

Questions and Answers Overview & Scrutiny  
March 11<sup>th</sup> 2024

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## Questions and Answers – Overview & Scrutiny Committee- 11 March 2024

### Question 1 from Mr David Redgewell

What progress is being made on the new zones for the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council, Westlink bus services so they connect with the city Region bus and railway station network on 20 minutes zone as instructed by the western Traffic Commissioner Kevin Rooney ,

So the Ezeec medical services drivers stay within UK law.

At present passengers are allowed to travel on these buses for miles often when a service bus or train is available and are being used to not passengers travelling to school College work hospital or basic food shopping.

But as a Taxis services for many middle class people because the Zones allow long distance travel and not travel to interchanges like Southmead hospital bus station, or cribbs causeway bus station, Filton Abbey wood station, Patchway station, Bristlington park and ride, long Ashton park and ride, or Portway park and ride interchange, Or Bristol Temple meads station,

The Dings, Easton, Eastville Stapleton,

At more than £10 per passenger,

When is passengers consultation being carried out, or the plans not to change the Zones as the contract runs out in 18 months.

### Answer to question 1:

**Zone changes for WESTlink are coming into effect on 8 April 2024**

### Question 2 from Mr David Redgewell

As a passengers member of west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council bus service improvement plan, panel,

The last panel meetings finished 25 mins early,

Without consensus from the elected councillors about the role of working parties and the officers lead approach

Councillor Hannah young transport executive North Somerset council lab did not like this approach

To which I understand the 4 transport executive member are un happy with

Including the councillor in charge of Transport at North Somerset council, Banes, south Gloucestershire and North Somerset councils

But at this meeting that finished 25 mins early

It would appear that bus operators had registered new service with the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority in it Traffic commissioner registration role, from the 8th April 2024

Unlike the Somerset bus Advisory board,

The service charge on many bus service improvement plan routes were not announced to panel or presented by First group plc Wales and West buses Division, stagecoach west or Big lemon buses or Transpora buses,

For discussion by passengers and stakeholders as many service run in to Somerset Council Transport Authority

Had been fully discussed with passengers group with west of England mayoral combined transport Authority officers present

are such as the new 375 Bristol bus and coach station to Bristol Temple meads station, Totterdown, Knowle Hengrove Whitchurch Pensford clutton ,Farrington Gurney ,Chewton Mendip Wells bus and coach station, Glastonbury and street and Bridgwater Railway station bus and coach station

Service 374 Bristol bus and coach station to Bristol Temple meads station Totterdown, Knowle Hengrove Whitchurch Pensford Clutton Farrington Gurney Chewton Mendip Wells bus and coach station, Glastonbury and street and Taunton Town Centre,

As their were new services which could have had amended route such as the 5 Clifton, to Bristol city centre, Bristol cabot circus, oid market Street, Barton hill, st Anne's park Extention to Brislington Hungerford road and Knowle,

First Group plc Wales and West buses Division,

Or 77 Henleaze, to Clifton Down station park street, Bristol city centre, Bristol Gloucester Road montpellier railway station approach,and. Horfield looped to Southmead hospital bus station,

First Group plc Wales and West buses Division

On 47 Downend, oidbury court Fishponds Stapleton road, Stapleton road Station Eastville Easton and oid market Street Bristol cabot circus Bristol city centre,

Operator via Bromhill and Stapleton village Eastville park m32 Bristol city centre ,  
First Group plc Wales and West buses

Or services 25 Bristol city centre st Paul, st werburgess, Eastville Stapleton, Broomhill Fishponds Oidbury court, Downend,

By Transpora buses

Which are area of city region without bus services,

Certainly the bus service to Ashton vale estate are to be welcomed both by Transpora buses and First group plc Wales and West buses Division.

On service 23 Ashton vale estate to the city centre via Southville and Bedminster, 41 kingwood to Avonmouth sevenside

Via st George, Lawrence hill Station, Broadmead city centre Harbourside, Hotwells, sea Mills Shirehampton Avonmouth

To be welcomed,

Service 24 Ashton vale estate ,Southville Bedminster Bristol city centre Bristol cabot circus, Oid market Street, Stapleton road Station, Eastville lockleaze Southmead hospital bus station,

And the west local route Bristol to the Chew valley,

Bath odd Down Park and Ride to Tunley Timsbury Paulton ,midsomer Norton Westfield Radstock,

But why was their no discussions with panel members and presentations bus operators of the proposed changes

As per the secretary of state for Transport, Mark Harper mp instruction to Transport Authority's

What action is being taken to make sure theirs is passengers and stakeholders

Consultants at the panel on service change similar to Somerset Council, Dorset Council and Gloucestershire County council or Wiltshire Council,

Can this please change at the next panel meeting, as over £11 million pounds of Taxpayers money is being spent by the west of England mayoral combined transport

Authority and North Somerset council on bus services improvement plan support services,  
Through the bus service improvement plan,  
I understand their was also not consensus on issue on the bus service Advisory Board either on ways forward  
We must improve passenger and stakeholder input as public transport effects people ability to work good to school College university health provision hospital basic food shopping and leisure and Tourism access ,

**Answer to question 2:**

**At the 21 February Enhanced Partnership Board – the following changes were approved with the aim of improving visibility and awareness of service changes:**

- 1. A requirement on operators to consult on major service changes (including rerouting to or cancellation of routes; significant reduction of service frequency; and timetable changes affecting schools, colleges, universities) with notification of the proposals shared with the EP advisory panel.**
- 2. That bus operators will publish service changes and updated timetables on their websites and social media (where in place) at least 21 days prior to the Service Change Date**

**Question 3 from Ian Beckey**

What progress is being made?  
With Bristol city council and South Gloucestershire county council Over the opening of Henbury Railway station and disabled access,  
What is the latest on the planning permission for this station and the diversity impact assessment,  
With links to Henbury

**Answer to question 3:**

**Outline design has been completed for Henbury Rail Station and the Combined Authority is currently working with Network Rail to scope out the requirements for the detailed design work, to commence later this year. The current programme is to complete the station at the end of 2026.**

**South Gloucestershire Council is currently assessing the planning application for the station. Some additional information has been requested and submitted which has resulted in an extended the determination period.**

**The station has been designed to be fully accessible to Persons of Reduced Mobility and a Diversity Impact Assessment has been undertaken in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.**

**Question 4 from Ian Beckey**

What progress is being made is being on metro west Railway Network  
And opening of Bristol Temple meads station to Bedminster, Parson street Pill Portishead and Ashton Gate, Bristol Temple meads, Bristol Lawrence hill, Bristol Stapleton road,

Ashley Down station, Filton Abbey wood, Filton North Station, and Henbury, and future link to Avonmouth Dock via Henbury loop line and New level crossing at Avonmouth.

**Answer to question 4:**

**The MetroWest rail programme is gathering significant momentum.**

**For MetroWest 1, enhanced services have been delivered on both the Severn Beach and Westbury lines from Bristol Temple Meads. Detail design is progressing for the re-opening of the Portishead Branch Line, which includes new stations at Pill and Portishead. A full business case is being prepared for submission to the Department of Transport which approval will enable construction works to commence, currently planned later this year.**

**For MetroWest 2, enhanced services have been delivered on Gloucester Line (via Yate) from Bristol Temple Meads. Rail infrastructure works progressing at pace on-site at Ashley Down Station, including the erection of the new station footbridge, to support an expected opening date later this year. The designs are progressing for planned new stations at Henbury, North Filton and Charfield.**

**Additionally, following securing funding at the West of Combined Authority Committee in January 2024 , there are various studies commencing as part of the Combined Authority's rail pipeline, such as new station study (including Ashton Gate**

**Question 5 from Rob Dixon (Chair, Bristol Rail Campaign)**

Bristol Rail Campaign (FoSBR) are concerned that it appears, from the lack of detail about any discussions or consideration of future plans in the consultants' report on mass transit, that a decision was taken against tram trains without consultation with Network Rail, GWR and other stakeholders, and therefore without consideration of the full facts.

Were Network Rail consulted about what capacity improvements would be required to enable tram train services or what capacity improvements are planned before the consultants' report into mass transit decided against tram trains?

**Answer to question 5:**

**Discussions regarding Future4West - relating to a mass transit system - took place at the October 2023 committee. Any further discussions regarding Future4West is a political decision. The proposed corridors as part of Future4West are on separate alignments to existing rail corridors. Any decision regarding development of Future4West is separate from, and does not preclude options for developing tram-train operations at a future point.**

**Question 6 from Rob Dixon (Chair, Bristol Rail Campaign)**

We welcome WECA's recent Transport Infrastructure report and the decision to take forward its recommendations.

However, in 2020 WEMCA's 10 Year Delivery Plan for Strategic Rail Investment proposed a new chord to link the Henbury Line with the Severn Beach Line at Chittingen. Although this would be a game changer in enabling services to run between Severn Beach and Yate, this is not mentioned in WEMCA's recent Transport Infrastructure report. Is this important proposal part of WEMCA's Branch line study, the Network Rail work currently being undertaken that informs that study, or has it been dropped? And if so, why?

**Answer to question 6:**

**We are currently working closely with Network Rail to develop a scope of work for the proposed branch line study and seek the necessary approvals to commence the project.**

**The branch line study will seek to identify options to improve service levels and connectivity across the Combined Authority area.**

**We anticipate that this feasibility study will help to inform our future decision-making / planning as to which enhanced services on our branch lines, and the interventions required to deliver them, should be prioritised for further development (including the Severn Beach and Henbury Lines).**

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