

Minutes of the West of England Combined Authority Committee

Friday, 3 December 2021

Members present:

Metro Mayor Dan Norris, West of England Combined Authority (Chair)
Cllr Kevin Guy, Leader, Bath & North East Somerset Council
Mayor Marvin Rees, Bristol City Council
Cllr Toby Savage, Leader, South Gloucestershire Council

1	WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting and introduced the members of the committee.
2	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE There were no apologies for absence.
3	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST There were no declarations of interest.
4	MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS a. Joint meeting – West of England Combined Authority Committee & West of England Joint Committee – 25 June 2021 The Combined Authority Committee 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 25 June 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair insofar as they relate to the Combined Authority Committee. b. Extraordinary Joint meeting – West of England Combined Authority Committee & West of England Joint Committee – 21 September 2021 The Combined Authority Committee RESOLVED: That the minutes of the extraordinary joint meeting of the West of England Combined Authority Committee and the West of England Joint Committee held on 21 September 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair insofar as they relate to the Combined Authority Committee.
5	CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS The Chair referred to the key item for discussion at this meeting regarding the Green Recovery Fund. He pointed out that the proposal now was to create a fund with a view to leveraging £50m through it on priority projects that target the climate and ecological emergencies, including allocating £30m from the existing Combined Authority Investment Fund headroom to contribute to the Green Recovery Fund.
6	ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC (QUESTIONS; STATEMENTS; PETITIONS) The Chair advised that 4 questions had been submitted in advance of this meeting on the following subjects: 1. David Redgewell - Bus survey / consultation 2. David Redgewell - Rail services 3. Kim Hicks - Green belt review 4. David Saunders - Solar Together group purchase schemes

	<p>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.</p> <p>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):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Kim Hicks - South Bristol wrong road 2. Stuart Gardner - Green Recovery Fund & green skills 3. Councillor David Orme (Dunkerton & Tunley Parish Council) - Supported bus services consultation 4. David Redgewell - Transport issues 5. Councillor Erica Williams (South Gloucestershire Council) - Statement and petition - no. 18 bus service 6. Katrina Billings - Green Recovery Fund 7. Tony Lloyd - Portishead line and Portway park & ride 8. Pete Travis - Bus services
7	<p>COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIR OF THE LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP</p> <p>Richard Bonner, Chair of the Local Enterprise Partnership Board commented as follows on behalf of the Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * The proposed £30m allocation to the Green Recovery Fund was welcomed as a vital first step in taking forward work to tackle the climate emergency; the fund would help create a platform for future activity. * The proposals being brought to this meeting to support projects under the UK Community Renewal Fund were also welcomed in terms of supporting businesses and promoting local opportunities. * He also welcomed the report proposing investment in the Bristol Temple Meads eastern entrance, recognising that the Temple Quarter area is a vital asset for the region. * The importance of retrofitting the region's housing stock was also recognised as a key element of the region's response to the climate emergency - securing funds for the region to achieve retrofitting targets will be a key ongoing issue.
8	<p>COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIR OF THE COMBINED AUTHORITY'S OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</p> <p>The Chair advised that the Chair of the Combined Authority's Overview and Scrutiny Committee had submitted comments. These comments had been circulated in advance of the meeting and were available to view on the Combined Authority web site.</p> <p>At the request of the Chair, the Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager read out the content of these comments.</p>
9	<p>GREEN RECOVERY FUND</p> <p>The Combined Authority Committee considered a report which sought approval for the creation of a Green Recovery Fund (agenda item 9).</p>

The Chair advised that, in his view, it was vital for the committee to approve this report today to take forward action on tackling the climate emergency. He was aware that an amendment to this report was to be proposed by the other authority Leaders. He expressed concern about the content of the amendment as from his perspective, the proposals put forward were inappropriate and he could not support the amendment as some elements of it referred to unrelated projects which did not have any connection to climate change / environmental issues. He suggested it would be appropriate for the other Leaders to withdraw the amendment. He also drew attention to the financial implications of a further delay in a decision to approve the Green Recovery Fund. He suggested that an adjournment of this meeting should take place so that members could consider these issues.

Mayor Rees responded by stating that in taking forward the work of the Combined Authority, it was critical to ensure that appropriate time was set aside to enable Mayors and Leaders to develop effective relationships and collaboratively discuss strategic priorities. This should include full co-production of proposals across the authorities, including committee reports. This in turn would contribute to informed decision-taking and to building a reputation, credibility and confidence across government and private sector decision takers in the Combined Authority's leadership and ability to deliver for the region. In terms of the Green Recovery Fund, it was crucial to ensure robust governance of the fund to maximise its effective use in tackling the climate and ecological emergencies, also avoiding any duplication of other activity in this area.

Councillor Guy stressed that he was determined that a decision should be taken at today's meeting on the Green Recovery Fund – he was disappointed, however, that it had not been possible for time to be set aside by the Metro Mayor to enable Leaders to engage with him in a collaborative conversation in advance of this meeting, given the significance of this issue. He agreed that an adjournment of the meeting should now take place.

Councillor Savage advised that he had comments/questions in relation to the report but agreed that it would be appropriate for the meeting to be adjourned at this point.

The meeting was then adjourned at 1.08 pm

The meeting reconvened at 2.42 pm

The Chair then moved the report recommendations.

This motion was seconded by Councillor Guy.

The Chair then moved an amendment as follows:

That the Combined Authority Committee approve the following revised recommendations:

'1. To support the creation of the Green Recovery Fund to leverage £50m of resources on priority projects that target the climate and ecological emergencies, including allocating £30m from the existing Combined

Authority Investment Fund headroom to contribute to the Green Recovery Fund.

2. To agree that specific proposals for expenditure from the Green Recovery Fund be developed in collaboration with the unitary authorities and brought to committee for approval.

3. To approve an initial award of £300k from the Green Recovery Fund to expand the Innovate Housing Retrofit Scheme, as part of the Low Carbon Challenge Fund project.'

The amendment was seconded by Councillors Guy and Savage.

Mayor Rees welcomed the amendment as it was crucial to press forward with work through the Green Recovery Fund. He also reiterated his earlier point about the importance of Mayors and Leaders being able to maintain regular collaborative discussions on key strategic issues such as this moving forwards.

Councillor Guy welcomed the fact that it had been possible to secure support for this amendment, to enable the Green Recovery Fund to be approved at this meeting; this was critical to the region's ambition to achieve net zero carbon by 2030; he looked forward to the detailed reports on specific proposals that would come back to the committee.

Councillor Savage advised that he was supportive of the amendment; he added that it would have been helpful if there had been an earlier opportunity for Mayors and Leaders to discuss these matters in detail in advance of today's meeting, and that collaborative meetings of Mayors and Leaders should be held on a regular basis, and this could be an important lesson to learn moving forwards. It will also be critical to focus on project delivery that will make a real difference in terms of the green recovery.

Voting then took place on the amendment. All 4 members present voted unanimously in favour of the amendment.

The amendment having been carried, the Combined Authority Committee then voted on the substantive motion (i.e. the revised recommendations) and

RESOLVED:

1. To support the creation of the Green Recovery Fund to leverage £50m of resources on priority projects that target the climate and ecological emergencies, including allocating £30m from the existing Combined Authority Investment Fund headroom to contribute to the Green Recovery Fund.

2. To agree that specific proposals for expenditure from the Green Recovery Fund be developed in collaboration with the unitary authorities and brought to committee for approval.

3. To approve an initial award of £300k from the Green Recovery Fund to

	expand the Innovate Housing Retrofit Scheme, as part of the Low Carbon Challenge Fund project.
10	<p>GREEN SKILLS AND ADVICE PRIORITISATION IN RESPONSE TO BUDGET AND SPENDING REVIEW</p> <p>The Combined Authority Committee considered a report which sought approval to ringfence £3m of the £30m Green Recovery Fund towards a retrofit programme (subject to business case approval) and to allocate £200k from the Green Recovery Fund to create a retrofit step-up programme (agenda item 10).</p> <p>The Chair stressed that the region has the clear ambition to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and become net zero by 2030 – this must include driving forward action on the highest sources of emissions, including those caused from buildings. It was essential to increase the pace of retrofitting properties to make them more energy efficient and move them away from gas heating; achieving this would save thousands of tons of carbon as well as creating jobs and business opportunities for residents. The report summarised the positive action already being taken forward on developing a retrofit programme and sought specific next-stage funding approvals to progress work in this area.</p> <p>The Chair then moved the report recommendations.</p> <p>This motion was seconded by Councillor Savage.</p> <p>Councillor Savage welcomed the proposals as set out in the report and looked forward to the collaborative action that would be taken forward to make the biggest possible difference in this area.</p> <p>Mayor Rees also welcomed the report, drawing attention to the place-based practical interventions that would be actioned to deliver the required action in terms of retrofitting buildings. It would be important to deliver at pace and move ‘up to scale’, and to target action at those communities most at risk of being left behind by economic restructuring. In terms of recommendation 2, which referred to delegating the approval of a Feasibility and Development Funding Application to the Combined Authority Chief Executive in consultation with the Chief Executives of the constituent councils, it was important to be clear that the term ‘<i>in consultation with</i>’ means that such delegations must be exercised in the spirit of full collaboration between the authorities.</p> <p>Councillor Guy concurred with the above comments and stressed the importance of ensuring that people on the lowest incomes were not left behind as climate change action was taken forward. It would also be important to continue to lobby government to increase funding to support retrofit.</p> <p>The Combined Authority Committee RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To ringfence £3m of the £30m Green Recovery Fund towards a retrofit programme subject to business case approval. 2. To allocate £200k from the Green Recovery Fund to create a Retrofit Step-Up

	<p>programme and delegate the approval of a Feasibility and Development Funding Application to the Combined Authority Chief Executive in consultation with the Chief Executives of the constituent Councils.</p>
11	<p>BRISTOL TEMPLE MEADS EASTERN ENTRANCE - FUNDING</p> <p>The Combined Authority Committee considered a report which sought approval for the full cost of £23.65m for the Bristol Temple Meads Eastern Entrance in the Investment Fund programme (agenda item 11).</p> <p>The Chair commented that Bristol Temple Meads Eastern Entrance represented an essential component of the infrastructure that would help facilitate successful delivery of the urban regeneration of land around Temple Meads rail station. The scheme would also overcome existing and future operational issues at Temple Meads. The station had passenger capacity constraints, regularly reaching capacity during peak periods, and this problem was likely to be exacerbated in future years as demand for rail travel grew as a result of significant investment in an improved station, and new passenger rail services become available (for example, through the introduction of MetroWest services). It was anticipated that the region will receive government funding for this vital project but this proposed allocation for approval today would ensure its delivery.</p> <p>Mayor Rees then moved the report recommendations.</p> <p>This motion was seconded by Councillor Guy.</p> <p>Mayor Rees then moved an amendment as follows:</p> <p><i>That an additional recommendation 2 be added to the report as follows:</i></p> <p>‘To allocate £2.226m from the Investment Fund to the Temple Quarter Regeneration Programme and delegate the approval of a Feasibility and Development Funding Application to the West of England Combined Authority Chief Executive in consultation with the Chief Executives of the constituent councils.’</p> <p>This amendment was seconded by Councillor Savage.</p> <p>Voting then took place on the amendment. All 4 members present voted unanimously in favour of the amendment.</p> <p>Councillor Savage then moved an amendment as follows:</p> <p><i>That an additional recommendation 3 be added to the report as follows:</i></p> <p>‘To approve the Outline Business Case for Charfield Station and the award of £2.923m to develop the Full Business Case, with provision in the programme retained for the capital tail until 2022/23 and the balance to be met through the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement and local contributions where possible; and to delegate approval of the Full Business Case and viability of operational services to the West of England Combined Authority Chief Executive in consultation with the</p>

	<p>unitary authority Chief Executives.’</p> <p>This amendment was seconded by Councillor Guy.</p> <p>Voting then took place on the amendment. All 4 members present voted unanimously in favour of the amendment.</p> <p>The Mayor then moved an amendment as follows:</p> <p><i>That an additional recommendation 4 be added to the report as follows:</i></p> <p>‘To undertake a review with the constituent authorities of the Investment Fund and all other funding streams available to the Combined Authority to ensure effective deployment of resources to maximise opportunity in delivery; the beginnings of this work to be presented to the WECA Committee in January 2022.’</p> <p>This amendment was seconded by Councillor Savage.</p> <p>Voting then took place on the amendment. All 4 members present voted unanimously in favour of the amendment.</p> <p>The above amendments having been carried, the Combined Authority Committee then voted on the substantive motion (i.e. including the additional recommendations) and RESOLVED (unanimously):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To approve the inclusion of the full cost of £23.65m for the Bristol Temple Meads Eastern Entrance in the Investment Fund programme. 2. To allocate £2.226m from the Investment Fund to the Temple Quarter Regeneration Programme and delegate the approval of a Feasibility and Development Funding Application to the West of England Combined Authority Chief Executive in consultation with the Chief Executives of the constituent councils. 3. To approve the Outline Business Case for Charfield Station and the award of £2.923m to develop the Full Business Case, with provision in the programme retained for the capital tail until 2022/23 and the balance to be met through the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement and local contributions where possible; and to delegate approval of the Full Business Case and viability of operational services to the West of England Combined Authority Chief Executive in consultation with the unitary authority Chief Executives. 4. To undertake a review with the constituent authorities of the Investment Fund and all other funding streams available to the Combined Authority to ensure effective deployment of resources to maximise opportunity in delivery; the beginnings of this work to be presented to the WECA Committee in January 2022.
12	<p>UK COMMUNITY RENEWAL FUND</p> <p>The Combined Authority Committee considered a report which provided an update on the outcome of the UK Community Renewal Fund submission and sought approval for</p>

	<p>grant giving to the successful projects (agenda item 12).</p> <p>The Chair commented that the bids that were approved for funding by Government were announced in November, totalling £2.4m for this region</p> <p>The Chair moved the report recommendations.</p> <p>This motion was seconded by Councillor Guy.</p> <p>The Combined Authority Committee RESOLVED: To approve grant giving to the successful UK Community Renewal Fund projects, as set out in the report.</p> <p>The Chair then closed the meeting at 3.03 p.m.</p>
	<p>Signed:</p> <p>Date:</p>