton Combe into Bath. How are residents expected to get into their closest shopping centre? Is this going to change?

Secondly, the availability of buses on Westlink is terrible. Westlink cannot in its current format be considered an alternative to a regular bus service. The investment required to improve the availability and breadth of routes available on Westlink might as well be invested into a perfectly good existing 94 service.

I hope the upcoming consultation is a true and democratic one and one which genuinely takes into account the needs and feelings of the residents of your community.

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Statement 3

From Cllr Joanna Wright (B&NES) - Fair Fares

The West of England Authority claims its objective is to make the region a better place to work and live for all our residents.

Over many years I have repeatedly spoken to Officers at the Authority about supporting a key group of residents who have very little voice to ensure that they too have Fair Access to all that this region offers.

If you are 18 and over and are in full-time education and you travel to school or any other educational establishment by train you will have to pay full fares on your train ticket. Student Railcards only offer discounts outside of peak times, which means if you have to travel before 10.30am to be in time for lessons only a full adult fare will suffice.

There is an alternative option called the Scholars Scheme that allows students to have a cheaper ticket and travel at peak times. However this Scholars scheme can only be authorized by the educational establishment or school. Having raised two adult children, I've encountered numerous parents facing challenges with their children using trains for education. Many times, these parents have struggled to receive adequate support from both the school and Great Western Railway in ensuring easy availability of these tickets.

Indeed, a concerned parent named Frances shared with me the correspondence received from Great Western Railway regarding this matter. They wrote the following to Frances:

“Sorry for further delay in coming back to you. I've spoken with our fares experts who have confirmed that the monthly season ticket is the best value for 18-year-olds, and there are no other products available that would reduce the cost down from this.

“Along with other operators we did lobby for the 16-17 Saver to cover 18-year-olds in full-time education but were not successful in securing this concession.

“I appreciate this won't be the answer you were looking for, and for your patience while we investigated.”

Why did Great Western Railway not accord priority to Frances' concern? Why do the inquiries of Great Western Railway's customers consistently encounter a response of 'further delay'?

What factors contributed to Great Western Railway's inability to secure this concession successfully?

If Great Western Railway acknowledges that the response Frances received is not satisfactory, why have they not taken proactive measures to address the issue?

Metro Mayor, as Leader, you are the Transport Authority. As Leader you are also responsible for jobs and skills in the region. 18 year olds are in education to make sure that they get good jobs and help the region prosper. They are also 18 when still at school and the system in place for train journeys that forces them to make a full adult fare is not fair.

Dan Norris, I urge you to ensure that the West of England Authority provides comprehensive support to all educational establishments and schools. This support should empower them with the complete details of the Scholar Scheme, ensuring that no young adult, just embarking on their journey beyond school, is burdened with the responsibility of paying full train fares. These young people are often in the throes of exams, a time charged with high

emotions and expectations and caught up in the expensive travel costs when they do not have full-time jobs.

The West of England Authority claims to be tackling climate change and helping residents secure good jobs and homes they can afford, which you state, is the heart of everything you do.

If the heart of what you do is to help residents, then I am informing you that there is a group who actively need the support to get to education using a train at a reduced fare, which not only tackles the climate emergency but also in the long run brings a better future for all in the region.

Metro Mayor, please act now and bring forward a proper plan for the West of England Authority to ensure that Great Western and local educational establishments and schools have in place a better system for accessing the Scholars scheme. Travelling by train is one of the best travel options for the environment and we need more young people to know that travelling by train is affordable and a great way to get to education. We need Leadership from you to ensure that this takes place for 18-year-olds.

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Statement 4

From Bill Blyth -(Access to Wells)

The West link bus service is very valuable for the villages of the Chew Valley. These include Chew Magna, Stanton Drew, Chew Stoke, Winford, Bishop Sutton, Litton, Ubley, Blagdon, Priddy (and others). For travelling within the valley it is very good. However there is one serious lack, access to Wells.

For this area Wells is the most important centre. Important destinations include a bank, three super markets and several specialized shops, all otherwise unobtainable without use of a car. But travelling to Wells from this area requires transfer to and linking the journey with the timetable of a different bus service. Particularly for the return journey from Wells home, this has proved really difficult. I myself and other people have been stranded at the transfer point.

The Westlink service includes single journey access to Clevedon and other towns at the extreme ends of the area, centres of far little use compared with the importance of visits to Wells.

In the annual review of Westlink and its value to the Chew Valley, please can single journey to and from Wells be included as a priority item. It is the one change we most urgently need.

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Statement 5

From Terry Stevens

Why doesn't the Mayor start listening to the passengers/customers, who pay their fares, or use their passes, to use the services to always have to get from A to B?

Many people who had to rely on public transport have lost, or had to give up, their jobs, due to the services no longer running.

Many other passengers cannot get to, like they used to.

I live in Downend & have to go into town if I want to go to Yate from my area. I know the Badminton Road part of the route is not possible, due to the work on the M4 bridge, but why not divert the route &/or bring back other 'near by' routes that will be easy for residents to use?

There was also a service that ran between Fishponds & Yate that went via Staple Hill, Mangotsfield & Pucklechurch, so why not bring that back.

People from the Blackhorse, Downend & Bromley Heath areas are going to be able to get buses to & from Fishponds or Staple Hill on other buses.

Bring them back to give more people encouragement to using our buses.

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Statement 6

From Cllr Shaun Hughes (B&NES)

Re: Letter of Support for West of England Combined Authority Change Request for Scheme grant uplift for Midsomer Norton Market Square (26th Jan 2024).

I am writing to express my support for the above funding decision ahead of the 26th of January 2024 WECA Joint Committee in my capacity as chair of the Midsomer Norton High Street Steering Group.

The creation of a new Market Square in Midsomer Norton Town Centre has been a long-standing ambition for the town and its community, and with a positive funding decision we can finally see this realised. The project will support our ambitions for the return of markets to Midsomer Norton which has hosted regular markets since the 13th Century.

The investment follows the transformational change being delivered in the 1860s Grade II listed now community owned Town Hall, which adjoins the market square, with works on-site, the two projects are linked. We are grateful also for the support that the Combined Authority has provided to support the delivery of this important community project.

The High Street Renewal Steering Group, which I am the chair of has been closely engaged in the co-design of the new Market Square over the last 3 years, and we are really keen to see this happen. We have seen through the engagement activities that this is a scheme supported by the community.

Midsomer Norton Town Centre has lacked investment in recent years and has become a Conservation Area at risk due to the poor quality of its public realm and unsympathetic changes to historic buildings. This project offers a real chance to turn this around and rebuild confidence in our amazing town.

We hope you will support this proposed Change Request to release this extra funding for Midsomer Norton Town Centre.

Yours sincerely,
On behalf of members of the High Street Renewal Steering Group

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Statement 7

From Ian Quaife

Bristol Older People's Forum (BOPF) and the Ashton Vale Suffragettes request the ringfencing of a proportion of CAZ funding, allocated to WECA via Bristol City Council, to be used for the reinstatement of the bus service in Ashton Vale. Local residents believe the savage cuts by First Bus /WECA, which disproportionately affect older and disabled people, is a scandal, and based on discrimination and profit, rather than the social and environmental good.

'We are isolated, we can't go to the shops or the doctors, or family gatherings - we are completely cut off. This is affecting our mental and physical health. We even have to use taxis to go to the local supermarket. Our number 23 bus service, used to run every hour and was lovely. We need it back!' (Ashton Vale resident).

The Ashton Vale Suffragettes and BOPF.

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Statement 8

From Roland Birchby

Withdrawal of funding for rural bus services (94- Trowbridge - Bath)

I wish to reiterate my previous concern in respect of the above proposal.

To lose such a vital link, especially at a time when government policy actively encourages the use of public transport, flies in the face of reason; it only serves to further marginalize the isolated, elderly and vulnerable, (including those with limited mobility) who, in many cases, are left with no viable or affordable alternate means of reliable and regularised transportation to urban centres; to propose instead the implementation of an "on demand" service, with no precise timetabling by way of replacement, and which does not reach Bath city centre, instead requiring a further change of service on the outskirts at the "Park and Ride" facility, appears in itself to be a costly option, and a barely credible policy to adopt-I would strongly urge its refusal.

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Statement 9

From Chris Birchby

I understand the 94 bus service between Trowbridge and Bath continues to be at risk due to the refusal to jointly fund this service alongside Wiltshire.

I have contacted you previously regarding this situation. I would have thought with the commitment to the environment getting cars off the road would be a priority as well as providing a lifeline to many who live in rural areas. The proposed Westlink service will not offer the regular and predictable service that many people, particularly the older and more vulnerable, prefer. I understand from someone who has used this service that she was the only passenger and it dropped her off at the park and ride rather than going into Bath. Again this is not ideal for many older people as well as not sounding very cost effective.

I understand there is government money, surely it is better to use this to continue a proven service for people to travel.

I have also read the rationale for the birthday buses. Whilst applauding any scheme which may increase the use of public transport, surely any increase will be canceled out by the loss of the existing bus users who will not have a bus to catch?

I would strongly urge you to reconsider the withdrawing of funds from rural services. I would have thought that the joint funding with Wiltshire for the 94 bus shows how well cross county initiatives can work.

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Statement 10

From Cllr Jos Clarke (BCC)

Myself and my colleague Cllr Andrew Varney both live in Brislington as well as representing it as the ward councillors, so are all too familiar with the problems of this congested roads. We believe it is the ward that will be most affected by any changes to the A4. So, we were keen that as many of our residents took part in the last consultation and promoted it as a way of people getting information on what was being proposed and encouraging people to have their say about the changes.

We are disappointed that the consultation finished 1st October 2023 and we have still not received any information about the consultation and next steps, this is despite my colleague Andrew Varney writing for an update in November 2023 and subsequently. Our residents need the feedback otherwise they will lose trust in the process. This request comes in light of the fact that the results from the previous consultation have never been shared with us or the community.

I understand that there is another officer managing the project and again despite our request to meet, we have had no communication them.

So, the purpose of this statement is to politely ask that the officer in charge of the project, arranges to meet with myself and Cllr Varney to discuss the feedback for the latest consultation and next steps. I do not feel that this is unreasonable.

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Statement 11

From Emilia Melville

26 Jan 2024 Statement from the Reclaim our Buses campaign to the WECA committee

We recently made a Freedom of Information Request to WECA regarding the report on bus franchising that Dan Norris promised in September.

We asked for the following information:

1. The terms of reference for the report that the Metro-Mayor has tasked his officers to produce on the topic of bus franchising
2. The timeline for the completion of this report
3. The date of the WECA committee meeting in which this report will be presented and discussed in the public domain.
4. If WECA officers have not been charged with producing a report on bus franchising, with clear terms of reference, an explanation of why this is the case given that the Mayor has made public statements that such a report is being prepared.

The response from WECA shows that there is no deadline, no terms of reference, and no plan for discussion with the West of England Unitary Authorities.

The formal response was as follows:

- 1: We can confirm there were no terms of reference set by our Metro-Mayor.
- 2: There was no specific timeline set by Mayor.
- 3: The Mayor did not specifically state when a franchising paper would be submitted to Committee.
- 4: The preparation of a report is underway but remains work in progress and is not yet finalised and subject to internal discussions and meetings.

This response, which was received 3 months after Dan said he was 'preparing a report', shows lack of prioritisation, professionalism or progress.

Given that the state of our buses is of great concern to residents, and given that [over 3500 residents](#) have signed the petition to take West of England buses into public control, and given that all three of the Unitary Authorities in the Combined Authority are in favour of formally investigating franchising, it is shocking that this has not yet been a formal discussion in the WECA committee agenda.

We call on Dan Norris to put bus franchising on the agenda of the next WECA committee meeting, on Friday 26th January. The West of England is rapidly falling behind other regions such as Manchester and West Yorkshire. The people of the West of England deserve to see a public discussion of this important matter by their representative officials in the WECA committee meeting, and to have full information about whether franchising would be the best choice for the region, which can only be achieved through a formal investigation of bus franchising.

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Statement 12

From Councillor Andrew Varney (BCC)

Petition signed by 1,833 signatories: The petition is entitled 'Save the Brislington Greenway', and the petition text is as follows:

The West of England Combined Authority is proposing to build a new road along the former Brislington Railway Line, known locally as the Brislington Greenway.

Over the last 60 years, the Greenway has become a wildlife haven, with regular sightings of bats, badgers and slow worms, all of which are protected species. Building a new road would destroy this space.

Our alternative proposal is an active travel corridor, providing a safe, pleasant, off-road route all the way from Temple Meads to Whitchurch and beyond. This green space would become a real community asset and do a lot more to promote sustainable travel than building a new road!

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Statement 13

From David Redgewell

With regards to west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council bus service improvement plan,

We welcome the the 11 million pounds spent on improvement to key corridor

Bristol routes Across Greater Bristol and Bath,

Such for the 75 76 Hartcliffe Bishopsworth, parson Street, Bedminster Bristol city centre, Gloucester Road, Bishopston, Horfield, Filton, Patchway, Cribbs causeway bus station, 76 Gloucester Road via Southmead and Henbury,

Bristol bus and coach station, Bristol Temple meads station Arnos vale, Bristlington, keynsham saltford, Newbridge, Weston Bath spa bus and coach station x39 ,39 ,349 Service 1, Broomhill, Arnos vale Bristol Temple meads station, Bristol cabot circus, Bristol city centre Bristol Park Street Clifton Down station, Down Westbury on Trym, Henbury, Bradley Cribbs causeway bus station,

Stockwood, Knowle, Hengrove, Knowle Bristol Temple meads station, Bristol cabot circus, Bristol city centre, Clifton Down station, Down, Henleaze, Southmead Henbury Cribbs causeway bus station,

42 43 Bristol city centre, Old Market Lawrence Hill Station, St George Kingwood, Warmley, North Common Bitton.

44,45 Bristol city council, Old Market, Lawrence Hill Station, St George, Hanham Cadbury Heath,

48,

Bristol city centre, Old Market Street, Stapleton road, Stapleton road Station, Eastville Fishponds Downend Bromley Heath Emerson green,

49 Bristol city centre, Old Market, Stapleton road, Stapleton road station Eastville park, Fishponds, Staple Hill, Emerson green,

Service 3 ,4 Bristol Broadmead shopping centre, city centre Bristol Park Street, Clifton Down station, Sea Mills, Shirehampton Avonmouth Lawrence Weston, Henbury, Cribbs causeway bus station,

Y1 y2

Bristol city centre Cadbury Heath, Yate park and ride, Yate, Yate railway station, Yate bus station and chipping Sodbury,

Bristol city centre, Little Stoke, Bradley Stoke, Aztec West, Hortham Alverston Thornbury, T2

.

522 Bristol bus and coach station, Bristol Temple meads station Arnos vale Bristlington keynsham marksbury Timsbury, Paulton, Midsomer Norton Westfield Radstock Peasdown St John Bath spa bus and coach station,

Rerouting via Midsomer Norton, Paulton, Timsbury Tunley Bath spa bus and coach station.

525 Yate North, Yate bus station Westerleigh Puckchurch Emerson green,

Service, 172, 173, 174 Bath spa bus and coach station, Peasdown St John, Radstock Westfield Midsomer Norton, Paulton, Chilcompton, Shepton Mallet and Wells Bus and coach station,

Service x1 Bristol bus and coach station, City centre, Hotwells, Long Ashton, Backwell, Congresbury, Worle interchange, Weston Super Mare bus and coach station,

X4 Bristol bus and coach station, Bristol city centre, Ashton Gate pill and Portishead,

X7 Bristol bus and coach station to Clevedon

X6 Bristol bus and coach station to Nalisea,

X8 Bristol bus and coach station city centre

X7 Bristol bus and coach station, city centre Hotwells to Clevedon,

X9 Bristol bus and coach station city centre Hotwells Ashton Gate ,long Ashton Nalisea,

X5 Portishead, Clevedon, Yatton station congersbury worle interchange, weston super mare bus and coach station.

126 Weston super mare bus and coach station, weston Railway station, Weston super mare Hospital, Hutton, Banwell,
Winscombe, Axbridge, Cheddar, Westbury sub Mendip Draycott, Easton weston sub Mendip Wells bus and coach station,
X10 Cribbs causeway bus station to Portishead and clevedon,
Weston super mare Town service 9

All the theses bus services and and westlink Demand responsive bus services are funded by the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council, The Birthday card fares scheme, and care levers scheme,

But the Bus service improvement plan has left many communities with bus service
Service 23 Bristol city centre Southville, Bedminster, Bristol city centre Bristol Bus and coach station ,

Bristol city centre 5 25 47 st Paul, st werburges Eastville park Stapleton Broomhill Fishponds oidbury court Downend Bromley Heath ,

Cribbs causeway bus station Westbury on Trym, Down, Clifton Down station park street, Bristol city centre, Bristol cabot circus, Bristol Temple meads station Arnos vale, re routed via st Anne's park Brislington Hungerford road school Road Bristlington loop ,

The reinstatement of public transport Network,
In Bath and North East Somerset council area
414 ,424 Frome Cork Street coach station Mells Radstock Westfield midsomer Norton and onto Paulton,

Service 522 Bristol bus and coach station to Bristol bus and coach station, Arnos vale, Bristlington keynsham marksbury, Timsbury Paulton, midsomer Norton, operating via Tunley to Bath spa bus and coach station.

Service 672 Cheddar, Blagdon Chew valley south Bristol, Bristol city centre,
52 Bishopsworth Hengrove South Bristol Hospital Bedminster city centre,
We to look at this route,

In North Bristol the important bus services are,
Service 10 11 Shirehampton or
Avonmouth Dock, Lawrence weston Westbury on Trym, Southmead hospital bus station uwe bus station, Bristol parkway station, Bradley stoke Aztec west Hortham Alverston,
Thornbury
622
Cribbs causeway bus station to Olverton Alverston Thornbury Tytherington and yate bus and coach station via Bristol zoo

84 ,85 yate Park and ride Yate Railway station,

With the need for the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council to
Resubmit the bus service improvement plan by 12 th June 2024
For the funding allocation 20 24 2025
Shoing clear improvements in the Network and passengers growth on the buses,
More frequent bus and coach services on Key corridor s
Interchange with Railway services and stations Express coaches, Ferries and especially
Demand responsive bus services,
Improvement in Interchange facilities
Bus shelter lighting cctv cameras,
Tagging and Graffiti removal,
More bus priority measures,
Accessible bus stops for disabled passengers and people with reduced mobility,
Cleaning standards on bus and coaches,
Zebra funding scheme in Greater Bristol and weston super mare Somerset,
Bus stop infrastructure maintenance is abig issues in Bristol city council, South
Gloucestershire county council, Banes
With shelters graffiti tagged lighting not working crating community safety problems and in
some cases out of date Timetable or wrong service information,
We need all bus and public Transport infrastructure transferred to the west of England
mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council public transport unit.
Similar to Greater Manchester combined transport Authority mayor Andy Burnham, Liverpool
City Region mayor Steve Rotherham, west Midlands combined Transport Authority mayor
Andy,

How the supported bus network is fully intergrated with the mainline bus Network coach
Network and Railway network ferry services in Bristol and Bath,
Improvement to Bus and coach stations and interchanges,
Consultant with Bus services advory panes ,Advisory boards
and especially passengers groups,
Like those in South Bristol, Ashton vale
Oidbury court Fishponds Stapleton,
Somerset Valley, Paulton Thornbury, Chew valley,
North Bristol, South Gloucestershire villages and Wotton under Edge,
North Somerset council area ,Clevedon, Portishead, Clevedon weston super mare, and
Rural area s

Joining the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset
council bus service improvement plan, with the rest of the county of Somerset and Somerset
unity council bus service improvement plan,
And the rest of Gloucestershire bus service improvement plan
Wiltshire and Swindon Council plan,

On staff we need to identify the shortage of bus and coach drivers
Cleaners and Engineers to maintain the bus network,
In our case that First Group plc Wales and West buses Depot at Bristol Lawrence hill, Bristol
Hengrove, Bath spa Western Island Wells Bus Depot
in Somerset,
Are used with the bus and coach station as a Depot
But Somerset council is proposing to switch off lighting and cctv facilities
In this 18 hours aday bus and coach station this need urgent discussion with Somerset
council,
And Depot facilities in the bus station for First Group plc Wales and West buses Division,
Weston super mare bus Depot Somerset,

Stagecoach west bus Depots at Bristol Patchway and Stroud,
Big lemon buses Depot at parson Street station Bristol,
Favesaver buses in Chippenham Wiltshire,
Euro coaches in yate Gloucestershire
Applegate coaches Berkley ,Gloucestershire,
Transpora buses Bristol,

So their alot of work to do by 12th June 2024 ,

West of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council
Transport levy ,
This has to be paid under the west of England mayoral combined Authority act ,
By Bristol city council, Banes and South Gloucestershire county council plus North Somerset
council for cross boundary bus and coach services.
Bus stop infrastructure bus and coach station Railway interchange and station
And public transport staff all need transferring to the west of England mayoral combined
transport Authority
And North Somerset council as full Authority member with the local Enterprise partnership,

Both Bristol city council and Bath and North East Somerset council have clean air zone
money,
Bristol has raised £26 million pounds
And cleaned up the air quality by 9%
In the central air ,
Reducing the amount of asthma attacks respiratory illness and Early Deaths this is a public
health measure not a transport funding scheme or allocation to replace the west of England
mayoral combined Authority act Transport levy

But we need to do more to improve bus
services in the poorest communities in the Greater Bristol and Bath city region and services
into North Somerset council area ,North Somerset East Somerset and South
Gloucestershire county council area ,and services into Somerset council Gloucestershire
County council and Wiltshire Council
Transport Authority area,

At present the Westlink Demand responsive bus services do appear to target middle Class
and upper class
Passengers in the countryside on apps
Journeys to Bristol city centre and Bath city centre,
When some of passengers could transfer to main line bus and railway services, when
working Class estates and communities have no public bus services in parts of Bristol, South
Gloucestershire county council and Banes in Paulton midsomer Norton Radstock Westfield
Timsbury Tunley and villages with rural isolation,

railway services on the metro west railway Network,
Walk and cycling as opposed to taking the car in to central Bristol area
But Bristol city council want to use £10 of the clean air zone money to pay the Transport levy
rather than collecting the money through Bristol city council taxation,
Bath and North East Somerset council have £ 7 million pounds of clean air zone money,
In both case this money should be being spent on Bus services improvement and public
transport Network service, with the Transport levy,
Other income streams for Public transport including car park policy in South Gloucestershire
county council area of charging for Car parking,
In Kingwood Town centre, Thornbury yate ,

In Bristol at local shopping centre in Brislington, west on Trym and other Town centres, Radstock and Midsomer Norton in Bath and North East Somerset council area
To seek public transport bus services and community transport services funding from Town and parish councils
Like Somerset council and Gloucestershire County council

On light rail system We need to make progress on a mass transit light system for the Greater Bristol and Bath city region,

On Metro west Railway Network and the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council bus service improvement plan.

The Departments for Transport and levelling up have agreed funding via the West of England mayoral combined transport Authority and mayor Dan Norris in partnership with councillors Mike Bell and Catherine Gibson leaders of North Somerset council and councillor Hannah Young transport executive North Somerset council
And Bristol city council, South Gloucestershire county council and Bath and North East council as Highway Authority's
Western Gateway Transport Board chair councillors Don Alexander, Bristol.
Their no provision for for the Wessex combined Authority or its area in Dorset Council Bournemouth Poole and Christchurch, Wiltshire Somerset council and North Somerset council
Agreed or proposed by UK government,
Or supported,

Metro west railway Network

Senior Officers

On railway metro west railway.

We welcome the business case for Reopening the Bristol Temple meads station to Pill and Portishead line

Being submitted to the Department for transport funding,

We need to make progress on planning permission for Henbury railway station for Cribbs Causeway shopping centre and Bristol zoo,

And pedestrian facilities access to Henbury,

And the Train services Henbury for Cribbs Causeway and Bristol zoo, Filton North for the Arena Filton Abbey Wood Ashley Down, Bristol Stapleton Road Bristol Lawrence Hill, Bristol Temple meads station train services

And Bristol Stapleton Road Bristol Lawrence Hill Station to be fully accessible,

On the Metro West Railway Network services we need more local Train unit 165, 166, 158 on Bristol Temple meads station, Filton Abbey Wood station, Bristol Parkway station, Yate, Charfield new station Cam and the Dursley proposed station Stonehouse Bristol Road Gloucester central, Cheltenham Spa Ashchurch for Tewkesbury Worcester Shrub Hill and Worcester Forge Street,

As using Inter City Express trains prevent wheelchair accessible to the trains wheelchair space if disabled space First Class coach is off the platform at Yate, Cam and Dursley and Ashchurch for Tewkesbury stations

Wheelchair and partly sighted passengers area put in the wrong part of Transport until Bristol Parkway, Gloucester central Cheltenham Spa or Worcester Shrub Hill where passengers can transfer,

This issue needs urgent discussion with the Department for Transport and First Group plc Great Western Railway company limited who run Metro West Railway Network for £35 millions pounds from the West of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council,

Of Train set suitable for Region Metro West Railway services.

On Bristol Temple meads station to Clifton Down station and seven Beach line
Bristol Temple meads station To weston super mare and Taunton,
Bristol Temple meads station To Bath spa and services to Westbury Salisbury and Frome,
Calling at local stations

The following local station do not have tickets machines Bristol Stapleton Road, sea Mills,
Shirehampton, Avonmouth Dock St Andrews Road seven Beach, Patchway and Pilning,
And disabled access is required at
Parson street, Nalisea and Backwell,
Weston super mare lifts Cheltenham spa lifts Pilning, Bristol Lawrence hill and Bristol
Stapleton Road,

On service frequency we would welcome extra trains services on the
Taunton, Bridgwater Highbridge and Burnham on sea station,weston super mare, Weston
million, Worle parkway Yatton for clevedon Nalisea and Backwell, parson Street Bristol
Temple meads station, Bristol Lawrence hill Bristol Stapleton Road, montpellier, Redland,
Clifton Down, sea Mills Shirehampton,Portway park and ride,
Avonmouth Dock, St Andrews Road seven Beach,
2 or 3 an hour an hour

The Henbury loop line should be a top priority with the new Developments in North Bristol at
Southmead, Henbury Patchway cribbs causeway new neighbourhood. 2 or 3 Trains an hour

The Henbury loop line need to run from Avonmouth Dock St Andrews Road Henbury for
cribbs causeway and Bristol zoo, Filton North platform for the area Filton Abbey wood
station, Horfield, / lockleaze, Ashley Down, Bristol Stapleton road, Bristol Lawrence hill and
Bristol Temple meads station,

The seven Beach line Trains could operate via the Henbury loop
With light rail People mover between Avonmouth, st Andrews Road and Severn Beach,

We welcome the study on New stations
Horfield, lockleaze, st Anne's park, saltford, and Ashton Gate,
Other station should be looked at Corsham Wiltshire with Wiltshire Council and and
Stonehouse Bristol Road in Gloucestershire and with the western Gateway Transport Board,
Who are responsible for Regional Transport policy with the peninsula Transport Board
covering Somerset and Devon and Cornwall,

We support the Transport for Wales

Welsh government proposals

For New railway service and stations at Cardiff Central, Cardiff Parkway Newport west
Newport Somerton Llanwern Magor and Undy Seven Tunnel junction, Pilning, Patchway,
Filton Abbey wood station, Bristol Stapleton road Bristol Lawrence hill Bristol Temple meads
station.

But believe Pilning should be developed as a Parkway station in theses proposals for
sevenside and Bristol Stapleton Road and Bristol Lawrence hill should be made fully
accessible,

On Bristol Temple meads station Temple Quarter we need the mayor Dan Norris and
Network rail, Home England, Bristol city council and West of England mayoral combined
transport Authority Western Gateway Transport Board to set up community forum with
bussiness community and public transport Network companies, First Group plc Great
Western Railway company and First Group plc Wales and West buses, inter city cross

country train Arriva 1sq, capital, stagecoach west buses British Transport police Network rail Western and Developers,
Temple Quarter/ Temple meads station Developments need a community engagement forum of local people bussiness community groups residents and public transport companies,
West of England mayoral combined transport Authority, and North Somerset council and Network Rail Western route, Homes England and Bristol city council,
Weston Gateway Transport Board,

Senior Officers need to look at these issues.
Kind regards David Redgewell,
South west transport Network
Railfuture Severnside,
Bristol disability equalities forum

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Statement 14

From Ian Beckey

We are very concerned about the need To make urgent progress on metro west Railway Network services and the Bristol Temple meads station To Lawrence hill Bristol Stapleton Road Ashley Down station.Filton Abbey wood station Filton North for the area and Henbury for cribs causeway and Bristol zoo

With the planning application for Henbury railway station.

Urgent progress is required on this station.

we like the following railway issues progressed

Bristol Temple meads station to Portishead and Pill Railway line

With North Somerset council Department for transport, Network Rail Western route and First Group plc Great Western Railway company

Including reopening Ashton Gate station in the future,

Horfield /lockleaze St Anne's Park ,salford and Stonehouse Bristol Road

With Gloucestershire county council

And Corsham with Wiltshire Council

And western Gateway Transport Board.

Bristol Temple meads station to Bristol Lawrence hill, Bristol Stapleton road Ashley Down, Filton Abbey wood, Filton North for the Arena ,Henbury for cribs causeway and Bristol zoo, Including more Train loop

And Bristol Temple meads station

Bristol Lawrence hill, Bristol Stapleton road, montpellier, Redland Clifton Down station, Sea Mills Shirehampton Portway park and ride, Avonmouth Dock St Andrews Road,Severn Beach,

and Charfield station on the Bristol Temple meads station to Gloucester central and Worcester Forgate Street Line,

With the Bristol Temple meads station, Filton Abbey wood, Bristol parkway station, Yate, Charfield new station Cam and the Dursley proposed station stonehouse Bristol Road Gloucester central, Cheltenham spa Ashchurch for Tewkesbury Worcester Shrub Hill and Worcester Forgate Street,

On the £35 million pounds metro west railway Network, operated by First group plc Great Western Railway company

On this route instead of providing trains designed for the metro west railway Network 165 166 or 158 units

First Group plc Great Western Railway company is operating Inter city Express trains 5 car units designed for the Intercity train Network where if the train is the wrong way round first class end can not platform at Yate ,cam and Dursley and Ashchurch for Tewkesbury station, So wheelchair users and passengers with reduced mobility have to Board the train at the second Class end with an access toilets but no wheelchair accessible space

Passengers have to park in coach vestibule until the passengers can be transferred to the wheelchair space at Bristol parkway Gloucester central Cheltenham spa or Worcester Shrub Hill,

What representation are being made by the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council and mayor Dan Norris to get the Department for

transport and First group plc Great Western Railway company to provide trains designed for the metro west railway Network.

We may be able to train lease trains to Department for transport and First group plc Great Western Railway company, from Transport for Wales

The Welsh Assembly Government.

We need to understand the agreement between The Department for transport and First group plc Great Western Railway company On using I ET on metro west Railway services and Office of Road and Bristol Rail derogation

Ian Beckey living Easton

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Statement 15

From Rosa Kell

With the new bus service improvement plan requirements for the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council
Joint bus service improvement plan.

And Somerset council bus service improvement plan,

We are concerned that new plans have to submit to the Department for transport by 12th June 2024

Including bus services network plans for commercial network service as laid out below but there needs to be full understanding of levels of Bus Drivers Engineers and cleaners at Wells, Weston super Mare and Bath Somerset Depot to deliver bus service,

Will the DWP look a vacancies and fill them,

With Taunton, Minehead and Yeovil Depot in need of bus drivers, cleaners and Engineers, is First group plc South buses in Somerset,

Frome, bus company Depot Frome

Somerset able to

Provides bus service from Frome Cork Street coach station to Mells Radstock Westfield midsomer Norton

Libra Travel Frome Cork Street coach station to Coleford and midsomer Norton,

A bus service for Radstock,

Bath University to Twerton services.

Passengers safety is also a major area where issues needs addressing at Wells bus and coach station as below but also in Bristol central area and Bath

With bus stop light that do not work and Graffiti covered bus stops in Bristol city centre,

Bristol Temple meads station area old market Street Bond Street, Broadmead, College Green, Lawrence hill,

And around Bath Lower Bristol Road,.

There is a need to review of support services links to main line bus services coach services and Railway station interchanges

There is a need for review of Demand responsive bus services Westlink Demand

Responsive bus services and Slinky bus ,

For a need for Bus priority measures, passengers information, wheelchair accessible and people with reduced mobility and partly sighted passengers, better bus stops and shelters, walkways, and safe routes .

Network review and for fare and ticket schemes like the Birthday card scheme, carers scheme, £1 fare in Taunton have to finish in 2025 what provisions are being made for their continuation

We now need urgent discussion between Somerset Council North Somerset Council and

Banes to protect the Somerset bus network in the Mendip region of the Bristol and Bath

Travel to work area as part of the west of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority

and North Somerset Council Bus Service Improvement Plans

Urgent discussion on On Bus services are to take place

376 Street Glastonbury, the Wells Bus and Coach Station, Chewton Mendip Farrington

Gurney, Clutton, Pensford, Whitchurch, Hengrove, knowle, Totterdown Bristol Temple

Meads Station Bristol bus and coach station.

172 Bristol bus and coach station

Bristol Temple Meads station, Knowle Hengrove, Whitchurch, Pensford Clutton, Paulton,

Midsomer Norton, Westfield, Radstock , Peasdown St John, Bath Spa bus and coach

station.

172 ,173 ,174 Bath Spa bus and coach station to Peasdown St John, Radstock, Westfield,

Midsomer Norton, Chilcompton 173 and the Shepton Mallet 174 Interchange and Wells Bus and Coach station,

126 Wells bus and coach station to Draycott ,Cheddar, Axbridge, Winscombe, Banwell, Hutton, Weston super Mare Hospital Weston super Mare bus and coach station interchange, and the Railway station,
D2 D2 xBath Spa bus and coach station to Midford, Norton St Philips, Rode, Beckington and Frome.

522 Bristol bus and coach station, Bristol Temple Meads station Arnos vale Bristlington, Keynsham, Marksbury, Timsbury, Paulton, Midsomer Norton, Westfield, Radstock, Peasdown St John Bath spa bus and coach station
But also to rerouting this service via Midsomer Norton Tesco Timsbury, Tunley and Bath spa bus and coach station interchange,
414 ,424 Frome Cork Street coach station to Mells, Radstock, Westfield, Midsomer Norton and extend the service to Paulton to replace bus service 82,
And the provide of a bus service from Axbridge, Cheddar or Wells Bus and coach station through the Chew Valley and Blagdon through Chew Magna to South Bristol and Bristol city centre.
Including look at fixed route Westlink Demand Responsive bus services in the Chew Valley and south Bristol with Demand Responsive sections

Wells is a major Bus operating centre for the West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority and North Somerset Council bus services ,
With a first Group plc Wales and West buses Division Depot,
Providing bus service 376 to Street Glastonbury Wells Bus and Coach station to Bristol Temple Meads station, Bristol bus and coach station,
The 172, 173, 174 Wells Bus and Coach station to Shepton Mallet interchange, Chilcompton, Paulton Midsomer Norton, Westfield, Radstock, Peasdown St John, Bath Spa bus and coach, interchange

The 126 Wells Bus and Coach station to Draycott, Cheddar, Axbridge, Winscombe, Banwell, Hutton, Weston super Mare Hospital and Weston super Nare bus and coach station and Railway station
At Wells bus and coach station
And it extra bus parking station for First Depot and its facilities Somerset council is proposing to turn off the CCTV Cameras in the city of Wells and all other bus and coach stations in Somerset, including the bus and coach station and close public toilets
This station is an important interchange point for bus services to Yeovil bus and coach station
The service 77 in urgent need of larger Double Deckers buses. This bus is a major access point to Yeovil Hospital from the Wells
Service 75 Wells bus and coach station to Bridgewater Hospital and Bridgwater bus and coach station
Service 29 Wells bus and coach station to Taunton giving access to Musgrove Hospital
But with the cctv cameras being switched off and lighting too how will staff at the interchange and passengers travelling in the Evening and day time to Bristol Bath and Weston super Mare be kept safe
What will be the effects on buses stored in the bus and coach station overnight
Without CCTV to prevent vandalism and tagging ?
What discussions have the West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority and Mayor Dan Norris North Somerset Council had with Somerset Council Transport Department and Councillor Richard Wilkins Executive Member for Transport and Chief Constable Sarah Crew and Police and Police Crime Commissioner Mark Shelford, and Doug Claringbold MD of First group plc Wales and West buses Division and Thomas Hughes of First Group plc Wales and West Buses Division Area Manager for Bath and Wells bus Depots and Bus and Coach Stations and City of Wells Council.

Somerset Council, North Somerset Council and West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority will need to work together for 12th June 2024 in order to meet the deadline for the Bus Service Improvement Plan submission with the Department for Transport

We are also concerned that the West of England Demand Responsive bus services are at present being used by many middle class and upper class people with access to the app to taken them into Bristol and Bath,

And not used the people without access to the app and living in the many isolated rural communities in Bath and North East Somerset and North Somerset council and Axbridge and in Sedgemoor Region

and for them to access schools college's universities work basic food shopping trips health services trips with links to local and regional bus and coach services and to local railway stations

When will this service be reviewed in line with the Western Traffic Commissioner Kevin Rooney instructions to reduce the size of the zones

And Connect with Bus coach and railway services,

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Statement 16

From Christina Biggs

Subject: Mass transit as Tram-Trains

The Bristol Rail Campaign welcome the transport proposals being presented today, and support all the recommendations, especially on a 20-minute frequency, and for new stations, where we recommend opening all four stations proposed (Saltford, St Anne's Park, Ashton Gate and Lockleaze); electrification (between Temple Meads and Parkway and between Temple Meads and Chippenham), progressing MetroWest Portishead, and ZEBRA 2 electric buses. We also recognise the need for electric cars, but advise a focus on car-free measures within cities and towns.

Our proposal today focuses on the mass transit plan, which we consider would be best delivered by tram-trains, as an extension of the already-successful MetroWest suburban and regional services.

Background

The Joint Local Transport Plan (JLTP4), published in 2020, identified four mass transit corridors radiating from Bristol City Centre: the North and East Fringes, Bristol Airport, and Bristol to Bath. JLTP4 recognised that it would be difficult to find space above ground for some of these routes. It proposed that underground running may be necessary in some cases. This has become a very contentious issue, with senior local politicians clearly at odds over whether this could ever be delivered. The recent Future4West report appears to suggest a very low benefit–cost ratio for tunnelled sections. However, this study has not properly considered all the costs involved in surface options to provide a true comparison. It also appears that Network Rail were not consulted about options or plans to increase the capacity of suburban rail lines. As noted above, the Combined Authority have now launched a study into potentially increased frequency on the Severn Beach and Henbury lines, which we feel could be extended to a cross-city service to south Bristol stations

The Combined Authority's studies continue to be 'mode-agnostic' and estimate that a 'rubber- wheeled' solution would be about 20% less expensive than light rail. But we should be under no illusions about what a rubber-wheeled solution means. At best it would be a gadgetbahn, using incompatible, unusual or untried technology. At worst it would be a bus. Either way it will emit rubber particulates. Extending MetroBus may be a useful way to tide us over until a light rail system can be delivered, but it cannot be transformative. It should only be seen as a stopgap.

Can we really deliver a light rail mass transit system?

Since the 1970s, Bristol has recognised the need for light rail mass transit. But it has failed to deliver it. Local politics have certainly got in the way, but other problems such as Bristol's geography and narrow arterial roads have also made it hard to find a viable solution.

So is there a way forward? We think so.

Tram-trains

A tram-train is a vehicle which runs on the existing rail network alongside main line passenger and freight services, but can also run on the street. Unlike conventional trains, they can go round tight corners and up steep hills. This means suburban rail services can be extended at a lower cost.

Battery-electric tram trains will soon be introduced in Cardiff, following successful implementation in other cities. Initially they will run on the existing rail network, but later street running will be introduced so that they can serve the Cardiff Bay area.

Build on what we already have

Tram-trains could allow us to build on the success of MetroWest rail services. We believe that a

mass transit system which can be extended incrementally, using known technology, is much more likely to be deliverable than one which relies on novel or untested systems.

Start at Temple Meads

A tram-train system could serve Bristol Temple Meads Station directly. The topology of Temple Meads makes it very difficult to access using road-based transport. Vehicles either stop on Temple Gate, a minimum 250m walk from the platforms, or potentially take a 300m detour into Friary – still leaving passengers 200m from the platforms.

Tram-trains could connect to the existing rail network at Bristol Temple Meads Station adjacent to Platform 1, giving direct interchange with other train services. The JLTP4 routes to Bath and Bristol Airport could connect to the existing rail lines at Avonmeads, using a disused railway route as far as Callington Road. Other JLTP4 routes could also make some use of existing rail corridors. Ditch the diesels New tram-trains could replace the unsuited and dirty diesel trains currently used for MetroWest services. This could act as a catalyst for electrifying these services, and could be done ahead of the JLTP4 routes. These vehicles use tried and tested zero-emission propulsion. And their batteries allow tram-trains to operate in areas where providing overhead wiring is difficult.

Experience elsewhere suggests that once a tram system is built and seen to work, it becomes easier to make a case for extending it. We CAN do this!

Christina Biggs, Bristol Rail Campaign (new name for FoSBR)

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Statement 17

From Anna Fry

I am writing this statement in response to the proposed closure of Talbot Road in Knowle as part of the A4 corridor project.

We have conducted an online survey and listened to the concerns of a large number of Knowle residents on the doorstep. Many of these residents have serious concerns about the impact of the closure on neighbouring roads including an increase in traffic volume, congestion and damage to road surfaces.

We have also heard the very valid concerns from some residents of Talbot Road, who understand the concerns of the wider community, but who are deeply concerned about the sustainability of the current volume of traffic on the road and the frequent occurrence of dangerous driving practices despite the current measures in place.

Whilst we are inclined to object to the absolute closure due to the wide-reaching negative impact it will have, we hope you will seriously consider alternative measures to improve the situation on Talbot Road.

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Statement 18

From Cllr Tim Rippington

I am pleased to see that a station at St Anne's Park in my ward is included in the list of planned new stations to be investigated under the Transport Infrastructure item on the agenda today. It is now 3 years since MP for Bristol East, Kerry McCarthy, and myself submitted a bid to the government's restoring your railways programme to investigate the possibility of re-opening opening St Anne's Park. It is two years since a Strategic Outline Business Case, prepared jointly with help from WECA, BCC and Network Rail, was submitted to the government. Since then, we have heard absolutely nothing.

In the meantime, the dire public transport situation for St Anne's and other parts of Brislington which was highlighted in the report has deteriorated rather than improved. So, whilst the re-opening of the railway station would be very welcome in the long term, I also urge WECA to take action now to improve the current situation.

There are two good proposals on the table to utilise BSIP funding to improve the local bus services to these areas. The extension of the 36 bus back along its original route to Hungerford Road and Tesco Brislington is one. The other is the introduction of a new 1A service between St Annes, Temple Meads and the City Centre. St Anne's is on a direct route to Temple Meads along the Feeder Road, yet there is currently no public transport link between the two. So, this latter service would put that right and make a huge difference to local residents, many of whom currently have to rely on their car to get around because of the lack of alternatives.

So yes, please look again at St Anne's station – it would be a vital part of a revitalised suburban rail network for Bristol in the decades to come. But right now, please give us the buses we need so that people who don't have cars or don't want to use them for the sake of the planet can have a viable alternative.

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Statement 19

From Jackie Head

As you will know I am a member of the Chew Valley Sustainable Transport Group whose key focus is to work collaboratively with B&NES & WECA and with local people in the Chew Valley to identify areas of public transport need and lobby for improvements to public transport systems in order to effect a transition from cars to public transport.

No-one can deny that the WESTlink service has had a difficult start, with about 80% of the complaints that we are aware of relating to the difficulty in getting a WESTlink when the ride is needed. Our Early Adopters group: over 40 people who agreed to 'stress test' the system, showed that of their first 100 journey attempts only 62% were successful. It is still the case that people cannot rely on the service, especially when there are last minute cancellations, which have happened too often.

However, I wanted to thank the team managing the WESTlink contract under Avril England, for their clear attempt to raise the standard and willingness to make use of the evidence based feedback we have given them to inform the 3 month review and hopefully the imminent 6 month review.

So I am partly here to say thank you.

First of all I am delighted to hear that the WESTlink service will now be funded for a further year until 2026. I feel this gives it a realistic chance to bed in and gives the combined authority an opportunity to find various ways to nudge behaviour towards using the service.

Secondly, I am delighted to hear that the number of drivers has risen, (still a way to go) and that the driver recruitment programme is continuing with vigour.

Thirdly the latest upgrade to the app is a significant improvement on the initial version, with many of the common irritations we reported on being ironed out.

I am delighted to say, for the first time, that I am travelling to and from this meeting (and indeed to any democratic meeting), from my village in the Chew Valley via WESTlink. This is the 4th day this week that I have taken a WESTlink bus and each time in terms of booking, notification and delivery it has done pretty-much exactly what it said on the tin.

So far, so brilliant.

I do however have 4 concerns to flag:

1. We gather from the scrutiny committee this week that discussions are happening about potentially reducing the zone sizes and journey times to 20 minutes to connect people to spinal routes. I can see the logic in this but would caution WECA to not go about this without consulting with local people. For instance, today's journey here for me is scheduled as about 45 minutes, cross country. From my village the only option of a link to spinal routes would take me into Bristol and out again, a 2 hour 15 minute journey: that's 1 hour 40 minutes on x 2 fixed route buses plus the 30 minutes I

would have to allow for the WESTlink connection and the 20 minute window variation. And triple the cost. Most people who could would get in the car.

Can you please ensure when drawing up zones with 20 minute drives, that you consider the normal travel habits of present bus users? The WESTlink system can give you this data and it wouldn't be hard to then identify what the alternative public transport routes would be.

Can you also consider the idea of *exceptional* trips outside of a zone if the price or the time of public transport alternative triples?

This could perhaps be considered for key journeys such as commuting, medical appointments and democratic meetings.

2. Secondly, our group wrote to you and WECA officers on 25th August proposing that you consider again the idea of a spinal fixed route within the Chew Valley which could provide regular timetabled journeys for commuters, those attending hospital, school and University in Bristol. We have not received any acknowledgement of its receipt let alone a response. Please can you state publicly in this meeting, as you promised you would at your recent bus meeting in Bishops Sutton, that you are seriously considering funding a fixed route such as this, so enable more efficient public transport to Bristol and achieve the necessary modal shift from cars to buses? Don't go back to the fixed routes we had...give us a better one.

I am attaching our report about this route here for reference.

3. Thirdly, can you reassure us that you have now come up with a metric which allows you to quantify the social benefit and the carbon benefit of **any** route put out to tender, so that the true cost/benefit analysis of rural buses can be understood, rather than just being assessed on a cost of delivery benefit basis, under which metric rural areas will always lose out.
4. Fourthly during the recent Big Choices consultation in the Chew valley, despite there being 4 officers in the room, no official and transparent note taking process was in place despite this being specifically asked for. Please can future consultations like this have this baseline in place so that local people can be reassured that their voices have been heard and their points reflected on. Can I also suggest that such events in the future are also always co-planned with local communities to avoid the situation this time of not being able to access the building, tables not being set up, not having brought sufficient cards for the card sorting process and not having basic refreshments in place. All of which were in place when we co ran the event the year before.

As always we stand as critical friends, sharing your vision of transforming public transport to enable more people to make the transition from car to bus. This is not a luxury but a necessity if we are to meet our climate change commitments.

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Statement 20

From Barbara Lawrence

I am part of the Save the 84/5 WUE to Yate bus service campaign. I wish to put forward an argument to support continued subsidised funding of the 32 mile round trip route, serving 11 communities in Gloucestershire and South Gloucestershire

This well used service is used by workers, students, GP and Hospital appointments and it provides opportunity for affordable shopping, recreational use and connects to national road and rail links.

Nursing homes in both GCC and SGC employ healthcare workers who are dependent on this service and the route includes Leyhill prison and Tortworth Court.

There is no alternative bus service if the 84/5 is removed.

DRT such as WESTlink have been shown elsewhere to be disproportionately costly. We are also hearing testimony that the nature of their dynamic/changing routes and app based interface makes them less accessible for some of our community when compared to a timetabled, predictable pay as you travel service

DRT will not provide people with an arrive by time that is crucial for many passengers and the significant evidence we provided to WECA in March 2023 supports our argument for Subsidised Funding of the 84/5 bus service.

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Statement 21

From Cllr Dr Eleanor Jackson

The plight of bus passengers with no alternative means of transport has been a theme in Radstock and Westfield since 2014, ie before WECA was even born. In some ways the bus service has improved, with cleaner, green buses, though the use of airport buses on occasion can mean a very crowded ride. Meanwhile the rural services and suburban 'hoppers' are fast disappearing. Keynsham is a scandal. I cannot cycle there. But there is only one bus, the airport bus, an hour, and precious few trains. The bus shelter at the Memorial Park is a disgrace, not to mention all the heavily used stops like Westfield Primary School raised curb and flag sign in a hedge. The petition submitted to Bath & North East Somerset Council in March 2023 sums up the issues:

We, the undersigned residents of Bath and North East Somerset and/or regular users of the supported bus services from neighbouring villages in Somerset, petition the authority to reconsider the decision to withdraw the subsidy for the 82 Tynning, Radstock-Paulton via Westfield and Paulton Hospital service and find means of funding it, and to restore the 42 Odd Down to the RUH.

Because

- **The elderly, disabled and those on low incomes are disproportionately affected, and have no alternatives so will be condemned to loneliness and isolation.**
- **School children will not be able to travel independently to Midsomer Norton secondary schools**
- **Waiting for the no 4 (RUH) often means ill people standing for 20-30 minutes due to jams in Weston**
- **NE Somerset residents are being discriminated against**
- **There is a climate emergency. Using public transport reduces B&NES carbon footprint. (800+ signatories)**

There was talk at the Scrutiny panel on Monday of how to increase bus use. Radstock today is a total jam because of emergency roadworks. It was gridlock yesterday and the bus timetable irrelevant. Until buses, like the 522 are punctual and pleasant (the Bristol drivers are great), people will not use them. I spent Christmas in Salamanca, Spain, and nearly wept at the wonderful bus service. But it is also a Roman fortress with planning constraints like Bath

There is really not much point in having government levelling up money if there is no public transport to reach high streets, to have a SVEZ with bus stops but no bus passing the doorstep and housing developments unable to move forward because they are 'unsustainable' in terms of planning legislation.

Mrs Harrington has invited the mayor four times to tea and dog biscuits. She and her neighbours on the Westfield Waterside to come and view the problem, marooned as they are on the Somerset border, and Margaret and her husband from the old 1950s council housing estate presented their arguments to Dan at the Bishop Sutton consultation.

The advantage to speaking today is that I have heard members of the scrutiny panel picking up on the wider context of the effect of bus cuts on people's mental health, social isolation and crime. In fact the police commissioner took the last 82 bus through Westfield. Westfield

is a microcosm of many areas in WECA where a high proportion of residents are on universal credit, in social housing, are carers and health workers..

In short, please use your imagination. One parish council is going to run its own bus service. Most can't, for lack of volunteers and resources. Some retailers, like Tesco, once made contributions and probably would again, to get the grey pound and the young people. You could re-organise the transport precept, and as members of Westfield's parish council environment and development committee asked me to say to you, get our carbon footprint down by running a better bus service.

My comment is that you get that Westlink bus on the road out of Radstock library car park

Note, the 82 was a subsidised service from Tynning, Radstock, to Paulton. . The 414, Midsomer Norton/ Frome which I use frequently to get to my allotment, is subsidised by Somerset Council, and should, like the 94 bus into Trowbridge, or the 184, ditto, be subsidized by WECA or BANES.

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Statement 22

From Janet Young

The 84 and 85, Wotton to Yate bus service connects 11 communities on the 32 mile round trip. It is used by workers, students, patients, tourists, shoppers. It provides opportunity for affordable shopping, education, employment, access to health services, and connects into national road and rail links.

There is no alternative bus service if the 84/85 is removed.

DRT such as WESTlink have been shown elsewhere to be disproportionately costly. We are also hearing testimony that the nature of their dynamic/changing routes and app based interface makes them less accessible for some of our community when compared to a timetabled, predictable, pay as you travel service.

DRT will not provide people with an arrive by time that is crucial for many passengers. The significant evidence we provided to WECA in March 2023 supports our argument for Subsidised Funding of the 84/5 bus service.

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Statement 23

From Nigel & Chris

The 84 and 85, Wotton to Yate bus service connects 11 communities on the 32 mile round trip. It is used by workers, students, patients, tourists, shoppers. It provides opportunity for affordable shopping, education, employment, access to health services, and connects into national road and rail links.

There is no alternative bus service if the 84/85 is removed.

This service has already been reduced to 1 bus from 2, and should be reinstated as it used to be.

DRT such as WESTlink have been shown elsewhere to be disproportionately costly. We are also hearing testimony that the nature of their dynamic/changing routes and app based interface makes them less accessible for some of our community when compared to a timetabled, predictable, pay as you travel service

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Statement 24

From Francis McGarry

We have been working with our partners for the last five years, to drive forward the regeneration of Bristol's Temple Quarter. As a result, together, we have successfully secured significant grant funding for investment into the station and local area. We are delighted that the Eastern Entrance is now under construction and will support the new University of Bristol campus and wider developments coming forward to the east of the station.

We are working with partners on proposals for improved northern and southern entrances which, alongside our ongoing renovations and planned retail improvements, will give passengers a much better experience at the station. The joint delivery vehicle will crystallise the partnership, enabling the partners to act as one voice in driving forward the aspirations for further investment into Temple Quarter, to support social inclusion and economic growth in the West of England region.

Francis McGarry, Investment Director, Network Rail

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