

Minutes of the West of England Combined Authority Committee , Friday, 28 September 2018

Members:

Mayor Tim Bowles, West of England Combined Authority
Cllr Tim Warren, Bath & North East Somerset Council
Mayor Marvin Rees, Bristol City Council
Cllr Toby Savage, South Gloucestershire Council

1	<p>EVACUATION PROCEDURE</p> <p>The Evacuation Procedure for the venue was set out and announced by the Chair.</p>
2	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced his colleagues around the table:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor Marvin Rees from Bristol City Council; • Councillor Toby Savage from South Gloucestershire Council; • Councillor Tim Warren from Bath and North East Somerset Council. <p>Apologies had been received from Professor Steve West the Chair of the Local Enterprise Partnership.</p>
3	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE LOCALISM ACTION 2011</p> <p>No declarations of interest were declared.</p>
4	<p>MINUTES</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 27 July 2018 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.</p>
5	<p>CHAIR ANNOUNCEMENTS</p> <p>The Chair informed everybody present that the meeting was being recorded and would be available the next working day and that anyone who did not wish to be filmed was asked to indicate this to the cameraman.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Bristol City Council for hosting the meeting, and shared the following news about the Combined Authority's activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Combined Authority had received excellent feedback from participants in the Future Bright project. • The West of England had been announced as part of wave two of Local Industrial Strategy development; • The Combined Authority, in partnership with the Careers and Enterprise Company had launched one of the 20 careers hubs as set out in the Government's career strategy. This would include 25 schools and colleges in the area; • The Chair reported the completion of a number of Local Growth Fund (LGF) schemes including Aztec West Roundabout and Saw Close Public Realm in Bath.
6	<p>COMMENTS FROM CHAIR OF LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP</p> <p>The Chair of the Local Enterprise Partnership, Professor Steve West, had given his apologies for the meeting.</p>
7	<p>ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC</p> <p>Six questions, as listed below, had been submitted for which written answers had been provided.</p> <p>1. David Kernick, 6/7 Bus Service;</p>

2. Dave Redgewell, Bus and Rail Services;
3. Andy Birkett, Metrowest
4. Cllr Gary Hopkins, EU Funding;
5. Cllr Dine Romero, Western Gateway Shadow Sub-national Transport Body benefits;
6. Cllr Claire Young, Regional Approach to Marketing.

The full text of the questions and replies was made available on the Authority's website following the meeting.

Nine statements had been received and members of the public who had submitted statements were invited to speak in the order in which their statements had been received, as follows:

1. Cllr Michael Bell, Petition for saving the No 10 bus;
2. David Redgewell, West of England Transport Issues;
3. David Redgewell, Bus Strategy formation;
4. Martin Garrett, Transport Update;
5. David Redgewell, Additional bus subsidy for evening and weekend services;
6. Professor Neil Sammells, Support for Talent Institutes and Skills Innovation Fund;
7. Professor Hugh Brady, Support for WECA proposal on Talent Institutes; 8. Cllr Michael Bell, Number 10 bus service from Mangotsfield to hospital;
9. Christina Biggs, Local Transport Issues;

The full text of the statements was made available on the Authority's website following the meeting.

8 PETITIONS

No petitions had been received from Members of the Committee.

9 BUSINESS PLAN - PROGRESS REPORT

The Chair introduced a report providing an update on progress in delivering the West of England Combined Authority business plan.

The report stated that the West of England Combined Authority 2018/19 business plan had been endorsed by both the West of England Combined Authority Committee and the Joint Committee at their meetings on 1 June 2018. It was proposed to bring forward quarterly updates to the Local Enterprise Partnership Board, Overview & Scrutiny Committee, the Combined Authority's Committee and the Joint Committee. This was the first quarter's update.

The Business Plan sets out the key deliverables during 2018/19 for skills, business support and infrastructure as well as the enabling corporate activities.

For each Directorate the report highlighted key achievements and detailed any significant exceptions to delivery together with any mitigating activities.

Mayor Marvin Rees stated that the importance of the document was that it was complementary to other schemes and strategies and would strengthen the local network. Mayor Tim Bowles agreed that the actions would be felt across the region including in the voluntary sector. Councillor Tim Warren stated that this would help the region become a better area to live in and was a great example of joined-up thinking and avoiding duplication.

Councillor Toby Savage agreed that it was complementary to other projects including the

strong start that had been made on Future Bright.

Agreed:

That the update on the business plan be noted.

10 SUPPORTING THE VISITOR ECONOMY

The Chair moved a report which presented an opportunity for the West of England Combined Authority to support the visitor economy in the West of England Region. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Toby Savage.

The report stated that the visitor economy was a key contributor to the West of England region. The report proposed that the Combined Authority explored the benefits of a more regional approach to marketing the area through the provision of funding for two initiatives, namely a regional tourism promotional exercise and a regional visitor economy study.

Councillor Tim Warren stated that the visitor economy is vitally important in Bath and North East Somerset, however, a gap existed with the corporate business visitors for the period Monday – Thursday. Mayor Bowles stated that there were lots of business people that could be attracted due to the excellent conference facilities available. Mayor Marvin Rees agreed that part of the reason for the attraction was the motorway links and showcasing industrial or destination offer.

Councillor Toby Savage agreed that South Gloucestershire already had lots of attractions for the weekend tourist such as Aerospace Museum, Wild Place, The Wave and it was precisely the correct time to bring forward such an initiative.

The Chair moved to the voting which was in line with the constitution.

The following was approved:

Unanimous decision of Constituent Authorities Excluding Mayor

1. To allocate a total of up to £80K from the WECA investment fund to support the regional tourism promotional exercise identified in paragraph 2.8 of this report.
2. To allocate a total of up to £20K from the WECA investment fund to support the regional visitor economy study identified in paragraph 2.9.1 of this report.

Majority decision of Constituent authorities and the Combined Authority Mayor:

3. To delegate to the West of England Combined Authority Chief Executive, in consultation with the West of England Chief Executives, authority to make all necessary arrangements for the allocation and application of this funding in accordance with the objectives set out in this report.
4. To request the WECA Chief Executive bring a report back to WECA upon completion of the projects setting out the outcomes and options available as appropriate.
5. To delegate to the Section 151 Officer to make all necessary amendments to the WECA and Mayoral Budgets as appropriate to reflect the approved allocation of investment funding.

11 TRANSPORT UPDATE

The Chair introduced a report updating members on the progress with the Bus Strategy, Key Route Network and Integrated Transport Authority (ITA) functions. The report also requested the Authority to approve the recommendation to approve an informal regional grouping of Transport Authorities to discuss transport issues.

The recommendation was moved by Mayor Bowles and seconded by Councillor Tim Warren.

Tim Warren stated that he was delighted to see the Bus Strategy moving ahead and that collaboration in these types of projects was the only way forward. Mayor Marvin Rees agreed that this would bring much needed investment and time.

Councillor Toby Savage stated that the Integrated Transport Authority (ITA) functions was an opportunity to do things better, avoid duplication and reduce the costs to the taxpayers.

The Chair moved to the voting which was in line with the constitution.

The following was approved:

Recommendations 1 & 3 - No vote for noting

1. Note the ongoing work and provide views on the Bus Strategy, Key Route Network and ITA functions.

3. To note that work continues in developing the Terms of Reference and draft prospectus for the informal Regional Transport Grouping, also known as the "Western Gateway".

Recommendations 2, 4, & 5 - simple majority of constituent authorities to include Mayor

2. To approve West of England Combined Authorities' participation in the informal regional transport grouping, also known as the "Western Gateway".

4. To appoint the Mayor to represent the Authority on the regional transport grouping Partnership Board and the Deputy Mayor as his nominated deputy. 5. To authorise the Director of Infrastructure to represent the Authority on the regional transport grouping Senior Officer Group.

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INVESTMENT FUND

The Chair introduced a report seeking approval for Investment Fund Feasibility and Development Funding proposals and change requests for schemes within the current approved programme.

The Committee had previously approved a number of feasibility studies and business cases for strategically important infrastructure, business and skills projects, together with an allocation to support a funding bid for the Metrowest rail programme. Further investment proposals for business and skills, together with a revised proposal in respect of the MetroWest rail funding, were set out in the report.

The Chair moved the recommendations which were seconded by Councillor Toby Savage.

Councillor Savage stated that he was excited by the prospect of the establishment of three Talent Institutes across the region with up to £100k being proposed for an initial feasibility study. Councillor Tim Warren concurred with this sentiment.

It was proposed that the words "in consultation with the Chief Executives of the three Constituent Councils" be added to recommendation 2. This was agreed in line with the constitution.

The Chair moved to the voting which was in line with the constitution.

The following was approved:

Recommendations 1 & 5 – Majority Vote of the constituent authorities including the Mayor

1. The change request for the JSP Mitigation Outline Business Cases set out in paragraph 4.

Recommendations 2-3 – unanimous decision of the 3 constituent authorities, excluding Mayor
2. The allocation of £100K from the Investment Fund revenue to support the development of a feasibility study to progress the Talent Institutes in consultation with the Chief Executives of the local authorities.

3. The provisional allocation of £4.5M from the Investment Fund to support a bid to the European Social Fund to establish a skills innovation fund, and subject to a future Full Business Case proposal should the bid be successful.

Recommendation 4 – Unanimous Decision of the 3 constituent authorities excluding the Mayor

4. The continued allocation of up to £6M to support a funding solution for the MetroWest Phase 1(b) funding gap, subject to a revised gateway decision for the project in November 2018.

Recommendations 1 & 5 – Majority Vote of the constituent authorities including the Mayor

5. The WECA Chief Executive, in consultation with the WECA Mayor, be delegated authority to finalise the detailed allocation of the Talent Institutes feasibility funding and the sign-off for the final Skills Innovation Fund Bid.

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ADULT EDUCATION BUDGET - INTERIM RESOURCES AND INDICATIVE BUDGET

The Chair introduced a report seeking approval for the indicative 2019/20 budget for the devolved Adult Education Budget.

The report stated that on 11 June 2018 the Department for Education (DfE) confirmed that the Combined Authority would be ready for the 2019/20 academic year. Development funding had been secured to cover the period April 2018 to July 2019. This funding would enable the Combined Authority to prepare properly for the 2019/20 academic year. From 1 August 2019 onwards the Combined Authority would assume full management and administration of the Adult Education Budget (AEB) funded provision.

The indicative budget for the 2019/20 academic year would be £524,000. The funding for this resource would be sourced through top slicing of the AEB allocation.

The recommendations were moved by the Chair and seconded by Councillor Tim Warren. Councillor Warren stated that this would enable more local people to study something useful that would enable them to leave college and go straight into work.

The Chair moved to the voting which was in line with the constitution.

The following was approved:

Recommendation 1 was for noting and required no decision

The Committee was asked to:

1. Note the required AEB implementation resource

Recommendation 2 required a unanimous decision of the 3 constituent Authorities excluding the Mayor

The Committee was asked to:

2. Approve the indicative budget for the 2019/20 academic year

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ANY OTHER ITEM THE CHAIR DECIDES IS URGENT

	There were no urgent items and the meeting was closed at 11:16am.
15	WECA - 28 SEPT - PUBLIC STATEMENTS
	Signed: Date: