

A meeting of the

## **WECA Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

will be held on

**Date: Monday, 4 April 2022**

**Time: 1.00 pm**

**Place: Bristol City Hall Council Chamber**

Notice of this meeting is given to members of the West of England Overview & Scrutiny Committee as follows

Cllr Winston Duguid, Bath and North East Somerset  
Cllr Hal MacFie, Bath and North East Somerset Council  
Cllr Geoff Gollop, Bristol City Council  
Cllr Ed Plowden, Bristol City Council  
Cllr Brenda Massey, Bristol City Council  
Cllr Steve Pearce, Bristol City Council  
Cllr Andrew Varney, Bristol City Council  
Cllr Brian Allinson, South Gloucestershire Council  
Cllr James Arrowsmith, South Gloucestershire Council  
Cllr John Ashe, South Gloucestershire Council  
Cllr Tristan Clark, South Gloucestershire Council

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# **West of England Combined Authority Committee Agenda**

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In the event of a fire, please await direction from the Bristol City Council staff who will help assist with the evacuation. Please do not return to the building until instructed to do so by the fire warden(s).

## **2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

To receive apologies for absence from Members.

## **3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE LOCALISM ACT 2011**

Members who consider that they have an interest to declare are asked to: a) State the item number in which they have an interest, b) The nature of the interest, c) Whether the interest is a disclosable pecuniary interest, non-disclosable pecuniary interest or non-pecuniary interest. Any Member who is unsure about the above should seek advice from the Monitoring Officer prior to the meeting in order to expedite matters at the meeting itself.

## **4. MINUTES**

5 - 14

To consider and approve the minutes from the previous meeting of the West of England Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

## **5. ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC (QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS)**

15 - 24

Members of the public can speak for up to 3 minutes each. The total time for this session is 30 minutes so speaking time will be reduced if more than 10 people wish to speak.

If you wish to present a petition or make a statement and speak at the meeting, you are required to give notice of your intention by noon on the working day before the meeting by e-mail to [democratic.services@westofengland-ca.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@westofengland-ca.gov.uk). For this meeting, this means that your submission must be received in this office by **12noon on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022**.

If you wish to ask a question at the meeting, you are required to submit the question in writing to [democratic.services@westofengland-ca.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@westofengland-ca.gov.uk) no later than 3 working days before the meeting. For this meeting, this means that your question(s) must be received in this office by **5pm on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2022**.

## **6. CHAIR'S BUSINESS / ANNOUNCEMENTS**

## **7. REVIEW OF 8TH APRIL 2022 WEST OF ENGLAND COMBINED AUTHORITY COMMITTEE AND WEST OF ENGLAND JOINT COMMITTEE REPORTS**

25 - 28

Overview report enclosed.

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# Public Document Pack Agenda Item 4

## West of England Combined Authority WECA Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 24 January 2022, 2.00 - 4.00 pm  
Council Chamber, Kingswood Civic Centre, High Street, Kingswood BS15 9TR  
3 Rivergate, Bristol BS1 6ER

### Present:

Cllr Winston Duguid, Bath and North East Somerset  
Cllr Hal MacFie, Bath and North East Somerset Council  
Cllr Geoff Gollop, Bristol City Council  
Cllr Brenda Massey, Bristol City Council  
Cllr Steve Pearce, Bristol City Council

Cllr Andrew Varney, Bristol City Council  
Cllr Brian Allinson, South Gloucestershire Council  
Cllr James Arrowsmith, South Gloucestershire Council  
Cllr John Ashe, South Gloucestershire Council

### Officers In Attendance:

### Apologies:

Cllr Ed Plowden, Bristol City Council

Cllr Peter Crew, North Somerset Council

## Minutes

1	<b>Apologies for absence</b> It was noted that apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Mike Bird and Councillor Ed Plowden.
2	<b>Declarations of interest</b> There were no declarations of interest.
3	<b>Minutes of previous meeting</b> <b>RESOLVED:</b> That the minutes of the meeting of the West of England Combined Authority Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 13 December 2021 be confirmed as a correct record.
4	<b>Discussion with Metro Mayor</b> <b>Relationship between Metro Mayor and unitary authority Leaders</b>  The Chair welcomed Metro Mayor Dan Norris to the meeting, noting that the Metro Mayor was able to attend for the first 30 minutes of this meeting. He also welcomed Councillor Toby Savage, Leader of South Gloucestershire Council to the meeting. The Chair commented that the Committee were very happy to extend an invitation to all Mayors and Leaders to attend future meetings, with a view to enabling scrutiny members to raise issues with them and ask questions of them about forthcoming decisions.  Points raised / noted in discussion with the Metro Mayor: a. Scrutiny members flagged the importance of Mayors and Leaders resolving their evident 'differences' (for example, around their differing views about the merits of pre-agenda briefings/meetings involving Mayors and Leaders to discuss committee reports as part of the governance arrangements) as a matter of urgency and find a workable way forward that recognises the need to collaborate and work collectively in the best interests of our region's residents. If this is not resolved urgently, Scrutiny members fear reputational damage for the region may prevail. Given the context of the imminent Levelling-Up white paper, we need to demonstrate that the region is ready to deliver.

	<p>b. Members eagerly await the outcome of the work being undertaken by Professor Steve West in liaison with Mayors and Leaders to unlock and understand the issues that need to be resolved and help find a constructive way forward.</p> <p>c. They urged that public discussions between Mayors and Leaders are held in a mutually respectful manner and in the spirit of collaboration – as in other combined authority areas, there will inevitably be areas of political disagreement from time to time – the key challenge is to overcome this and focus on delivery across the areas of agreement.</p> <p>d. Members noted that the Audit Committee is intending to review governance matters at their meeting on 1 March 2022, particularly in terms of addressing the potential risks that the current political situation may have in relation to the Combined Authority's governance and ensuring sound and secure decision-making. The members sincerely hope that the Audit Committee will, by 1 March, be in a position to assess that real progress is being made in terms of the working relationship between Mayors and Leaders.</p> <p>At the conclusion of the discussion, the Chair thanked the Metro Mayor for his attendance.</p>
5	<p><b>Items from the public (questions; statements)</b></p> <p>It was noted that 4 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.</p> <p>The statements received were on the following subjects:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. David Redgewell – Budget and transport issues (this statement was presented at the meeting)</li> <li>2. Peter Travis – Transport issues</li> <li>3. David Andrews – Transport issues (this statement was presented at the meeting)</li> <li>4. Christopher Maltin – Transport issues (this statement was presented at the meeting)</li> </ol> <p>It was noted that 2 questions had been submitted in advance of this meeting on the following subjects:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. David Redgewell - Bus recovery grant</li> <li>2. David Redgewell – Transport interchanges</li> </ol> <p>Written replies had been sent to the questioner 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.</p>
6	<p><b>Chair's announcements</b></p> <p>None.</p>
7	<p><b>Update on and review of 28 January WECA Committee and West of England Joint Committee Reports</b></p> <p>Committee members reviewed and commented as follows on the 28 January committee reports. It was noted that some of the reports had been considered by the Transport sub-group at their meeting held on 17 January 2022 and comments from Cllr Ed Plowden, Chair of the sub-group are set out at Appendix 1.</p> <p><b>West of England Combined Authority Committee reports:</b></p> <p><b>Item 9 - MAYORAL AND COMBINED AUTHORITY BUDGET 2022/23 AND MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL FORECAST</b></p> <p>It was noted that this report sought approval for a revenue budget for the Mayoral functions and the West of England Combined Authority for 2022/23.</p> <p>Points raised/noted:</p>

- \* Members stressed the importance of delivering the Portishead railway line and are appreciative of officers' ongoing efforts to resolve this.
- \* They noted and supported the proposal to transfer £950k from the 2021/22 Transport Levy to a specific earmarked reserve to fund the anticipated additional costs of maintaining continuity of bus services prior to the re-tender of major bus routes in August 2022.
- \* They highlighted that it will be important to maintain a close watch on the impact of inflation on key activities and projects.
- \* They noted and are supportive of the Financial Reserves Policy.

#### **ITEM 10 - CAPITAL STRATEGY INCLUDING TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND INVESTMENT STRATEGIES**

It was noted that this report presented the Capital Strategy for the West of England Combined Authority including the:

- \* Capital budget for 2022/23, and indicative budget up to 2024/25.
- \* Treasury Management Strategy for 2022/23.
- \* Combined Authority Investment Strategy 2021 to 2026.

Points raised/noted:

- \* Members noted the updated Treasury Management and Investment strategies.
- \* They are supportive of the specific Highways and Transport Capital Grant allocations totalling £25m to the constituent councils for 2022/23. And noted that the Department for Transport had adjusted the West of England allocation with a significantly reduced highways capital maintenance element of £14.6m and welcomed the fact that through the use of the CRSTS, we are now able to provide greater certainty for the constituent unitary authorities to help them better plan their highways capital maintenance over a five year period, through this proposal to raise the annual allocation to £25m per annum.

#### **ITEM 11 - Investment fund programme**

It was noted that this report provided update on the overall programme and headroom, and outlined the extension of the current programme to 2025/26 providing £450m of funding overall; the proposals set out in the report would increase the available headroom for new projects to £66.8m.

Points raised/noted:

- \* Members noted this report and welcomed the £2m for Strategic Masterplanning from the Investment Fund headroom – they would like to be kept informed about the specific allocation of this funding in due course.

#### **ITEM 12 - Investment fund – change requests**

It was noted that this report sought approval for change requests for schemes within the current Investment Fund programme.

Points raised/noted:

- \* Members noted this report but asked that officers send some further information:
  - on the latest position on the timeline for producing the Spatial Development Strategy.
  - to explain the delay in taking forward the specific housing delivery programme through the North Keynsham Land Acquisition Fund.

#### **ITEM 13 - REGIONAL RECOVERY AND ADAPTIONS FUND**

It was noted that this report sought approval for additional funding to support the next phase

of regional recovery and adaption in response to the continued economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Points raised/noted:

- \* Members supported the proposal to allocate £5m to this fund and would be interested to receive further background information from officers on the detail / evidence on those sectors of the economy that suffered the greatest impacts through the pandemic.

#### **ITEM 14 - Green Recovery Fund**

It was noted that this report provided an update on the Green Recovery Fund, including indicative allocations by priority theme, and outlined the process for developing and assessing proposals.

Points raised/noted:

- \* Members were pleased to see this initial report. In relation to retrofitting of buildings to achieve carbon reductions, it would be important to be mindful of value for money considerations. It was suggested that opportunities around private investment /placemaking initiatives could be explored.

#### **ITEM 15 - city region sustainable transport settlement**

It was noted that this report requested agreement on the submission of the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) to the Department for Transport on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2022.

Points raised/noted:

- \* Board members were supportive of the proposed submission and note that the proposals build on and take account of existing plans including the bus strategy.
- \* They commented that in terms of liveable neighbourhoods, early and sustained local engagement within communities will be critical.
- \* Whilst supporting the emphasis on Sustainable Transport Corridors, they felt that it would be crucial that walking and cycling schemes are integrated into scheme development.

#### **ITEM 16 - On bus 'tap on/tap off' project**

It was noted that this report updated members on development of the On Bus 'Tap on, Tap off' project and sought approval of the Full Business Case.

Points raised/noted:

- \* Members were very supportive of this report, noting that Phase 1 of the project will deliver an individual operator contactless 'tap on tap off' facility, with capping for adult tickets, on all buses in the West of England. They would also encourage the widest possible future extension of this into the future, eg linking in with the regional rail network.

#### **item 17 - ENHANCED partnership PLAN AND SCHEMES FOR BUSES**

It was noted that this report provided an update on the development of a joint Enhanced Partnership Plan and Schemes with North Somerset Council, as required by the National Bus Strategy, and to seek delegated authority to approve the final documents.

Points raised/noted:

- \* Members were supportive of this report and asked that reference was also made to the comments of the Transport Sub-Group at Appendix 1.
- \* As a specific issue, they suggested that the lack of a bus service to/from Avonmeads retail park represents a deficiency in the current bus network.



**ITEM 18 - Supported bus services procurement**

It was noted that this report sought approval to carry out the procurement of supported bus services across the region and delegated authority to award contracts in due course.

Points raised/noted:

- \* Members were supportive of this report – they referred also to the comments of the Transport Sub-Group at Appendix 1.
- \* They noted that the issue of procuring a Cribbs Patchway Metrobus Extension will be taken forward, it was suggested that the option of a Metrobus route serving the South Bristol Link should also be considered again.

**ITEM 19 - ADULT EDUCATION BUDGET – APPROACH FOR THE 2022/23 ACADEMIC YEAR**

It was noted that this report provided details of the

- \* proposed approach for the management and administration of the devolved Adult Education Budget (AEB) for the 2022/23 academic year.
- \* proposal by the Combined Authority to the Department for Education for National Skills Fund Bootcamp Wave 3 funding.

Points raised/noted:

- \* Board members were supportive of this report, noting that the approach will be sufficiently flexible in helping to meet individuals' skills needs as the economy continues to move into recovery.
- \* Board members welcomed the fact that outcomes are being tracked through a 'dashboard' approach; the Skills scrutiny sub-group will be keen to receive a more detailed briefing on this.

**ITEM 20 - Report of the independent remuneration panel**

It was noted that this report presented the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

Points raised/noted:

- \* Board members commented that clearly this is a matter for the Combined Authority to determine based on the independent panel's recommendations. A number of members did suggest, however, that given the range of responsibilities of the Metro Mayor, it would not in their view be unreasonable for the Metro Mayor's remuneration to be at least the equivalent of an MP's salary.
- \* Members also felt that a careful assessment should be made of the risks of not meeting the requirement that a Deputy Mayor should be in place and noted that the Audit Committee will review this as part of their governance discussions on 1 March.

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:****Appointment of interim Monitoring Officer**

- \* It was suggested that, as a point of governance / public transparency, it would be appropriate for the appointment of the Combined Authority's interim Monitoring Officer to be ratified formally by the Combined Authority Committee.

**Committee reports:**

- \* Following a point raised by Cllr Gollop, it was agreed that it would be useful for the committee to be supplied with a description of the report preparation process, including any discussions/liaison that takes place through the governance process at officer groups /

Boards.

**West of England Joint Committee report:**

**ITEM 9 - LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP (LEP) REVENUE BUDGET SETTING REPORT 2022-23**

It was noted that this report sought approval of the LEP revenue budget setting report for 2022/23.

Points raised/noted:

\* There were no particular comments on this report.

Note: following the meeting, the Chair (on behalf of the committee) submitted the comments (as set out in Appendix 1 below) to the 28 January 2022 meetings of the West of England Combined Authority Committee and West of England Joint Committee:

**APPENDIX 1**

**COMMENTS FROM CHAIR OF THE WEST OF ENGLAND COMBINED AUTHORITY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**COMMENTS TO BE SUBMITTED TO:  
WEST OF ENGLAND COMBINED AUTHORITY COMMITTEE AND WEST OF ENGLAND JOINT COMMITTEE MEETINGS  
28 JANUARY 2022**

**COMMENTS FROM CHAIR OF THE WEST OF ENGLAND COMBINED AUTHORITY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**COMMENTS TO BE SUBMITTED TO: WEST OF ENGLAND COMBINED AUTHORITY COMMITTEE and WEST OF ENGLAND JOINT COMMITTEE  
28 JANUARY 2022**

I wish to present the following comments on behalf of scrutiny members:

**1. Relationship between Metro Mayor and unitary authority Leaders**

We were pleased that the Metro Mayor again attended our meeting and that he has given an ongoing commitment to engage with scrutiny.

We were also pleased to welcome Cllr Toby Savage, Leader of South Gloucestershire Council to the meeting. We are very happy to extend an invitation to all Mayors and Leaders to attend our future meetings, with a view to enabling us as scrutiny members to raise issues with them and ask questions of them about forthcoming decisions.

It is clear to us that it is now absolutely vital that Mayors and Leaders resolve their evident 'differences' (for example, around their differing views about the merits of pre-agenda briefings/meetings involving Mayors and Leaders to discuss committee reports as part of the governance arrangements) as a matter of urgency and find a workable way forward that recognises the need to collaborate and work collectively in the best interests of our region's residents.

If this is not resolved urgently, we fear reputational damage for the region may prevail. Given

the context of the imminent Levelling-Up white paper, we need to demonstrate that the region is ready to deliver.

We eagerly await the outcome of the work being undertaken by Professor Steve West in liaison with Mayors and Leaders to unlock and understand the issues that need to be resolved and help find a constructive way forward.

We urge that public discussions between Mayors and Leaders are held in a mutually respectful manner and in the spirit of collaboration – as in other combined authority areas, there will inevitably be areas of political disagreement from time to time – the key challenge is to overcome this and focus on delivery across the areas of agreement.

We note that the Audit Committee is intending to review governance matters at their meeting on 1 March, particularly in terms of addressing the potential risks that the current political situation may have in relation to the Combined Authority's governance and ensuring sound and secure decision-making. We sincerely hope that the Audit Committee will, by 1 March, be in a position to assess that real progress is being made in terms of the working relationship between Mayors and Leaders.

## **2. Specific comments on the 28 January Combined Authority Committee reports:**

Some of the reports were considered by our Transport sub-group at their meeting held on 17 January and comments from Cllr Ed Powden, Chair of the sub-group are set out at Appendix 1.

Specific comments:

### **a. Agenda item 9 - Mayoral and Combined Authority budget 2022/23 and medium-term financial forecast**

- \* Members stressed the importance of delivering the Portishead railway line and are appreciative of officers' ongoing efforts to resolve this.
- \* We noted and supported the proposal to transfer £950k from the 2021/22 Transport Levy to a specific earmarked reserve to fund the anticipated additional costs of maintaining continuity of bus services prior to the re-tender of major bus routes in August 2022.
- \* It will be important to maintain a close watch on the impact of inflation on key activities and projects.
- \* We noted and are supportive of the Financial Reserves Policy.

### **b. Agenda item 10 – Capital Strategy**

- \* We noted the updated Treasury Management and Investment strategies.
- \* We are supportive of the specific Highways and Transport Capital Grant allocations totalling £25m to the constituent councils for 2022/23. We noted that the Department for Transport had adjusted the West of England allocation with a significantly reduced highways capital maintenance element of £14.6m and we welcome the fact that through the use of the CRSTS, we are now able to provide greater certainty for the constituent unitary authorities to help them better plan their highways capital maintenance over a five year period, through this proposal to raise the annual allocation to £25m per annum.

### **c. Agenda item 11 – Investment fund programme**

- \* We noted this report and welcomed the £2m for Strategic Masterplanning from the Investment Fund headroom – we would like to be kept informed about the specific allocation of this funding in due course.

**d. Agenda item 12 – Investment Fund – change requests**

- \* We noted this report but asked that officers send us some further information:
  - on the latest position on the timeline for producing the Spatial Development Strategy.
  - to explain the delay in taking forward the specific housing delivery programme through the North Keynsham Land Acquisition Fund.

**e. Agenda item 13 - Regional recovery and adaptations fund**

- \* We support the proposal to allocate £5m to this fund and will be interested to receive further background information from officers on the detail / evidence on those sectors of the economy that suffered the greatest impacts through the pandemic.

**f. Agenda item 14 – Green Recovery Fund**

- \* We were pleased to see this initial report. In relation to retrofitting of buildings to achieve carbon reductions, it will be important to be mindful of value for money considerations. It was suggested that opportunities around private investment /placemaking initiatives could be explored.

**g. Agenda item 15 – City Region Sustainable Transport Fund**

- \* We were supportive of the proposed submission and note that the proposals build on and take account of existing plans including the bus strategy.
- \* In terms of liveable neighbourhoods, early and sustained local engagement within communities will be critical.
- \* Whilst we support the emphasis on Sustainable Transport Corridors, it will be crucial that walking and cycling schemes are integrated into scheme development.

**h. Agenda item 16 – On bus ‘tap on, tap off’ project**

- \* We were very supportive of this report, noting that Phase 1 of the project will deliver an individual operator contactless ‘tap on tap off’ facility, with capping for adult tickets, on all buses in the West of England. We also encourage the widest possible future extension of this into the future, eg linking in with the regional rail network.

**i. Agenda item 17 - Enhanced partnership plan and schemes for buses**

- \* We were supportive of this report – please refer also to the comments of the Transport Sub-Group at Appendix 1.
- \* As a specific issue, it was suggested that the lack of a bus service to/from Avonmeads retail park represents a deficiency in the current bus network.

**j. Agenda item 18 - Supported bus services procurement**

- \* We were supportive of this report – please refer also to the comments of the Transport Sub-Group at Appendix 1.
- \* Noting that the issue of procuring a Cribbs Patchway Metrobus Extension will be taken forward, it was suggested that the option of a Metrobus route serving the South Bristol Link should also be considered again.

**k. Agenda item 19 - Adult education budget – approach for the 2022/23 academic year**

- \* We were supportive of this report, noting that the approach will be sufficiently flexible in helping to meet individuals’ skills needs as the economy continues to move into recovery.
- \* We also welcome the fact that outcomes are being tracked through a ‘dashboard’ approach; the Skills scrutiny sub-group will be keen to receive a more detailed briefing on this.

**l. Agenda item 20 – Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel**

- \* Clearly this is a matter for the Combined Authority to determine based on the independent panel’s recommendations. A number of members did suggest, however, that given the range of responsibilities of the Metro Mayor, it would not in their view be unreasonable for the Metro Mayor’s remuneration to be at least the equivalent of an MP’s salary.

\* Members also felt that a careful assessment should be made of the risks of not meeting the requirement that a Deputy Mayor should be in place and noted that the Audit Committee will review this as part of their governance discussions on 1 March.

#### **ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:**

##### **Appointment of interim Monitoring Officer**

\* It was suggested that, as a point of governance / public transparency, it would be appropriate for the appointment of the Combined Authority's interim Monitoring Officer to be ratified formally by the Combined Authority Committee.

##### **Committee reports:**

\* Following a point raised by Cllr Gollop, it was agreed that it would be useful for the committee to be supplied with a description of the report preparation process, including any discussions/liaison that takes place through the governance process at officer groups / Boards.

#### **3. Comments on the 28 January West of England Joint Committee report:**

##### **Agenda item 9 – Local Enterprise Partnership revenue budget setting report**

\* There were no particular comments on this report.

##### **Councillor Winston Duguid**

Chair

West of England Combined Authority Overview & Scrutiny Committee

##### **Appendix 1**

#### **Comments from Chair of Scrutiny Transport sub-group (arising from meeting held on 17 January 2022:**

##### **Bus strategy and Enhanced Partnerships:**

\* We note the considerable work undertaken to create a Bus Strategy and an Improvement Plan, and to lay the groundwork for an Enhanced Partnership (which is the local delivery model for the strategy and plan).

\* We fully support the focus on improving and harmonising ticketing, capping fares and cleaning up the emissions from buses.

\* Given the Government will announce the revenue funding in February and has extended the overall deadline, we fully support the approach to tailor the next steps to that funding package, also noting the significant focus on corridor improvements in the CRSTS.

**\* More details will be needed in due course about how operators will be encouraged to match the corridor investments with their own investment in increased frequency.**

**\* We would like to be able to revisit the proposals once officers and operators have refined them following the announcement of funding.**

##### **Supported Bus services:**

\* We note that all current supported bus services will be tendered, and following discussion with operators, some of the commercial services at threat will also be included in the tender.

\* We have previously heard about the lobbying to extend the current Bus Recovery Grant beyond the end of March, and note that there is no news on this at present.

\* We support the use, if necessary, of the underspend on the concessionary fares budget to protect services between end of March and the commencement of the new services at the

	<p>end of August.</p> <p>* We note that the current budget will not support all the services that will be tendered, and that the timescales are tight; as such delegated authority will be sought to decide how best to use the investment.</p> <p>* We note that this decision will be based on a range of factors including viable alternatives and the impact of losing the services.</p> <p><b>* Whilst we understand that delegated authority is needed and have been assured that political input will be sought in making these tough decisions, we would like to see a clear timetable for including the involvement of Scrutiny in this process and a timely date for a meeting of the transport sub-group.</b></p> <p><b>Communications:</b></p> <p>* Officers advised that problems contacting Bristol Councillors are being resolved to ensure timely and direct communications. In the meantime Bristol Councillors noted that Cllr Don Alexander has recently been prompt in forwarding this information.</p>
	Monday, 4 April 2022, 1.00 pm, To be confirmed

**WEST OF ENGLAND COMBINED AUTHORITY  
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
4<sup>th</sup> April 2022**

**PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

The following questions were submitted by the deadline:

**Questions from: David Redgewell**

**Subject: Transport issues**

**Q1**

**What progress is being made by the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council to protect the city region bus Network from major service cuts from the 24th March 2022 to the following services :-**

**92 Bristol city centre to Whitchurch estate via Knowle.**

**T2 Bristol bus and coach station, Stoke Croft Montpelier station approach, Bishopton, Horfield, Filton, Patchway, Cribbs Causeway bus station, Aztec West, Almondbury, Hortham Rudgeway Alveston and Thornbury.**

**This will cause hardship to passengers with no other bus services to Filton College and Cribbs Causeway from the Thornbury villages and the Gloucester Road areas.**

**Y2 Bristol bus and coach station to Yate bus station and Chipping Sodbury via Eastville Park, Fishponds, Downend, Bromley Heath, Winterbourne and Coalpit Heath.**

**Y4 Bristol bus and coach station via Eastville Park, Stapleton, Frenchay Winterbourne, Frampton Cotterell, Coalpit Heath and Yate. This service will terminate at Yate park and ride and not the bus station in the town centre.**

**The Yate Park and Ride being not very safe interchanges in the evening due to poor lighting. There is also a need for a through tickets on services which go on to Bristol bus station**

**Rural bus services from Weston Super Mare to the Chew Valley have been withdrawn completely and Weston Super Mare town services have suffered network reductions with four services cut.**

**Rather than bus services terminating at the Bath & Brislington Park & Ride sites these services should continue onward as part of a network to Bath Odd Down, and the Newbridge park and Ride site.**

There is a need to provide extra subsidies to the bus network especially with the Department for Transport grant of 150 million pounds being withdrawn in England from October 2022. Bus services are still only carrying 65 to 70% of pre covid passenger levels.

## **REPLY**

Several of the changes to bus services taking place from 24<sup>th</sup> April are due to a shortage of drivers within the industry. The changes proposed are designed to reduce the number of lost journeys, improve reliability and, where possible, maintain commercial viability. Some services, such as the T2 and Y2 have been withdrawn due to long-standing low passenger numbers (that existed pre-Covid), but alternative services are available for passengers to connect to their destinations.

A replacement half-hourly service has been secured between Hengrove Park and Broad Walk Shops and will run until 27<sup>th</sup> August whilst a longer-term solution is sought.

Safety issues related to lighting levels at Yate P&R are a matter for the Highway Authority and your concerns have been passed on to South Gloucestershire Council.

The Combined Authority will continue to support bus services where possible within financial means and is working with bus operators towards a longer-term sustainable network and to deliver the priorities within the Bus Service Improvement Plan.

Passenger numbers are now up to around 76% of pre-Covid levels and continuing to gradually increase, although concessionary travel remains lower at around 58%.

## **Q2**

What progress is being made on the Metro West rail network including the reopening of the Bristol Temple Meads to Portishead railway line via Pill regarding the development consent order from the Secretary of State, the leasing of rolling stock from the Department for Transport operated by First Group's Great Western Railway? This should include an option for a future station at Ashton Gate. On the Bristol Temple Meads to Henbury loop line, what progress is there on the train services and planning permissions for stations at Ashley Down, Filton North and Henbury for Cribbs Causeway park and ride and bus interchange. We would like a clear timetable for reopening of these railway services/routes by Network Rail Western Region, the West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority and North Somerset council.

## **REPLY**

MetroWest 1b (Portishead line) - The Combined Authority and North Somerset Council are currently working with Network Rail and DfT towards a positive Development Consent Order (DCO) approval and funding for the project. We are anticipating a



positive DCO decision by mid April 2022 and upon receipt, the project will progress towards a construction phase, with detailed design the next key activity to be started.

**MetroWest 2 (Henbury, North Filton and Ashley Down stations) - The Combined Authority are working with the local planning authorities to progress planning applications for North Filton and Ashley Down. Henbury station planning submission has been delayed due to emerging design issues associated with the flood zone the site is located on. Once the project has secured planning for the stations and full funding (Both expected to be resolved by the end Autumn 2022), there will be a much clearer view of the future station opening dates.**

**Henbury Park and Ride - The Combined continue to explore the feasibility of a Park and Ride near to the station at Henbury. This forms part of a wider programme to look at Park and Ride locations across the region.**

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Statement for Banes full Council 24th March 2022 and Banes Cabinet meeting 31st March 2022.

Public transport services in the West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority and North Somerset council bus service improvements plan - with bus service cuts across the west of mayoral transport Authority and North Somerset.

We are very very concerned about the level of service and frequencies that first group west of England buses are going to operate across the city region and into rural areas of Somerset ,Wiltshire and Gloucestershire from 24 th April 2022 ..

D 2 Bath Spa bus and coach station to Midford, Norton St Phillips, Rode, Beckington and Frome reductions on Saturdays.

Reductions in services 1 Bath city centre to Southdown.

services 3 services reductions.

and 3 a services withdrawn.

services change on route 39 x39 with services starting from Newton St Loe in the morning.

Changes to the Bath Spa bus and coach station to Weston, Kelston, Bitton, Oldland Common, Cadbury Heath, Warmley, Kingswood, Hillfields, Staple hill, Downend, Bromley Heath Uwe bus station, Bristol Parkway, Patchway and Cribbs Causeway bus and coach station.

Services changes - early mornings journeys.

Services 92 Bristol city centre to Whitchurch estate which the West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority has put out to tender between Knowle and Whitchurch.

Services Weston super mare to the chew valley which West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority and North Somerset council have put out to Tender along with the Weston super Mare to Chew Valley bus service.

One of the main problems out of Bath Spa bus and coach station is the link to Employment in North Bristol fringe and to the Towns in south Gloucestershire of Thornbury, Yate and Chipping Sodbury. with only the Stagecoach West 620, 69 services Bath Spa bus and coach station to Lansdown, Wick, Pucklechurch, Yate bus station, Chipping Sodbury Tetbury and Stroud bus and coach station every 2 hours.

By using services 19 Bath Spa bus and coach station to Downend, connections could be made to Yate on the Y2 Bristol bus and coach station to Eastville, Fishponds, Downend, Bromley heath Coalpit Heath, Yate and Chipping Sodbury, and the 19 connections at Patchway for Aztec west and Thornbury.

People from Bath use bus for Employment in the Yate and Thornbury areas so the West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority needs to put out emergency tenders for these services.

The only alternative being the first group Great western railway service from Bath Spa, Oldfield park, Keynsham, Bristol Temple meads, Filton Abbey wood, Bristol Parkway and Yate.

Some trains on this route are being withdrawn in May.

Services in Greater Bristol are also being reduced on the Network and especially services number 2 2a on the Stockwood to Cribbs Causeway bus corridor, one of the city region investment corridors.

There is a problem that we will invest in the city region transport corridors.

Bath Spa bus and coach station, Peasedown St John, Radstock, Westfield, Midsomer Norton, Paulton Chilcompton, Shepton Mallet and Wells bus and coach station - and Street, Glastonbury, Wells bus station, Farrington Gurney, Clutton, Pensford, Whitchurch, Hengrove, Knowle, Bristol Temple Meads station and Bristol bus station but with very reduced bus services especially in the evenings and Sundays.

If services are being reduced now with a £150 million pound covid 19 bus service recovery grant then in October the situation will get worse.

Without further government funding from the Department for transport to the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority and North Somerset council - under the levelling up white paper on Mayoral Combined Authorities, North Somerset council needs to join the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority as the mayor Dan Norris will have more powers on Planning and Transport.

The other question is whether Gloucestershire County council joins as well which has been discussed in the past. We need a governance review for the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority as the planning and Transport Authority - and all public transport Network staff transferred to the West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority from Banes South Gloucestershire council and Bristol city council including all bus infrastructure and interchanges and bus and coach stations.

We also need a bus service review of the South of Bristol bus Network and support bus services from Keynsham, Whitchurch, Hengrove, Knowle, Hartcliffe, Withywood, Bishopsworth, Bristol Airport looking at the support services and the Chew valley with Transport hubs at Pensford Whitchurch and Bristol Airport.

And a Keynsham and Kingswood review of services including interchanges facilities at Keynsham and cherry gardens as part of the services review for support bus services.

We are very very concerned about park and ride services.

Unlike the other west country local Authorities we are still running non stop Park and ride services. Bath city centre to Odd down does not need evening and Sunday services when services buses to Peasedown St John, Radstock, Westfield, Midsomer Norton, Paulton, Shepton Mallet and Wells bus station pass the site and could operate into the site .

or the Bristol city centre to Brislington park and ride services.

where services 178 Bristol bus station Bristol Temple Meads ,Arnos vale, Brislington, Keynsham, Marksbury, Timsbury, Paulton, Midsomer Norton, Westfield, Radstock.

39, x39 Bristol bus and coach station Temple meads ,

Arnos vale Brislington, Keynsham ,Salford Newbridge Weston and Bath and coach station could call 349 Bristol bus and coach station Bristol Temple meads Arnos vale Brislington Keynsham buses could call.

Park and ride service sare costing a lot of public money and we should review the way the West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority and North Somerset council deliver park and ride service and with Banes council.

We need a marketing campaign for buses and public transport with the West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority and North Somerset council on buses and trains and Tourist information centre in Bath Spa bus and coach station and Bristol bus station.

On rail, we are concerned at the Department for Transport services cuts

About the loss of the Great Malvern to Brighton services which calls at Malvern links Worcester Forget street shrub hill,

Ashchurch for Tewkesbury, Cheltenham spa, Gloucester central, Cam and Dursley, Yate Bristol Parkway, Filton Abbey wood, Bristol Temple Meads, Keynsham, Oldfield park, Bath Spa, Bradford on Avon, Trowbridge, Westbury, Warminster, Salisbury, Romsey, Southampton central Fareham, Havant, Chichester, Worthing and Brighton.

And cross Bristol and Bath train services from May 2022.

David Redgewell South West Transport Network and Railfuture Severnside.

## Statement to WECA scrutiny and oversight committee – 4<sup>th</sup> April 2022

Statement from Maddy Longhurst on behalf of Tiny House Community Bristol, with support from Sorrel Housing Coop and Furze Housing Coop (see end)

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Tiny House Community Bristol (THCB) is part of the thriving community-led housing sector in the West of England.

We'd like to offer some clear ways in which WECA can support its continued growth, and are asking this committee to lend its support.

A 10 year strategy for Community Led Housing (CLH) is being collaboratively written with key housing stakeholders and housing innovators, led by Bristol Community Land Trust. We think WECA should be part of shaping this strategy alongside others and to play a key role in bringing the vision to life. Can you help ensure WECA plays its part?

Community-led housing worldwide is generating inclusive, regenerative models of housing, changing the daily lived experience of people and entire neighbourhoods. It enables people to create, deliver and manage their own housing solutions together in the ever growing gaps where market and state do not, can not or will not provide.

When Steve Dale, CEO of Bristol Community Land Trust met with Dan Norris prior to his election, Dan saw the potential for CLH to help meet WECA's goals, and laid down this challenge: we as a sector would need to be able to work at pace and scale. We are ready to meet that challenge and would welcome the opportunity to plan a joint approach with Mr Norris and his team. Numerous invitations to further this conversation have been met with no response as yet including most recently an invitation to a meeting in June to discuss the national CLH picture where other mayors will be present. Mr Norris has so far declined. A recent email to Mr Norris was sent from my THCB co-director Rachel Butler, asking about WECA's support and funding for Community Led Housing. Mr Norris replied that there is no funding for CLH.

CLH is an approach that involves **local people taking an active part in the planning, development, ownership or management of land and homes** – often through a community land trust or a cooperative. Typically, this results in **genuinely and permanently affordable homes, of a high environmental specification, on sites which are unavailable or unattractive to mainstream developers or housing associations**. This generates diverse and sustained social, environmental and economic benefits to a degree unseen elsewhere in the housing sector. We think WECA should actively support this. We understand that there is not currently a WECA funding pot reserved for community led housing, but there is money for housing. We invite Mr Norris to think creatively about how we use existing resources and how we work together to attract further investment. We have a one-off opportunity to keep the momentum going. Let's not waste it.

Community Led Housing improves skills, builds social cohesion and trust, increases community resilience, addresses structural inequalities and keeps resources circulating in the local community and local economy. Every £1 invested in community led housing yields a £3 return on investment in terms of improved health and wellbeing. The more we do it, the better we will get at it, the more needs we will meet and the quicker we will build the vital social and economic frameworks that hold communities together.

The West of England is now a national leader in CLH. This is thanks, in large part, to central government funding which has led to the creation of **Community Led Homes West**, the CLH enabling hub for the West of England and a range of supportive policies and practices in local government. The CLH West service is hosted by Bristol Community Land Trust and works with public and private landowners to make land available for housing. It provides the technical support those communities need to be able to obtain land and to secure the finance to develop it.

Today there are over 20 live CLH projects in the West of England, which represents a pipeline of around **400 homes**. These include initiatives in Clevedon, Churchill, Corston, Marshfield, Pill and in Bristol: Hillfields, Knowle West, Lawrence Weston, Lockleaze, Sea Mills, and Southmead to name but a few.

But the pump-priming funding for the sector ends in June 2022 - this pipeline is at risk. We need all stakeholders to work together to ensure the continued success of CLH West and the wider CLH sector.

With WECA tasked with improving the pace and quality of housing delivery we believe it should offer support now.

We'd like the committee to encourage Metro Mayor Dan Norris to meet representatives of our sector and visit CLH projects. We think it fits his role to attract that investment, to provide political leadership on this issue and empower his officers to proactively support our sector. With an acute shortage of affordable housing across the West of England, and too much poor quality new housing not fit for the future still being given planning permission, we need a counterweight: communities are ready to organise to create their own housing solutions, fit for the future, and WECA is part of the solution.

**We would like Dan Norris and his team to do the following:**

- Meet with representatives of our sector to learn about how Community Led Housing (CLH) can support the objectives of WECA
- Help to identify and secure £100,000 per annum to amplify and sustain the impact of the CLH West Hub, and work with them to attract investment into a £1.7 million revolving fund for community led housing
- Explore how existing resources (such as the WECA Investment Fund) could make funding available to support the growth of our sector

- Explore how WECA could help to make land available for community led housing initiatives (e.g. through the Joint Assets Board)
- Broker partnerships with Registered Providers and private developers
- Establish a task and finish group (like that which was established for Modern Methods of Construction - MMC) to look at how we can establish the West of England as a Regional Centre of Excellence in Community Led Housing
- Include an ambitious sub-target for community led housing delivery in the Spatial Development Strategy - to be collectively agreed
- Support the efforts of Bristol Community Land Trust, the CLH West hub and Community Led Housing groups across the four authorities, to lobby central government for a renewal/expansion of the Community Housing Fund

**Please support this proposal.**

Thank you.

Tiny House Community Bristol (THCB)

Tiny House Community Bristol has been supported by CLH West and Bristol's pioneering CLH Land Disposal Policy to bring forward the UK's first tiny house regenerative settlement. This will provide 12-15 genuinely and permanently affordable homes and a range of shared facilities. It will be a zero car, zero waste development where energy will be generated, nutritious food grown, resources shared and water saved. We will be housing people from the housing register and those whose needs are not met by the out-of-control housing system.

We are indebted to the work of CLH West and the CLH enablers who have supported us throughout. It would not happen without them. All groups like ours need support, guidance, until such a time as Community Led Housing is mainstream. We are innovating left right and centre, together, and bringing joy, security and empowerment in the process. [www.tinyhousecommunitybristol.org](http://www.tinyhousecommunitybristol.org)

Sorrel Housing Co-operative, Bristol

As a member of a fledgling CLH group in Bristol (Sorrel Housing Co-operative), we have benefited greatly from the knowledge and support provided from CLH West. We are currently in the process of acquiring land through Bristol City Council's Land Disposal Policy to custom-build long-term affordable, secure and sustainable homes. If successful, we will be housing those for whom the private rented sector is failing. We are indebted to the work of CLH West and their advisors, without whom we would not have made it this far and without whose continued support we will struggle to realise our goals: building homes and communities that are resilient, joyful and empowered. <https://sorrelhousingcoop.wordpress.com/>

## Furze Housing Co-operative

Furze Housing Co-operative is one of the preferred bidders on a site in Lockleaze, and are planning to build 4 or 5 custom built shared houses where there are currently derelict garages which are an eyesore and fly-tipping site. Our project aims to bring together families and single people across generations to tackle loneliness and isolation, in a diverse and supportive community to improve mental well-being. We will build to a high level of environmental performance, with a near zero carbon design, and make best use of the cycle path adjacent to the site to minimise members' car use.

Community Led Housing is an opportunity for innovation in creating long term affordable and sustainable homes. Co-operative housing has a long history of creating affordable, secure and democratic housing, Furze is progressing this model with innovations in the here and now. <https://furzecoop.org/>





## **WEST OF ENGLAND COMBINED AUTHORITY**

### **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 4 APRIL 2022**

#### **OVERVIEW REPORT - 8 APRIL WEST OF ENGLAND CA COMMITTEE AND WEST OF ENGLAND JOINT COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**AUTHOR: JACK LATKOVIC, DEMOCRATIC SERVICES & SCRUTINY MANAGER**

#### **Purpose**

a. To update the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on the reports due to be considered at the 8<sup>th</sup> April 2022 meetings of the West of England CA Committee and the West of England Joint Committee.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

**That the committee identify any comments they wish to submit to the West of England CA Committee and to the West of England Joint Committee on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2022.**

#### ***8<sup>th</sup> April reports – overview:***

#### **West of England CA Committee:**

##### **1. Latest Combined Authority & Mayoral budget outturn report**

Purpose of item: To note the latest revenue budget outturn report for 2021/22.

##### **2. Investment Fund report.**

Purpose of item: To consider headroom & tails, allocations principles and priorities. Business cases, funding asks, delegations on individual schemes.

##### **3. Investment Fund report – change requests**

Purpose of item: To seek approval for change requests for schemes within the current approved programme.

#### **4. Delivery assurance and management of capital projects**

Purpose of item: Approve proposed arrangements to identify, report and mitigate project slippage.

#### **5. Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy and Action Plan**

Purpose of item: To approve a new Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy and Action Plan.

#### **6. Green Recovery Fund**

Purpose of item: To consider overall principles for the fund and approve selected business cases and delegations.

#### **7. Regional Recovery & Adaptions Fund**

Purpose of item: To approve an additional allocation of £5m.

#### **8. Business Case – “The Courts”**

Purpose of item: To Seek approval of the Full Business Case for £757K of funding for ‘The Courts’ led by Creative Youth Network

#### **9. Business Case – “West of England Careers Hub”**

Purpose of item: To Seek approval of the Full Business Case for £750K for the continuation of the service (Subject to satisfactory evaluation)

#### **10. Bus services – Transport Levy**

Purpose of item: To Approve changes to the transport levy to enable the combined authority to protect key services following the withdrawal of government funding.

#### **11. (To be confirmed) Draft Spatial Development Strategy – approval ahead of public consultation**

Purpose of item: To approve the content of the draft Spatial Development Strategy ahead of formal public consultation that will take place in 2022.

NOTE: Draft Spatial Development Strategy will not be considered by West of England Combined Authority Committee on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2022. The meeting date when this item will be on the West of England Combined Authority Committee agenda will be published in the future Forward Plan.

#### **12. CRSTS**

Purpose of item: To approve the memorandum of understanding with the unitary authorities, FBC for Portway Park & Ride and metrobus consolidation.

#### **13. (To be confirmed) Future arrangements for Local Enterprise Partnership**

Purpose of item: To consider the Levelling Up White Paper

### **West of England Joint Committee**

#### **1. Latest Local Enterprise Partnership revenue budget outturn report**

Purpose of item: To note the latest revenue budget outturn report for 2021/22.  
Selonge Russell

## **2. Joint Committee Governance Review**

Purpose of the item: UAs Monitoring Officers Joint Committee governance report.

The above agendas are due to be published on 31<sup>st</sup> March. Agenda packs will be sent to the Overview and Scrutiny committee members.

At their 4<sup>th</sup> April meeting, the Overview & Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider and formulate any specific comments to submit to the 8<sup>th</sup> April meetings (a standard slot is included on each committee agenda to enable the Chair to present any comments on behalf of scrutiny members).

**Appendices:** None.

### **West of England Combined Authority Contact:**

Any person seeking background information relating to this item should contact Democratic Services email: [democratic.services@westofengland-ca.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@westofengland-ca.gov.uk)

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