

Minutes of the Joint meeting - West of England Combined Authority Committee and West of England Joint Committee, Friday, 25 June 2021

West of England Combined Authority Committee - members present:

Metro Mayor Dan Norris, West of England Combined Authority
Councillor Toby Savage, Leader, South Gloucestershire Council
Mayor Marvin Rees, Bristol City Council
Councillor Kevin Guy, Leader, Bath & North East Somerset Council
Professor Steve West, Chair, West of England Local Enterprise Partnership (non-voting member)

West of England Joint Committee - members present:

Metro Mayor Dan Norris, West of England Combined Authority
Councillor Toby Savage, Leader, South Gloucestershire Council
Mayor Marvin Rees, Bristol City Council
Councillor Kevin Guy, Leader, Bath & North East Somerset Council
Councillor Donald Davies, Leader, North Somerset Council
Professor Steve West, Chair, West of England Local Enterprise Partnership (non-voting member)

1	<p>WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS</p> <p>The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting and introduced the members of the committees.</p> <p>The Chair advised that he wished to place on record his thanks to Tim Bowles, former West of England Mayor and to Councillor Dine Romero, former Bath & North East Somerset Council Leader for their work in serving as members of the West of England Combined Authority Committee and the West of England Joint Committee.</p>
2	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>There were no apologies for absence.</p>
3	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>
4	<p>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS JOINT MEETING - TO CONFIRM AS A CORRECT RECORD</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the minutes of the joint meeting of the West of England Combined Authority Committee and the West of England Joint Committee held on 29 January 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.</p>
5	<p>CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</p> <p>Noting that this was the first joint meeting of the committees that he was attending following his election as the region's new Metro Mayor, the Chair commented as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * He thanked everyone across the region who had elected him as the new Metro Mayor, adding that he would serve all the region's residents and communities. * The region needs to be more successful and he was determined to ensure that the West of England's profile is recognised nationally and globally. * It was essential to ensure, particularly in light of the tough times brought about through the pandemic, that the region maximises its share of available national resources. * He particularly wished to express his thanks to all National Health Service staff for their work throughout the pandemic in caring for the region's residents. * He was determined to press forward with delivering his manifesto commitments, including his ambitious plans for a green economic recovery, jobs and the environment.
6	<p>ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC (QUESTIONS; STATEMENTS; PETITIONS)</p> <p>The Chair advised that 8 questions had been submitted in advance of this meeting on the following subjects:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. David Redgewell - Bus Back better 2. David Redgewell - Bristol ring road 3. Ian Beckey - North Somerset joining West of England Combined Authority 4. Ian Beckey - Railways

5. Kim Hicks - Spatial Development Strategy timetable
6. Kim Hicks - Joint Local Transport Plan
7. Councillor Martin Fodor (Bristol City Council) - Climate emergency action plan update
8. Councillor Martin Fodor (Bristol City Council) - E-scooters

The Chair then confirmed that written replies had been sent to all questioners in advance of the meeting. The questions and replies had been circulated to committee members and were available to view on the Combined Authority web site.

The Chair then advised that 8 statements had been received in advance of the meeting. The statements had been circulated to committee members and were available to view on the Combined Authority web site. The statements received were on the following subjects (statements were presented by those in attendance; statement 2 was read aloud at the meeting by the Director of Legal Services at the request of the person who had submitted the statement, who was unable to attend the meeting in person):

1. David Redgewell - Transport & regional issues
2. Kim Hicks - 'South Bristol Wrong Road'
3. Steven Hunt - Transport issues
4. Lucy Travis & Peter Travis - Transport issues
5. Councillors Mark Weston & Chris Windows (Bristol City Council) - Strategic rail investment (agenda item 15)
6. Councillor Martin Fodor (Bristol City Council) - Climate emergency action plan update (agenda item 11)
7. Robin Kerr - Bath Alliance for Transport and Public Realm
8. Tony Lloyd - Rail and transport issues

7 COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIR OF THE LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP

Professor Steve West, Chair of the Local Enterprise Partnership Board commented as follows:

* The Board had met on 21 June and extended a welcome to Dan Norris as the new Metro Mayor and Councillor Kevin Guy, the newly elected Leader of Bath & North East Somerset Council.

* The Board had reviewed the reports to be discussed at this meeting and he wished to draw attention to the following points:

- The Board welcomed the update on work to deliver the West of England Climate Emergency Action Plan, and in particular the Metro Mayor's proposal for a £20m Green Recovery Fund to stimulate local action to address climate change, further push government action and help stimulate economic recovery. Board members had seen first-hand the impact of the pandemic on the region's residents and businesses and this Green Recovery Fund provided an opportunity not only to build back, but to do so in a way that helped work towards the goal of net zero by 2030.
- The Board also supported the allocation of £100k of Local Enterprise Partnership funding to focus on digital connectivity. This challenge had been highlighted during the pandemic and needs to be addressed as the region moves into recovery.
- The strong financial controls in place have ensured that the Local Growth Fund and

the Getting Building Fund would meet their spend targets by the required deadline. It was also good to see the opportunity to develop the case for investment in the Weston Business Quarter.

* His term as Chair of the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership was coming to a close after 4 years and he would shortly be handing over to Richard Bonner from Arcadis, who was elected as Chair at the Board meeting on 21 June. He was very proud of the role the Local Enterprise Partnership had taken in shaping the regional strategy, directing a range of funds to ensure investment was evidence led and aligned with regional priorities, and more recently the Partnership had played a key role in the development of regional recovery plans. The Local Enterprise Partnership gave the business community a voice and an opportunity to discuss sometimes challenging issues and to help inform effective strategic decision making; retaining a strong business voice in regional strategic planning, alongside local political leadership would be important in ensuring levelling up becomes a reality. He looked forward to seeing the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership continuing to play a leading role as the region moves into recovery.

The Chair and members of both committees thanked Professor West for his work and contribution in taking forward the work and priorities of the Local Enterprise Partnership and the Combined Authority.

8 COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIR OF THE COMBINED AUTHORITY'S OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Chair advised that the Combined Authority's Overview and Scrutiny Committee had submitted comments following on from their meeting held on 23 June. These comments had been circulated in advance of the meeting and were available to view on the Combined Authority web site.

9 WEST OF ENGLAND COMBINED AUTHORITY COMMITTEE ANNUAL BUSINESS REPORT

The Combined Authority Committee considered the annual business report (agenda item 9).

The Chair moved the report recommendations.

Mayor Rees then moved an amendment as follows:

That the following be added to the report:

“As the West of England Combined Authority transitions from its first Mayoral term, it would be appropriate to undertake an internal Governance Review to better understand what has worked well over the last four years, and those areas where we can come together further to deliver improved collaborative working to the greater benefit of our area. This would also recognise that over this period the external environment has changed significantly, and new ways of working may now be more appropriate in facing the challenges and opportunities ahead. It is important this work is focussed and delivered at pace so any recommendations can be put into practice quickly, that it is jointly owned by the West of England Combined Authority and the

three constituent local authorities, and is independently supported to enable an equality of voice.

Additional recommendation: A formal internal review is undertaken to make recommendations on improvements to joint working led by the Chief Executives of the constituent bodies. That up to £100k is set aside to support the commissioning of any work that may be required, and summary findings are reported back to committee in October.”

The amendment was seconded by Councillor Savage.

The amendment was then debated.

Mayor Rees commented that in moving the amendment, he felt it was an opportune time to reflect on how the Combined Authority could operate more effectively and be in the best position to face the challenges ahead. As indicated in the amendment, the external environment had changed significantly and new ways of working may now be more appropriate in facing the challenges and the opportunities to come. The Combined Authority had delivered some wins since its inception, but it was important to recognise there is always room for improvement; this would form the focus of the proposed governance review.

Councillor Savage stated that as the Combined Authority was now moving from a first-term of 4 years to a second-term, it was important to now take the opportunity to review processes, policies and culture; all of these were currently based around the first-term experience of having to create an organisation from scratch. The Combined Authority now needed to step up a gear or more in terms of delivery. The proposed review would provide the opportunity to be able to share experiences of the first 4 years and look at how this could be improved on for the next 4 years, with the aim of enhancing delivery. In his view, it was reasonable to start this process now and resource it appropriately.

Cllr Guy suggested that in terms of timing, the election of a new Metro Mayor meant that this was an appropriate time to carry out a review. It was important to build on the work and delivery that had already been achieved by the Combined Authority, but also to focus on those areas that could be improved and ensure that the authority was in the best position to respond to the challenges faced, including responding to funding opportunities from the government.

Professor West commented that the government was currently conducting a national review of Local Enterprise Partnerships; given the ongoing relationship and collaborative nature of work between Combined Authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships, it may be more appropriate to consider how any review might fit in this context; ultimately, it will be essential to ensure a continued, effective and meaningful, collaborative approach to the challenges faced.

It was noted that the report recommendations had not been seconded prior to the amendment being moved.

Following discussion, Mayor Rees then moved the report recommendations, including the amendment as follows:

That the following be added to the report:

“As the West of England Combined Authority transitions from its first Mayoral term, it would be appropriate to undertake an internal Governance Review to better understand what has worked well over the last four years, and those areas where we can come together further to deliver improved collaborative working to the greater benefit of our area. This would also recognise that over this period the external environment has changed significantly, and new ways of working may now be more appropriate in facing the challenges and opportunities ahead. It is important this work is focussed and delivered at pace so any recommendations can be put into practice quickly, that it is jointly owned by the West of England Combined Authority and the three constituent local authorities, and is independently supported to enable an equality of voice.

Additional recommendation: A formal internal review is undertaken to make recommendations on improvements to joint working led by the Chief Executives of the constituent bodies. That up to £100k is set aside to support the commissioning of any work that may be required, and summary findings are reported back to committee in October.”

This motion, including the amendment, was seconded by Councillor Savage.

The Metro Mayor advised that he was not supportive of the motion including the amendment as proposed. He commented that in his view, spending £100k of taxpayers' money on an internal review was not the right or appropriate thing to do during this crucial time for the region's recovery. He felt that local people were expecting the Combined Authority to instead be getting on with the key priorities of investing in jobs and skills, improving transport and tackling the climate emergency.

On being put to the vote, 3 members (Mayor Rees, Councillor Savage and Councillor Guy) voted for the motion including the amendment, with the Chair voting against the motion including the amendment.

The motion was therefore not carried as there was not a unanimous vote including the vote of the Metro Mayor in support of the motion.

No decisions were therefore taken on this item of business.

10 WEST OF ENGLAND JOINT COMMITTEE ANNUAL BUSINESS REPORT

The Joint Committee considered the annual business report (agenda item 10).

Following a nomination made by Councillor Savage, seconded by Councillor Guy and Councillor Davies, the **West of England Joint Committee** RESOLVED:

1. To elect Metro Mayor Dan Norris as Chair of the West of England Joint Committee for 2021/22.

Following a nomination made by Councillor Davies, seconded by Councillor Guy and Mayor Rees, the **West of England Joint Committee** RESOLVED:

2. To elect Councillor Toby Savage as Vice-Chair of the West of England Joint Committee for 2021/22.

The **West of England Joint Committee** also RESOLVED:

3. To note the Joint Committee's membership as at paragraph 2.

4. To note the Joint Committee's terms of reference as set out in Appendix 1.

11

CLIMATE EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN UPDATE

The Combined Authority Committee considered a report (agenda item 11) that set out details of the next phase of activity for tackling the climate emergency and protecting nature, including proposed activity in the lead up to COP26, and providing an update on progress towards ambitions contained within the Climate Emergency Action Plan. The report was also presented to the Joint Committee for their information.

The Chair moved the report with the following amendment:

“To agree items 2 and 3 of the Climate Emergency Action Plan update and withdraw the remainder of the Climate Emergency Action Plan update report. Mayors and Leaders to review the Combined Authority's approach to Climate Emergency and to bring back recommendations to a special meeting of the Combined Authority and the Joint Committee in September 2021 whereby the Combined Authority will confirm a new and ambitious approach towards a Climate Emergency Strategy and action plan ahead of COP Glasgow in November 2021.”

(Note:

* Item 2 referred to above refers to the second bullet point in the report recommendation: 'Support and engage with plans for activity to stimulate a green recovery and in the lead up to COP26'

* Item 3 referred to above refers to the third bullet point in the report recommendation: 'Support the participation of Solar Together')

This motion, including the amendment was seconded by Councillor Guy.

Mayor Rees welcomed the amendment. He commented that the work to tackle the climate emergency, including the ecological emergency must be very specific with a clear timeline for taking forward actions and clarity about how impacts will be measured. There was an opportunity to set an ambition and a standard from the region in the lead up to COP26.

Councillor Savage expressed his support for the motion, including the amendment.

Councillor Guy commented that it was important to recognise that the amendment must not be seen as a pause to work taking place to tackle the climate emergency. However, a re-think of the action plan was needed; clear, measurable actions must be identified and delivered, recognising that the climate emergency is the most important issue facing this generation and generations to come. A new and ambitious approach needs to be taken forward with all the region's authorities working together to improve people's lives.

The Metro Mayor also welcomed the amendment, highlighting that it supports his ambitions and key priority on taking urgent action to address climate change and protect the natural environment and biodiversity within the region.

On being put to the vote, the motion including the amendment was approved and

The **West of England Combined Authority Committee** RESOLVED:

To agree items 2 and 3 of the Climate Emergency Action Plan update and withdraw the remainder of the Climate Emergency Action Plan update report. Mayors and Leaders to review the Combined Authority's approach to Climate Emergency and to bring back recommendations to a special meeting of the Combined Authority and the Joint Committee in September 2021 whereby the Combined Authority will confirm a new and ambitious approach towards a Climate Emergency Strategy and action plan ahead of COP Glasgow in November 2021.

(Note:

* Item 2 referred to above refers to the second bullet point in the report recommendation: 'Support and engage with plans for activity to stimulate a green recovery and in the lead up to COP26'

* Item 3 referred to above refers to the third bullet point in the report recommendation: 'Support the participation of Solar Together')

12

BUS NETWORK RECOVERY AND BUS INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAMME

The Combined Authority Committee and Joint Committee considered a report (agenda item 12) that:

- * set out an update on the National Bus Strategy.
- * sought approval for the work programme arising from the National Bus Strategy and the associated budget.
- * updated on the Bus Infrastructure Programme and Metrobus consolidation package and sought approval for amendments.
- * sought approval for additional funding for the Bus Infrastructure Programme to accelerate delivery.

The Chair highlighted that the committee was asked to agree to publish a Notice of Intent to proceed with the development of a joint Enhanced Partnership between the West of England Combined Authority and North Somerset Council, Bath & North East Somerset Council, Bristol City Council and South Gloucestershire Council and bus operators.

The Chair then moved the report recommendations relating to the Combined Authority Committee.

This motion was seconded by Councillor Savage.

The Chair then moved the report recommendations relating to the Joint Committee.

This motion was seconded by Councillor Davies.

Councillor Guy welcomed the report - whilst recognising the need to take forward strategic bus corridors with high volumes of passengers to better connect urban areas through bus services, it will also be important to ensure connectivity to and from rural communities across the region.

Councillor Davies also stressed the importance of serving rural communities through bus services, which may require innovative approaches. He additionally commented that in engaging with the public about future bus services, it will be important to ensure this is made 'real' and meaningful from the perspective of service users.

The Chair commented that whilst there was a potential option available of embarking on the development of a franchising scheme instead of an Enhanced Partnership, such an arrangement (which would give more local control over the bus network) would not reduce operating costs, or bring in more revenue, and currently would place a substantial revenue risk on the franchising authority. Revenue and income streams currently available to support a franchising approach, for example in the case of the Greater London Authority and the Greater Manchester Combined Authority were not available at this point to the West of England Combined Authority.

Councillor Savage also welcomed the report and the evidence-based approach which informed the proposed option of taking forward an Enhanced Partnership. He added that the future of public transport is a key issue for the Combined Authority, in the context of the climate emergency. This also linked in with the masterplanning work and delivery being taken forward around high streets and town centres resourced through the Combined Authority. He also noted that a franchising option would have taken 2 years to assess at a cost of over £5 million.

Mayor Rees stressed the importance of engaging meaningfully with the public and passengers and advised that Bristol can assist and advise on this, for example through the community development teams and outreach approach which is in place. He also stressed the key importance of pressing forward with the delivery of Park and Ride sites.

The Chair then moved to the voting on the recommendations.

The **West of England Combined Authority Committee** RESOLVED:

1. To note the contents of the National Bus Strategy and the work programme arising from it.
2. To agree to publish a Notice of Intent to proceed with the development of a joint Enhanced Partnership between the West of England Combined Authority and North Somerset Council (as local transport authorities), Bath & North East Somerset Council, Bristol City Council and South Gloucestershire Council (as highway authorities) and bus operators.
3. To allocate £900k from the Investment Fund tail for the bus programme for development of a joint Bus Service Improvement Plan and Enhanced Partnership and that approval of the relevant Feasibility & Development Funding Application be delegated to the West of England Combined Authority Chief Executive in consultation

with the Chief Executives of the constituent councils.

4. That the Combined Authority Committee approve the change request for the Bus Infrastructure Programme and Metrobus Consolidation Package and the award of an additional £600k from the Investment Fund tail for the bus programme as proposed in the report and detailed in Appendix 5.

The **West of England Joint Committee** RESOLVED:

1. To note the contents of the National Bus Strategy and the work programme arising from it.

2. To agree to publish a Notice of Intent to proceed with the development of a joint Enhanced Partnership between the West of England Combined Authority and North Somerset Council (as local transport authorities), Bath & North East Somerset Council, Bristol City Council and South Gloucestershire Council (as highway authorities) and bus operators.

13

LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP & INVEST BRISTOL AND BATH REVENUE BUDGET OUTTURN REPORT

The Joint Committee considered a report (agenda item 13) that presented the revenue outturn for the West of England Joint Committee for the financial year 2020/21 based on data for the period April 2020 to March 2021.

The Chair highlighted the commitment to digital connectivity being taken forward through this report. He stressed the importance of improving the affordable Broadband offer to residents throughout the region.

Mayor Rees then moved the following amendment:

That the following be added to the report:

“A recommendation that £100K is allocated from the Local Enterprise Partnership reserve to drive digital inclusion and connectivity across the communities within the region. This allocation is requested to progress specialist work to develop an evidence based picture of current activity to tackle digital inclusion and connectivity across the West of England region (including North Somerset), and to set out some options and actions to support these existing initiatives and identify any gaps. This will draw together existing evidence from across each of the constituent unitary authorities and identify what value added there may be from developing a regional strategy.

Revised recommendation 3: To approve £100K from the Local Enterprise Partnership reserve to focus on digital inclusion and connectivity with financial sign off for each phase of works delegated to the Chief Executives from the constituent authorities of the Joint Committee subject to the final approval of the accountable officer.”

Councillor Savage seconded this motion, including the amendment. Councillor Savage also commented that taking forward digital inclusion and connectivity is a key workstream, linking in with other programmes such as 5G tourism, the Future Transport Zones programme and the Umbrella network testbed. It would also be

important to link in with other partners, including the Western Gateway and work collectively in developing a strong digital programme.

With reference to his earlier comments, Professor West strongly supported the focus on the digital agenda. He stressed the importance of delivering the outcome of a clear, inclusive digital strategy for the region, with clear milestones, and encouraging investment from businesses / inward investment to the region.

The Metro Mayor confirmed his support for the amendment, confirming that a digital strategy was currently being developed, and that these proposals would improve Broadband connectivity across the region.

On being put to the vote, the motion including the amendment was carried.

The Chair then moved to the voting on the recommendations, including the above amendment.

The **West of England Joint Committee** RESOLVED:

1. To note the Local Enterprise Partnership revenue outturn as set out in Appendix 1.
2. To approve the net underspend on core Local Enterprise Partnership activities of £152k to be transferred to the Local Enterprise Partnership General Reserve.
3. To approve £100K from the Local Enterprise Partnership reserve to focus on digital inclusion and connectivity with financial sign off for each phase of works delegated to the Chief Executives from the constituent authorities of the Joint Committee subject to the final approval of the accountable officer.

14

LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP ONE FRONT DOOR FUNDING PROGRAMME REPORT

The Joint Committee considered a report (agenda item 14) that set out the latest position on the Local Enterprise Partnership One Front Door funding programme.

The Chair highlighted that the main item for decision was to approve the arrangements to take forward the Weston Business Quarter project through to Full Business Case stage. This would deliver the infrastructure and utilities required to service the remaining 30 acres of land yet to be developed, in the ownership of North Somerset Council in the Weston Business Quarter, which is part of the Junction 21 Enterprise Area. He added that the Combined Authority had also successfully fulfilled its Local Growth Fund commitments by the required 31 March 2021 deadline, ensuring that every penny of this £202m government grant remains within the region.

The report recommendations were then moved by the Chair.

This motion was seconded by Cllr Davies. Cllr Davies particularly welcomed the proposal to progress the Weston Business Quarter project.

The Chair then moved to the voting on the recommendations.

	<p>The West of England Joint Committee RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To note the full spend of the Local Growth Fund and the Getting Building Fund in-year award for 2020/21 by the required deadline. 2. To note the submission of the Outline Business Case for the Weston Business Quarter project, and delegate approval and the award of £674k to progress the Full Business Case to the West of England Combined Authority Chief Executive in consultation with the Council Chief Executives, subject to headroom in the Revolving Infrastructure Fund being available and there being no other immediate calls on these funds.
<p>15</p>	<p>STRATEGIC RAIL INVESTMENT</p> <p>The Combined Authority Committee considered a report (agenda item 15) that sought endorsement of recommendations to continue the development and delivery of the rail programme.</p> <p>The Chair then highlighted that through approving this report, the Combined Authority would be making commitments to fund a footbridge to connect the A4018 immediately north of the railway to the western edge of the new Henbury train station, and to take forward step free railway station proposals for five stations to improve station accessibility – these proposals take account of areas of deprivation, and the stations most likely to be supported were Oldfield Park station in Bath and Lawrence Hill, Parson Street, Bedminster and Stapleton Road stations in Bristol.</p> <p>The recommendations as set out in the published report were then moved by the Chair and seconded by Councillor Guy.</p> <p>The Chair then moved to the voting on the recommendations.</p> <p>The West of England Combined Authority Committee RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To increase the scope of the MetroWest 2 project to include a footbridge link to the A4018 and allocate an additional £140k for the MetroWest Phase 2 project to progress the A4108 footbridge to outline design by December 2021. 2. To allocate £150k of Investment Fund funding to develop the step free station proposals for five stations to Governance for Railway Investment Projects 3 option selection. 3. To continue to cash flow the delivery of the Bristol Temple Meads Eastern Entrance in advance of central government funding decisions.
<p>16</p>	<p>COMBINED AUTHORITY & MAYORAL BUDGET OUTTURN REPORT</p> <p>The Combined Authority Committee considered a report (agenda item 16) that presented the revenue budget financial outturn information for the West of England Combined Authority and the Mayoral budget for the financial year 2020/21 based on data for the period April 2020 to March 2021.</p>

The report recommendations were then moved by the Chair.

This motion was seconded by Councillor Savage.

The Chair then moved to the voting on the recommendations.

The **West of England Combined Authority Committee** RESOLVED:

1. To note the Mayoral Fund revenue outturn as detailed in Appendix 1.
2. To note the West of England Combined Authority revenue outturn as detailed in Appendix 2.
3. To amend the 2021/22 Mayoral budget to reflect the Department for Transport announcement (in March 2021) reducing the Highways Capital Maintenance Grants from £17.5m to £14.06m.
4. To note the allocation of £400k from the 2020/21 Treasury Management surplus to a specific Treasury earmarked reserve (as agreed at the 29th January 2021 Committee).
5. To approve the reimbursement of £227k to Bath & North East Somerset Council in relation to the surplus that they delivered against the 2019/20 transport levy.
6. To approve the transfer of £492k, being the net end of year surplus in Integrated Transport activities, to the Transport Smoothing Reserve.
7. To approve the transfer of £500k from the 2020/21 revenue surplus to the earmarked Business Rates Retention reserve to address the estimated shortfall in 2021/22.
8. To approve the transfer of £627k from the 2020/21 net revenue surplus into the West of England Combined Authority General Reserve.

17 TREASURY MANAGEMENT OUTTURN REPORT 2020-21

The Combined Authority Committee considered a report (agenda item 17) that presented the Treasury Management outturn report for 2020/21.

The **West of England Combined Authority Committee** RESOLVED:

1. To note the Treasury Management Outturn Report to 31st March 2021, prepared in accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Code of Practice.
2. To note the Treasury Management Indicators to 31st March 2021.

18 INVESTMENT FUND REPORT

The Combined Authority Committee considered a report (agenda item 18) that sought approval for feasibility, development and delivery funding, and for change requests for schemes within the current approved Investment Fund programme.

The Chair moved the following amendment:

That an additional recommendation 14 be added to the report as follows:

“To approve the Feasibility and Development Funding application for Thornbury High Street Public Realm and the award of £200k from the Love Our High Streets allocation, with the opportunities for other match funding for the delivery of this project to be fully explored as part of developing the Full Business Case.”

This motion was seconded by Councillor Savage.

On being put to the vote, the motion including the amendment was carried.

The Chair then moved the report recommendations, including the above amendment. This motion was seconded by Cllr Savage.

Cllr Savage commented that he was pleased to see, through this report and the amendment, the increasing focus on supporting high streets through their recovery; in addition to the successful work being taken forward in Kingswood, opportunities were now being taken forward in the market town of Thornbury. The South Gloucestershire Cabinet had recently taken a high-profile decision to progress with an ambitious public realm and engagement project for Thornbury, involving £6-8 million of capital works - given South Gloucestershire's clear commitment to this project, the funding proposed through the amendment was critically important to helping set Thornbury High Street up as a high street that will be better able to bounce back from the challenges from the past 15 months due to the pandemic but also from the structural challenges faced by high streets more generally. He also welcomed the Outline Business Case for the Common Connections project, which will contribute to climate change commitments and to taking forward the Joint Green Infrastructure Strategy.

Mayor Rees welcomed the report, particularly in relation to the Full Business Case for Hawkfield Business Park / the Bottle Yard Studios and the related award of £11.82 million. These developments were of huge significance for Bristol and the city's reputation and had national significance as well. He also referred to the importance of the Bristol Temple Meads eastern entrance project in the context of the regeneration of Temple Quarter, which will realise 22,000 jobs and 10,000 homes - every opportunity must be taken to make sure that the government understands just how significant this regeneration opportunity is, as national government support is needed to maximise the benefits. In relation to this point, the Chair stressed the Combined Authority's commitment to the Bristol Temple Meads eastern entrance project, which had involved underwriting project costs.

Professor West commented on the issue of the future visioning of key places in the region and in particular the High Street going forward; it will be important to lock in other big anchor institutions to the thinking and planning, including opportunities for how a health and social care offer/service can potentially become an integral part of the future high street. It will be important to join up approaches that may enable funding streams to be used in different, creative and innovative ways.

The Chair highlighted that the report proposals also included:

* Using £1 million of identified headroom to increase recovery funding and to develop and implement further measures to support economic recovery in line with his manifesto commitments, to include:

- a campaign to support regional re-opening.
- additional support for high streets.
- a jobs and skills summit and green skills focused activity in the run-up to the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26).
- an additional £1 million of grant funding for small and medium sized enterprises / the creative sector in recognition of the high demand of quality applications received to date.

* A further £1 million allocation for walking and cycling infrastructure.

In relation to an issue raised during the earlier public items/session about the current consultation being carried out by South Gloucestershire Council on potential A4174 ring road proposals, Councillor Savage pointed out that the funding for these improvements would only come to the region if a business case was accepted by the Department for Transport; the bid for this funding was being developed in response to a Department for Transport invitation to South Gloucestershire to bid, as a highways authority, for funds to support improvements through the major routes network. If awarded, this funding could not be allocated by the authority to other services, or to public transport or active travel. The proposals themselves were the subject of public consultation until 16 August; the consultation responses would be considered carefully and assessed in determining the scheme that would ultimately be put forward.

The Chair then moved to the voting on the recommendations, including the above amendment.

The West of England Combined Authority Committee RESOLVED:

1. That a further £1m of the £9m allocation for walking and cycling infrastructure delivery is brought forward to support scheme development, with the approval of specific Feasibility and Development Funding Applications delegated to the West of England Combined Authority Chief Executive in consultation with the Chief Executives of the constituent councils.
2. To approve a further £234k of masterplanning funding for the (Bristol) City Centre Development and Delivery Plan so that this is fully funded.
3. To approve the Full Business Case for Hawkfield Business Park - The Bottle Yard Studios and award of £11.82m
4. To approve the Full Business Case for the Bath City Centre High Streets Renewal Project and the award of £1.235m subject to confirmation of the High Streets Catalyst Fund match funding.
5. To approve the Full Business Case for the Bristol City Centre and High Streets Recovery and Renewal Programme and award of £2.725m

6. To approve the Outline Business Case for the Common Connections project.
7. To approve the Feasibility and Development Funding Application for the SEND Careers Information and Guidance Collaboration Pilot and the award of £20k.
8. To approve further development funding of £500k for ISTART, and to delegate approval of the Outline Business Case and award of funding of up to £1.94m to the West of England Combined Authority Chief Executive in consultation with the Chief Executives of the constituent councils, with a phased funding approach and/or the opportunity for other match funding to be considered as part of progressing to Full Business Case.
9. To approve the Full Business Case for the Careers Hub and award of £180k.
10. To delegate the approval of development funding applications and business cases for further recovery funding of up to £1m to the West of England Combined Authority Chief Executive in consultation with the Chief Executives of the constituent councils.
11. To award a further £1m to the Small Business Resilience Grant Programme and the Culture and Creative Economy Recovery Fund and to delegate the split of the funding between these programmes to the West of England Combined Authority Chief Executive in consultation with the Chief Executives of the constituent councils.
12. To approve the change requests for schemes within the current programme as set out in Appendix 2.
13. To amend the approved capital programme for individual project approvals agreed at the January Committee and within this report.
14. To approve the Feasibility and Development Funding application for Thornbury High Street Public Realm and the award of £200k from the Love Our High Streets allocation, with the opportunities for other match funding for the delivery of this project to be fully explored as part of developing the Full Business Case.

Signed:

Date: