

DRAFT Minutes of the West of England Combined Authority Committee , Friday, 27 January 2023

Members:

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

1	<p>EVACUATION PROCEDURE</p> <p>The meeting was held at Turnberrie’s Community Centre, Thornbury. The Chair, Metro Mayor Dan Norris, welcomed everybody to the meeting and the evacuation procedure was noted.</p>
2	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>There were no apologies for absence.</p>
3	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE LOCALISM ACT 2011</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest declared under the Localism Act 2011.</p>
4	<p>MINUTES</p> <p>To consider and approve the minutes from the West of England Combined Authority Committee Meeting held on 9 December 2022.</p>
5	<p>CHAIR ANNOUNCEMENTS</p> <p>The meeting was held on Holocaust Memorial Day. Those present observed a minute’s silence.</p> <p>There were no Chair’s announcements.</p>
6	<p>ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC (QUESTIONS, STATEMENTS & PETITIONS)</p> <p>13 questions from 7 individuals had been submitted for this meeting. These questions together with the Metro Mayor’s responses had been circulated and published on the Authority’s website following the meeting.</p> <p>In addition 8 statements had been received from members of the public. These statements had been published on the Authority’s website prior to the meeting. The following individuals attended the meeting and addressed the Committee for up to three minutes on the topic of their statement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Robert Dixon · Brian Blestowe · Dave Redgewell · Robbie Bentley
7	<p>COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIR OF THE LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP BOARD</p> <p>The Chair of the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Board, Richard Bonner, made the following statement in respect to the items on the agenda:</p> <p>Before getting into our detailed comments I wanted to reflect on a few matters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · I had the privilege to attend the Convention of the North this week, with mayors, civic, government and business leaders from across the North. We also heard from DLUHC Secretary of State, Gove, and his opposition, Lisa Nandy. · It was my 2nd Convention, and I was struck by the confidence, the joined up nature of mayors and leaders, and the sense of real progress

- I was also struck by two other attributes, the mayors were ambitious to secure more devo powers, join the accelerator initiatives, create more local control on education, health, transport, etc. And using their soft powers to accelerate in bound investment, political engagement, and mobilise their communities.
- We workshopped 8 Policy areas, and from that the 1,000 delegates identified top 3 priorities:
 - o Inclusive and decarbonised city region transport systems
 - o Plan to deliver and improve housing
 - o Delivering a clean and affordable energy transition
- These of course chime here in West of England, and we want to see our 'mass transit' proposals coming forwards and being progressed, we want leaders to work together to create the policy framework to delivery new and improved housing, and of course support citizens and business on our transition to net zero.
- I was interested speak to a HM Treasurer Civil Servant, making the point, that our CRSTS programmes need to look to 2nd and 3rd rounds, and that as well as short term delivery, we look to the longer terms schemes. The example of work short term expediency over longer term strategic thinking is really well explained in Leeds / West Yorkshire. Similar to here, previously cocked up and didn't agree to deliver the opportunity to have trams, but now don't look back but are working hard to deliver their mass transit (9 strategic routes, station and park & ride interfaces, and transition to active travel), all that you would expect. However, the mayor is very clear that first spades won't be in the ground until her second term (whether her or another), but recognises the region needs that longer term strategic planning and delivery.
- I think that the approach being taken in the North highlights how so much more can be delivered when we collaborate, work together, engage and build trust with Government. Working together to create Optimism, Opportunity and Hope, using our Powers, hard and soft to make sure that happens.
- Hopefully with so much to get through today, we can bring the best of ourselves to this committee, and work together to get the very best outcomes for our citizens, and businesses to thrive and invest.

Mayoral and Combined authority budget 2023/24 and medium-term financial STRATEGY

- § I am pleased to see that it has been a successful year in terms of attracting additional funding into the region.
- § It is important that we recognise that the West of England Combined Authority is changing and that it needs to adapt and have the resources in place to ensure that it has the skills and capacity to deliver the significant programme of work ahead for the benefits of the economy, and ultimately the residents and businesses of the region.
- § The LEP Board is supportive and keen to increase its engagement and 'step change' positively the Combined Authority's reputation with government, business, and residents.

Investment Fund Programme

- § It is clear that inflation is already having an impact on the programme with a number of schemes facing significant cost increases and it will be important to keep this under regular review.
- § I welcome the proposed funding for the West of England Support Programme and that UKSPF is being blended with the Investment Fund to deliver greater benefit and I look forward to seeing the details of this £8.5m package when they come forward.
- § I recognise the issue of the large cost increase for the Arena Infrastructure Package and the need to fully review this, but fully support the scheme which is key to providing good,

and sustainable, travel to the Arena and the wider area.

In relation to Business Support Programme:

- § The Investment Fund report includes a recommendation to allocate £4.8m towards a new £8.5m West of England Business Support programme.
- § The landscape remains complex and difficult for SMEs, and therefore the Combined Authority and Unitary Authorities have a fundamental role to play in maintaining and sustaining the best possible conditions for businesses to thrive.
- § The Local Enterprise Partnership Board this month received a presentation on the work of the West of England Growth Hub. The service has significantly increased its reach and impact, supporting just short of 10,000 businesses.
- § In addition, though the Combined Authority's £5m investment in the Local Industrial Strategy Productivity Challenge, including programmes like Tech for Growth and the Universal Business Support Programme, a total of 160 business start-ups and 237 new jobs have been created, with 54% of businesses supported already experiencing productivity increases.
- § The new investment will build on this progress to put in place new capacity, regionally and locally, alongside a set of strategic projects which will, over 3 years, support 5,707 businesses, create 262 new businesses and 370 jobs, and achieve a GVA uplift of £21.3m

Investment Fund Delivery Assurance

- § I note that the process of challenge and support for projects is now in operation with the creation of the Programme Review Board and this should help support timely delivery and minimise delays which have been an issue for the programme to date.

Transport Paper

- § With such a significant programme of transport infrastructure investment planned over the next few years, it's exciting to see projects coming forward which are ready to transition into the construction phase. The three projects, MetroWest 2, cycle hangars and Integrated Micromobility Service will be some of first projects where we will see our investment unlock connectivity, decarbonisation and economic benefits for the Combined Authority region.

Transforming Cities Fund

- § It has been encouraging to see the amounts of investment received since the Transforming Cities Fund was initially awarded in late 2018 for the development and construction of major transport schemes.
- § I would also like to reflect that there are some lessons learnt and significant changes needed to ensure we deliver for the region.
- § I would like to support this paper and ensure that the funding is spend to the benefit of the region.

Capital Strategy including Treasury Management & investment

- § I note that the information presented in the detailed capital budget for 2023/24, and indicative budget up to 2026/27 again demonstrates the significant capital growth in funding within the Combined Authority.

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Chair of the Authority's Overview & Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Winston Duguid, attended the meeting and submitted the views of that Committee on the agenda items. The Overview & Scrutiny Committee had met to discuss the items on the agenda a few days previously. The comments submitted had been circulated prior to the meeting and published on the Authority's website.

9 MAYORAL AND COMBINED AUTHORITY BUDGET 2023/24 AND MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

Metro Mayor Dan Norris introduced a report by stating that the Authority was moving forward with a plan that recognised the impact of the economic slowdown and the impact of inflation on our residents and business in the West of England. He stated that officers had provided a transparent report to enable the Authority to meet the local challenges. He warned that delays would slow delivery as well as reducing purchasing power and value for money due to the inflationary levels.

The recommendations were moved by Metro Mayor Dan Norris. He stated that he also wished to move an additional effectiveness and efficiencies recommendation.

There was a request for an adjournment for the members of the Committee to discuss any additional recommendations and/or amendments.

The meeting adjourned at 1348 and reconvened at 1527.

On resumption of the meeting Councillor Toby Savage stated that he wished to move two additional recommendations as follows. These recommendations would become recommendations 1 & 2, with the existing recommendations becoming recommendations 3-5. This would be seconded by Cllr Kevin Guy.

"1. Approve the combined authority budget for 2023/24 as summarised in figure 6 and the relevant related supporting appendices, with the exception of the £8m staffing increase, of which 10% will be withheld to enable further work to be undertaken to assess the relevant need against pressures on services. The remaining funds will be released following the unanimous approval of the Combined Authority Chief Executive and Chief Executives of the Constituent Councils. Should a decision not receive unanimous approval the matter will be returned to the next Combined Authority Committee.

2. That the acting Chief Executive works with UA Chief Executives on a programme of effectiveness and efficiency reviews to be agreed at the March 2023 committee, including the delivery timescales for such reviews, which will include appropriate value for money testing with external validation where appropriate, this will include the development of a risk-based reserve policy as referred in para 4."

The Interim Chief Executive stated that this enabled the Authority to pass a robust budget and keep up the pace of delivery.

Councillor Savage stated that he accepted the need for additional resources to deliver the programme of work and strengthening of governance. It was important to balance the needs of residents and maximising the value for money. Leaders needed to ensure that they spent the available money as wisely as they could.

[voting arrangements: A unanimous vote in favour at full meeting of the Combined Authority by all members appointed by the by the constituent Authorities or substitute members acting in place of those members, present and voting].

The recommendations were carried unanimously.

The Committee **RESOLVED**:

1. Approve the combined authority budget for 2023/24 as summarised in figure 6 and the relevant related supporting appendices, with the exception of the £8m staffing increase, of which 10% will be withheld to enable further work to be undertaken to assess the relevant need against pressures on services. The remaining funds will be released following the unanimous approval of the Combined Authority Chief Executive and Chief Executives of the Constituent Councils. Should a decision not receive unanimous approval the matter will be returned to the next Combined Authority Committee.
2. That the acting Chief Executive works with UA Chief Executives on a programme of effectiveness and efficiency reviews to be agreed at the March 2023 committee, including the delivery timescales for such reviews, which will include appropriate value for money testing with external validation where appropriate, this will include the development of a risk-based reserve policy as referred in para 4.
3. Approve the West of England Combined Authority budget for 2023/24 as summarised in figure 6 and relevant related supporting appendices.
4. Review and comment on the West of England Combined Authority projected revenue forecast for 2022/23 as detailed in Appendix 2.
5. Approve the Mayoral Budget for 2023/24 together with the funding contribution from the West of England Combined Authority, (Investment Fund), budget of £675k as set out in Appendix 7.

10 INVESTMENT FUND PROGRAMME

The Metro Mayor introduced a report which provided an update on the new funding awards through the Investment Fund programme and the impact these had on the overall headroom remaining in the current investment period.

The recommendations were moved by Metro Mayor Dan Norris and seconded by Councillor Kevin Guy.

Cllr Guy stated that there were exceptionally good projects included including on better sustainable transport which he especially welcomed.

Cllr Savage welcomed the report and stated that it was important that there were no delays in agreeing the projects outlined.

Mayor Marvin Rees also welcomed the report and felt this would help secure long-term transport improvements in the region, although he was concerned about the amount of resilience built into the system currently such as bus driver recruitment.

[voting arrangements: Decision required majority agreement of Committee Members in attendance, or their substitutes (one vote representing each Authority) and including the West of England Combined Authority Mayor].

It was unanimously agreed.

The Committee **RESOLVED**:

(1) Approve the revised Local Growth Assurance Framework as set out in paragraph 7.

(2) Approve the Waterspace Connected Phase 1 Outline Business Case and the award of £296k to develop the Full Business Case by November 2024, as set out on paragraph 11.

(3) To approve the Scholars Way Outline Business Case and the award of £580k (£72k TCF and £508k CRSTS) to develop the Full Business Case by July 2023, as set out in paragraph 11.

(4) To allocate £4.8m to the West of England Business Support Programme as set out in paragraph 12 and delegate the approval of the Full Business Case to the Combined Authority Chief Executive in consultation with the Chief Executives of the constituent Councils, as set out in paragraph 12.

(5) Delegate the approval of the Full Business Case for the Arena Infrastructure Package and the award of up to £10.081m to the Combined Authority Chief Executive in consultation with the Chief Executives of the constituent Councils following a report to the Programme Review Board (PRB) and subject to the PRB's unanimous recommendation to CEO's.

11 INVESTMENT FUND DELIVERY ASSURANCE

This report set out the changes to schemes within the current approved investment programme.

In line with the previously agreed delivery assurance principles, these changes had been reviewed and tested by the Programme Review Board, who was seeking to support and speed up scheme delivery.

The recommendations were moved by Metro Mayor Dan Norris and seconded by Councillor Tony Savage.

[voting arrangements: Decision required majority agreement of Committee Members in attendance, or their substitutes (one vote representing each Authority) and including the West of England Combined Authority Mayor].

The recommendation was unanimously agreed.

The Committee resolved to approve the change requests for schemes within the current programme as set out in Appendix 1.

12 TRANSPORT PAPER

Metro Mayor Dan Norris introduced a report setting out that the Combined Authority was

embarking on an unprecedented programme of transport infrastructure investment and project delivery which would support growth and productivity across the region and will be a critical enabler to its net zero transition.

The recommendations were moved by Metro Mayor Dan Norris and seconded by Councillor Kevin Guy.

Councillor Guy remarked that there was a red line in terms of cost increases, and if those costs increased too far the projects would have to be rescoped so it was important that the projects were delivered as soon as possible.

[voting arrangements: Decision required majority agreement of Committee Members in attendance, or their substitutes (one vote representing each Authority) and including the West of England Combined Authority Mayor].

The recommendations were agreed unanimously.

The Committee RESOLVED:

- (1) MetroWest Phase 2** –to approve funding to cover stage 1 and remaining elements of the scheme. As set out elsewhere on this agenda a Full Business Case (FBC) has been produced seeking the award of £13.663m of funding (£2.6m beyond that previously awarded) for stage 1 of the project which will include the construction and opening of Ashley Down Station, secure planning approval for North Filton and Henbury stations and tender detailed design and construction works. An allocation of £6.245m from the Investment Fund (IF) is proposed for the delivery of the remaining elements of the scheme.
- (2) Cycle Hangars** - to approve the FBC and funding from the Transforming Cities Fund of a total of £360,661 (£289k already awarded for development) to enable the installation of at least 28 cycle hangars on Bristol City Council social housing sites.
- (3) Integrated Micromobility Service Contract** - that a new Integrated Micromobility Service contract be tendered and awarded to cover on-street Micromobility rental services. Recommendation that the authority to issue the tender and award the contract is delegated to the Interim Director of Infrastructure in consultation with Unitary Authority Directors. Recommendation that the authority to sign/seal the contract be delegated to the Monitoring Officer.

13

TRANSFORMING CITIES FUND

Metro Mayor Dan Norris introduced a report asking the Committee to utilise the remaining Transforming Cities Fund by March 2023.

The recommendations were moved by Metro Mayor Dan Norris and seconded by Councillor Kevin Guy.

[voting arrangements: Decision required majority agreement of Committee Members in attendance, or their substitutes (one vote representing each Authority) and including the West of England Combined Authority Mayor].

The recommendations were agreed unanimously.

The Committee **RESOLVED:**

- (1) To approve the recommended use of TCF as set out in paragraph 7.
- (2) To approve the delegation of urgent change requests relating to the fund to the Infrastructure Directors meeting in consultation with the Programme Review Board, to ensure that the fund is fully utilised by March 2023. Where agreement is not reached decisions will be escalated to the CEO's meeting.
- (3) That, subject to decision by the CA Section 73 Officer regarding eligible capital spend, to delegate to the Combined Authority Director of Infrastructure in consultation with the Unitary Authority Directors the approval of change requests within overall funding envelopes for schemes in the City Regions Sustainable Transport Settlement programme to utilise any potential underspend in the TCF.

14

CAPITAL STRATEGY INCLUDING TREASURY MANAGEMENT & INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

This report presented the Capital Strategy for the West of England Combined Authority including the detailed capital budget for 2023/24, and indicative budget up to 2026/27 and The Treasury Management Strategy for 2023/24.

The recommendations were moved by Metro Mayor Dan Norris and seconded by Councillor Toby Savage.

[voting arrangements. Recommendations 1 & 2 - Required unanimous vote in favour at full meeting of the Combined Authority by all members appointed by the by the constituent Authorities or substitute members acting in place of those members, present and voting.

Recommendation 3 - Decision required majority agreement of Committee Members in attendance, or their substitutes (one vote representing each Authority) and including the West of England Combined Authority Mayor.]

The recommendations were unanimously agreed.

The Committee **RESOLVED:**

- (1) To approve the Capital Budget as detailed in Appendix 1;
- (2) To approve the Treasury Management Strategy for 2023/24 detailed in Appendix 2.
- (3) To agree the specific Highways and Transport Capital Grant allocations totalling £25M to the constituent councils for 2023/24 as set out in Figure 3.

The meeting closed at 15.45.

Signed:

Date: