

**WEST OF ENGLAND COMBINED AUTHORITY COMMITTEE
& WEST OF ENGLAND JOINT COMMITTEE**

ITEM 18

19 JUNE 2020

REPORT SUMMARY SHEET

BUS INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

Purpose

To agree proposals for further investment in bus infrastructure.

Summary

The report provides an update on Bus Infrastructure, specifically in relation to:

- Potential changes arising from the impact of Covid-19.
- Its relationship to the Bus Strategy
- Funding opportunities
- Priority corridors
- Prioritisation criteria
- Phase One Delivery Plan (including Metrobus consolidation)
- Phase Two Delivery Plan

The report also provides an update on the following key projects:

- Mass Transit progress and finance
- Modelling progress and finance
- Bath Transport Study progress and finance
- Bristol to Bath Strategic Corridor programme and delivery approaches

Impact of Covid-19 pandemic

The Combined Authority has actively reviewed its key activities and work programme to reflect changing priorities as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Specific issues relating to the Covid-19 situation that impact on or are addressed through this report are as follows:

1. Covid-19 has created a significant change for bus and public transport operations nationally. Members will be aware that significant work has been, and is being, progressed across the West of England Authorities to manage the impact and continue to provide a critical bus network for essential journeys and key workers.
2. WECA continues to be in close dialogue with operators, and the Department for Transport, and work continues with other bodies such as the Urban Transport Group to understand ongoing funding, legacy and recovery issues.
3. The Bus Strategy adoption paper (see separate report on the agenda) details the proposed Bus Strategy. This paper also notes the need to develop an understanding of the steps towards bus network recovery both in the short-term and in tackling legacy issues as

the country emerges from lockdown. This will enable more to be understood with regard to the levels of usage and the environment within which bus services are operating.

4. Whilst the previously proposed Bus Operator Agreements clearly require further consideration post Covid-19, the key principles of the Bus Strategy remain irrespective of the specific bus operator environment.

5. The principles for investment in bus priority corridors and Park & Ride also remain sound. The provision of bus priority measures, and Park & Ride facilities, will continue to underpin the delivery of the Region's wider transport objectives, irrespective of the starting point that bus operations and bus patronage will be in as we emerge from Covid-19. Whilst recovery and legacy issues must be considered alongside these plans, it is still critical that investment in our bus infrastructure is continued to ensure we can deliver efficient, low carbon services into the future.

6. Whilst the Bus Network Recovery report (see separate report on this agenda) steers the short-term support for bus operations and the network, this report builds on those aspects, guiding the development of the bus infrastructure programme beyond the current crisis. This recognises the importance of managing the current situation as well as the criticality of an effective long-term public transport system for the region. This paper focuses on the plans for infrastructure delivery in order to:

- progress the infrastructure to unlock the network principles set out in the Bus Strategy and consistent with any Covid-19 recovery and legacy issues;
- support our complementary plans for Strategic Park & Ride; and
- review the approach to Operator Agreements once recovery and legacy issues are better understood.

Recommendations

The **Combined Authority Committee** is asked:

- 1) To agree the strategic criteria for initial prioritisation.
- 2) To agree the prioritised corridors.
- 3) To agree to the principles set out in Section 7 for progressing Operator Agreements.
- 4) To note progress on the Mass Transit project and Bath Transport Study.
- 5) To agree to the creation and funding of the Bristol to Bath Strategic Corridor programme and agree the suggested delivery approach.

The **Joint Committee** is asked to note this update report.

Contact officer: David Carter

Position: Director of Infrastructure

Email: David.Carter@westofengland-ca.gov.uk

**REPORT TO: WEST OF ENGLAND COMBINED AUTHORITY
COMMITTEE AND JOINT COMMITTEE**

DATE: 19 JUNE 2020

REPORT TITLE: BUS INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

**DIRECTOR: DAVID CARTER – DIRECTOR OF
INFRASTRUCTURE**

**AUTHOR: KATHRYN VOWLES – HEAD OF CAPITAL
DELIVERY JASON HUMM – HEAD OF TRANSPORT**

Purpose of Report

1. To update the committee on Bus Infrastructure, and specifically in relation to:
 - Potential changes arising from the impact of Covid-19.
 - Its relationship to the Bus Strategy
 - Funding Opportunities
 - Priority Corridors
 - Prioritisation Criteria
 - Phase One Delivery Plan (including metrobus consolidation)
 - Phase Two Delivery Plan
2. To update the committee on the following key projects:
 - Mass Transit progress and finance
 - Modelling progress and finance
 - Bath Transport Study progress and finance
 - Bristol to Bath Strategic Corridor programme and delivery approaches

Recommendations

The WECA Committee is asked to:

- 1) To agree the strategic criteria for initial prioritisation
- 2) To agree the prioritised corridors
- 3) To agree to the principles set out in Section 7 for progressing Operator Agreements
- 4) To note progress on the Mass Transit project and Bath Transport Study
- 5) To agree to the creation and funding of the Bristol to Bath Strategic Corridor programme and agree the suggested delivery approach.

The Joint Committee is asked to note the report.

Background / Issues for Consideration

2. Covid-19

- 2.1. Covid-19 has created a significant change for Bus and Public transport operations nationally. Joint Committee will be aware that significant work has been, and is being, progressed across the West of England Authorities to manage the impact and continue to provide a critical bus network for essential journeys and key workers.
- 2.2. WECA continues to be in close dialogue with operators, and the Department for Transport, and work continues with other bodies such as the Urban Transport Group to understand ongoing funding, legacy and recovery issues.
- 2.3. The Bus Strategy adoption paper (see separate report on the agenda) details the proposed Bus Strategy. This paper also notes the need to develop an understanding of the steps towards bus network recovery both in the short-term and in tackling legacy issues as the Country emerges from lockdown. This will enable more to be understood with regard to the levels of usage and the environment within which bus services are operating.
- 2.4. Whilst the previously proposed Bus Operators Agreements clearly require further consideration post Covid-19, the key principles of the Bus Strategy remain irrespective of the specific bus operator environment.
- 2.5. The principles for investment in bus priority corridors and Park & Ride, also remain sound. The provision of bus priority measures, and Park & Ride facilities, will continue to underpin the delivery of the Region's wider transport objectives, irrespective of the starting point that bus operations and bus patronage will be in as we emerge from Covid-19. Whilst recovery and legacy issues must be considered alongside these plans, it is still critical that investment in our bus infrastructure is continued to ensure we can deliver efficient, low carbon services into the future.
- 2.6. Whilst the Bus Network Recovery report (see separate report on this agenda) steers the short-term support for bus operations and the network, this report builds on those aspects, guiding the development of the bus infrastructure programme beyond the current crisis. This recognises the importance of managing the current situation as well as the criticality of an effective long-term public transport system for the region. This paper focuses on the plans for infrastructure delivery in order to:
 - progress the infrastructure to unlock the network principles set out in the Bus Strategy and consistent with any Covid-19 recovery and legacy issues;
 - support our complementary plans for Strategic Park & Ride; and
 - review the approach to Operator Agreements once recovery and legacy issues are better understood.

3. Bus Strategy Adoption

- 3.1. The Bus Strategy is a key document that builds on public transport delivery options to meet the aims of the Joint Local Transport Plan 4 (JLTP4). The Bus Strategy work-stream has been in progress over the last 18 months and has recently undergone public consultation and the completion of the final draft document. The proposed adoption of the bus strategy forms a separate report to this committee (see separate report on this agenda). The document emphasises a number of key principles including the following:

- A target to double bus passenger journeys by 2036, delivered by;
- A further, significant reallocation in road-space to enable faster and more reliable bus services, using new bus lanes and other bus priority infrastructure; and
- A shift towards an interchange-based network to open new journey opportunities for bus passengers, including the reintroduction of cross-city and orbital services.

3.2. As noted above it is recognised that to deliver our objectives we will need to invest in and deliver both infrastructure (including new bus lanes and other priority measures) and behavioral change programmes, using our investments to leverage complementary fleet investment, progressively incorporate network interchange principles and increase service frequency from regional bus operators, alongside the delivery of our ticketing strategy.

4. Funding Opportunities

4.1. To deliver our regional bus infrastructure plans, we need to maximise our access to all possible sources of funding. Our aspiration is well in excess of existing funding sources. There are existing bids underway alongside Investment Fund allocations. On 6 February 2020, the Department for Transport announced four main funding streams for bus services, however over recent weeks, due to the impact of Covid-19 the bid processes for these have been amended.

4.2. **Funding for Supported Services 2020/21:** The landscape for short- and medium-term funding is in a state of flux at present. The original intention of the £736,397 funding allocation was to support the existing 'steady state' network. However, the current critical bus network continues to require financial support and revenue funding is expected to be required to support and promote recovery issues post Covid-19.

4.3. Government have indicated appropriate flexibility in the use of this funding, and it will be considered alongside wider bus operator recovery issues.

4.4. **Superbus Fund:** This funding stream has been removed by Government in light of the operational financial support packages that are being provided.

4.5. **All Electric Bus Fund:** The region was not eligible for this fund.

4.6. **Rural Mobility Fund:** This fund is only available to lower tier authorities that have not seen spend from Transforming Cities Fund. The deadline for the submission of Expressions of Interest has recently been extended by DfT to 3rd July 2020. Both SGC and B&NES are considering Expressions of Interest subject to eligibility confirmation from DfT. NSC is also currently preparing one or two EoI's with some input from WECA.

4.7. There is £20m allocated to this fund. Bids are expected to range between £0.5m and £1.5m each. As this is a pilot area, monitoring and evaluation will be required. Feeder services to commercial bus services or Park & Ride sites will be eligible. Eligible areas will need to demonstrate poor connectivity from these rural areas to employment areas or urban areas, and that the current transport offer is unable to meet the needs of local residents.

5. Bus Infrastructure - Update

- 5.1. Considerable work has already progressed, to collate progress against any Park & Ride related work across the region. This has been followed by an initial sifting of the schemes to allow priorities to be agreed against the previously approved £500k funding.
- 5.2. M32 corridor study has been progressed over the last 6 months and following some recent resourcing delays related to Highways England and Covid-19 impact, is due to report in summer 2020. This will provide options and outline costs related to M32 corridor improvements and revisit the potential for an M32 Park & Ride site.
- 5.3. Proposals for bus priority in Bristol City Centre and the potential bus only use of Bristol Bridge have received some positive initial support and further funding to develop Bristol City Centre proposals forms part of this report to committee.
- 5.4. Cribbs Patchway metrobus extension infrastructure is continuing to be delivered and will provide further bus priority infrastructure linking Bristol Parkway, the YLT Arena Development and Cribbs Patchway New Neighborhood.
- 5.5. Feedback on the existing operation and bus priority related to current metrobus routes has been ongoing, and whilst Covid-19 has impacted on metrobus operations it is anticipated that work to develop solutions to consolidate the existing metrobus routes could continue and has funding secured to progress the work.
- 5.6. Updates on Mass Transit and Bath Transport Study are described below.

6. Establishing Priority Corridors

- 6.1. To support a regional delivery plan, it was agreed by West of England Committee in July 2019 for bus infrastructure to be centrally co-ordinated. This allows infrastructure schemes to better complement each other across authority boundaries and for the infrastructure to better align with the bus strategy and integrated ticketing programme. The Bus Infrastructure Working Group, made up of nominated officers from each UA and WECA, has undertaken a prioritisation exercise based on:
 - Alignment with JLTP4 / Bus Strategy
 - Readiness (deliverability) of schemes
 - Data availability
 - Initial assessment of Value for Money
- 6.2. As part of the route assessment, officers reviewed corridors making assessments against the above criteria as well as evidence from operator feedback; passenger numbers; alignment with other investment and Park & Ride sites; and UA priorities for interventions. This has identified the corridors as detailed below. Priorities have been split into two phases based on the deliverability of interventions.

○ Phase One

Scheme	Development cost (estimate)	Progress / stage
A4 Bath Road (Bristol to Bath Strategic Corridor)	N/A	Options Assessment Report complete. Development funding to

		Outline Business Case (OBC).
A4018/A37 (First Route 2, and Bristol City Centre)	£1.2m	To develop Strategic Outline Business Case. Funding to include OBC.
A38 North (Bristol City Centre to Thornbury)	£900k estimate (assumes 5%)	5% would typically take scheme through to completed OBC.
Bristol City Centre	£4m (assumes 5%)	Early concept 5% would typically take scheme through to completed OBC.
Bristol City wide bus lanes and bus stop upgrades	N/A	Included in above
A4174 Ring Road / A432 to Yate	£300k A4174 Ring Road £2.31m estimate A432 (Assumes 5%)	To develop Strategic Outline Business Case. Funding to include OBC.
A37 (S) – Bristol to Midsomer Norton	£1.17m (assumes 5%)	Early concept 5% would typically take scheme through to completed OBC.
Metrobus consolidation	£150k estimate (assumes 5%)	5% would typically take scheme through to completed OBC. Funded from metrobus consolidation

6.3. It is the intent to take all routes through to Outline Business Case (OBC), however the current progress on each corridor varies and as such the level of analysis around options and costs; and therefore the associated timescales for development of the OBC; will vary.

6.4. Prioritisation approach, route analysis and prioritisation narrative is detailed in Appendix 1.

6.5. Phase 2 prioritisation

Scheme	Development cost	Progress / stage
A38 (S)	£700k estimate (assumes 5%)	Early concept 5% would typically take scheme through to completed OBC.
A4 (Portway) - Inc Hotwell Road	£60k estimate (assumes 5%)	Early concept 5% would typically take scheme through to completed OBC.
Bath Park & Ride	£245k estimate (assumes 5%)	Early concept 5% would typically take scheme through to completed OBC.
A367 Bath to Midsomer Norton	£850k estimate (assumes 5%)	Early concept 5% would typically take scheme

		through to completed OBC.
A4 London Road	£75k estimate (assumes 5%)	Early concept 5% would typically take scheme through to completed OBC.
M32	£50k estimate (assumes 5%)	Early concept 5% would typically take scheme through to completed OBC.
A370	£520k estimate (assumes 5%)	Early concept 5% would typically take scheme through to completed OBC.
A36 Lower Bristol Road	£225k estimate (assumes 5%)	Early concept 5% would typically take scheme through to completed OBC.
Bath urban area	£105k estimate (assumes 5%)	Early concept 5% would typically take scheme through to completed OBC.
B&NES Other places	£2k estimate (assumes 5%)	Early concept 5% would typically take scheme through to completed OBC.
North West Area (NW of A4018)	£150k estimate (assumes 5%)	Early concept 5% would typically take scheme through to completed OBC.
Northern orbital route	£100k estimate (assumes 5%)	Early concept 5% would typically take scheme through to completed OBC.
B4465/Speedwell Road	£900k estimate (assumes 5%)	Early concept 5% would typically take scheme through to completed OBC.
A420/A431	£1.8m estimate (assumes 5%)	Early concept 5% would typically take scheme through to completed OBC.

Recommendation 1: To agree the strategic criteria for initial prioritisation

Recommendation 2: To agree the prioritised corridors

Programme and Funding Considerations:

- 6.6. From the identification of the Phase One priority corridors, a programme of specific interventions has been identified. The total anticipated cost of delivering all interventions on all strategic corridors is estimated at £291m, excluding those schemes from alternative funding such as metrobus consolidation.
- 6.7. The level of detail within the cost estimates for these schemes varies. Where plans are more advanced, such as the A4 corridor; more analysis has been undertaken of potential costs and therefore more confidence exists in cost estimates. Each scheme is required to demonstrate an initial Value for Money (VfM) assessment (Cost and Benefit) based on analysis of demand and data. The level of granularity

will vary according to how early in the design process the scheme is. However, applying this approach to all stages ensures that development funding is not invested abortively in schemes that have little likelihood of meeting the Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) threshold of 2.0, later in the design stages.

6.8. In addition, schemes are also required to demonstrate a qualitative assessment of benefits applicable to the scheme; applicable across complimentary modes; and/or applicable to an integrated approach along a particular transport corridor. For example, Town Centre improvements in Bristol would benefit a range of services; improvements identified within the M32 Corridor study could benefit both the metrobus M1 and future Park & Ride services. Where already identified Park & Ride schemes align with corridor packages, this has been recognised in the qualitative prioritisation approach. The prioritised corridors are shown in appendix 2.

6.9. Throughout the development of the OBC, more detailed costs estimates will be required on each scheme and corridor programme and this aligns with WECA's gateway approvals related to Feasibility and Design funding. At these later stages each scheme or corridor package will be required to demonstrate a Benefit Cost ratio of at least 2.0 substantiated by modelling outputs, the level of detail of which is consistent with the size of the scheme and the level of cost confidence appropriate for the stage of development that the scheme is at.

6.10. Initial work and scheme / corridor assessment has also considered the range of funding options and where a co-ordinated approach can add value across funding packages and where an integrated solution for transport modes along a corridor could be taken. The following funding packages exist:

- Metrobus Consolidation (£3m)
- Local Pinch Point Funding bids (approx. £15m)
- Developer Funding Allocations (as secured)
- Investment Fund priorities for Strategic Park & Ride

6.11. The delivery of our Bus Infrastructure Delivery Plan will not be a static programme. Whilst an initial programme of work around the key corridors has been identified as Phase 1, we need to continually review to identify:

- Gaps in identified interventions within our priority corridors,
- Dependencies / interaction with other investment programmes such as Strategic Park & Ride, Mass Transit etc.
- Interdependency with and development of the early proposals identified in the Phase 2 programme

6.12. As work progresses on Phase 1 and our initial priorities, the Bus Infrastructure Working Group will establish a more detailed programme for the Phase Two Delivery Plan. This is likely to require some initial investment to develop solutions, costs, potential timescales and BCR's.

7. Operator Agreements

7.1. In principle, this significant opportunity for investment in bus infrastructure across the region provides a basis for discussion and subsequent agreement with Bus Operators within the region through the provisions set out in the Bus Services Act 2017 to work together to deliver our objectives through providing:

- Vehicles that support our clean air and low carbon aspirations
 - Increased frequencies to support our modal shift, and target for increased passenger numbers.
 - A commitment to operate enhanced services to promote patronage growth.
- 7.2. Clearly operator agreements would need to take account of the legacy and recovery issues currently and post Covid-19. At present it is not feasible for operators to commit to a level of commercial services when the bus network is likely to remain uncommercial for some time and any recovery to a pre-Covid level remains in question.
- 7.3. As such detailed individual agreements could not be progressed under the current circumstances. However, whilst any overarching agreement (or Memorandum of Understanding) is not able to be specific on what operators can provide commercially – there may be some principles and objectives that may remain consistent and could be explored to progress agreements in a more phased approach.
- 7.4. **Next Steps** – It is proposed that as part of the governance arrangements for the development of the Phase 1 and Phase 2 schemes that a non-statutory overarching agreement will be signed by the West of England Mayor in consultation with UA Leaders and Local Bus Operators, which will set out the broad principles under which individual agreements (consistent with 2017 Bus Services Act legislation) could be progressed.

Recommendation 3: To agree to the principles set out in Section 7 for progressing Operator Agreements

8. Mass Transit Progress

8.1 A tender to progress the Mass Transit project commenced in January 2020 through the Professional Services Framework. Bids were received from all 3 providers in early March and following a thorough scoring process a preferred supplier has been identified and contract awarded. The cost and programme from the preferred supplier are within the tolerances expected for this project. Progress on phase 1 (Gap Analysis) has commenced and the commission will complete up to Options Appraisal Report (OAR) / Appraisal Specifications Report (ASR) stage. An option to extend the contract to completion of a Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) is also included based on performance and acceptable cost.

Recommendation 4: To note progress on the Mass Transit project

9. Bath Transport Study

9.1 A Transport Delivery Plan for Bath is required that provides a holistic approach for meeting the CO₂ targets and provide a step change in public transport. This will include an evidence-based study for a Mass Transit system within the city and linking to the main Mass Transit work being undertaken. The Bath Transport Study is being undertaken by B&NES and supported where required by WECA. A procurement process is underway, with tenders previously returned and scored. WECA have

assisting in getting the project to contract award which occurred during May 2020. The costs put forward are affordable and within the proposed overall Mass Transit approved budget.

Recommendation 4: To note progress for the Bath Transport Study

10. Bristol to Bath Strategic Corridor

- 10.1 In February 2019 the WECA committee agreed to deliver the Bristol to Bath Strategic corridor as a programme approach as part of a Housing Infrastructure Fund bid, to maximise the potential to unlock housing. Our proposal is to continue with that programme led approach to ensure maximum return. The Bristol to Bath Strategic Corridor (BBSC) is a regional priority and substantial work has been completed on the corridor which should not be lost.
- 10.2 It is therefore requested that the remaining Investment Fund (£1.7m approx.) that was allocated to the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) programme be utilised to progress the programme of works to deliver the Bristol to Bath Strategic Corridor. This programme of works will have a delivery strategy which will include the identification of alternative funding options. This work already includes the submission of a new bid (at the request of Homes England) for part of the original HIF bid, namely Bristol Temple Quarter which is discussed in more detail in the Strategic Rail Paper (elsewhere on this agenda).
- 10.3 The BBSC programme will progress all the required infrastructure, and work towards the identification of funding to progress the full corridor. The programme will establish a full strategy for delivery and progress those elements of the corridor that, to date, have had little investment as well as those with more detail. The elements of the corridor include but are not limited to: Bristol Temple Meads, A4 corridor from Bristol City to Emery Road (Metrobus Phase 1), Emery Road to Hicks Gate, Hicks Gate roundabout, Hicks Gate Park and Ride, Hicks Gate to Keynsham, Keynsham to outskirts of Bath, Newbridge P&R, Corston/Saltford to Bath. The funding allocated will also fund progress towards OAR stage for all elements and if funding allows to OBC where appropriate.
- 10.4 It is important to ensure that we are ready to produce robust business cases to government for investment. This can only be done through the readiness of strategic, financial and economic narrative and justification. To do this all elements must be coordinated. We know that finance can enable housing (HIF), but also that transport infrastructure delivery can inform housing location and provision. It is therefore essential to have a coordinated approach.
- 10.5 It is also important to note that the team are actively managing the interface between the Strategic Corridor and the Mass Transit programme to ensure we are establishing strong, coherent and cost-effective programmes for the region.
- 10.6 As part of the HIF programme, a provisional allocation of £21.8m of Investment Fund was assigned as match funding. It is therefore also recommended that these funds be utilised in the most efficient way possible to progress the corridor to delivery. Any specific projects identified to utilise this funding from the BBSC programme will need to go through the Local Growth Assurance Framework in the usual way.

Recommendation 5: To agree to the creation and funding of the Bristol to Bath Strategic Corridor and agree the suggested delivery approach.

11. Consultation

11.1 Consultation would be undertaken as part of the development of any schemes associated with phase 1 and 2.

12. Risk Management/Assessment

12.1 Whilst the prioritisation approach for bus infrastructure schemes has been identified, schemes are still required to meet WECA's Evaluation Assessment and a minimum BCR requirement of 2.0. This could mean that schemes initially identified and approved as part of the corridor assessment (within this report) fail to meet the required threshold when more detailed assessment is undertaken.

13. Public Sector Equality Duties

13.1 The public sector equality duty created under the Equality Act 2010 means that public authorities must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimization and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

13.2 The Act explains that having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

13.3 The general equality duty therefore requires organisations to consider how they could positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations. It requires equality considerations to be reflected in the design of policies and the delivery of services, including policies, and for these issues to be kept under review.

13.4 It is vital that our plans for Bus Infrastructure, and our Operator Deals, consider our vision to create a bus network that is accessible for all. Our equality duty will always be considered when designing and delivering our services, and accessibility across our proposed network enhancements and development will be continually reviewed.

14. Finance Implications, including economic impact assessment where appropriate:

14.1 Bus Infrastructure work is supported by existing funding allocations.

Advice given by: Malcom Coe, Director of Investment and Corporate Services

15. Legal Implications:

15.1 The creation of a bus strategy is a devolution requirement on the Combined Authority.

15.2 As transport authority WECA has powers to enter into a formalised partnership agreement with bus operators, consistent with 2017 Bus Services Act legislation. Any agreement would also require commitment from Constituent Council's as Highway Authorities, with responsibility for the implantation of infrastructure changes to the highway network.

Advice given by: Shahzia Daya, Director of Legal Services

16. Climate Change Implications

16.1 On 19 July 2019, the West of England Combined Authority declared a climate emergency, recognizing the huge significance of climate change and its impact on the health, safety and wellbeing of the region's residents. The Combined Authority is committed to taking climate change considerations fully into account as an integral part of its governance and decision-making process.

16.2 Supporting a modal shift away from private cars is a global imperative to deliver a low carbon transport in the future. Our Bus Infrastructure Delivery Planning is important in supporting modal shift to public transport.

16.3 Managing car dependency and shifting people from the car to more sustainable modes such public transport, cycling and walking is expected to represent a significant contribution to the region's climate initiatives.

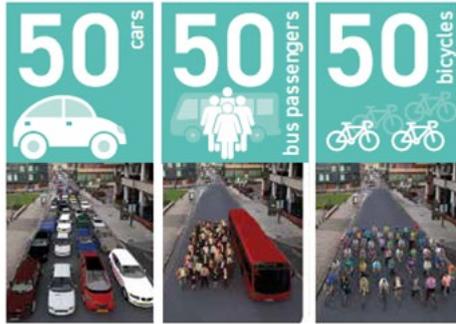
16.4 The shift away from private vehicles to more sustainable modes will have direct significant positive impacts on air quality as public transport generates significantly less particulate matter or NOx per passenger journey than private vehicle travel and modes such as cycling, and walking have no emissions.

16.5 The active travel element associated with any modal shift to public transport (where typically active travel becomes part of the total journey) supports the local and national health agendas.

16.6 Particular projects will also be subject to more detailed environmental assessment/consideration as necessary as part of their detailed project-specific management arrangements.

16.7 All interventions will take into account support of walking and cycling infrastructure.

16.8 All designs will consider implications for embodied carbon, with improvements that can be made without new infrastructure being preferred, where possible. Resilience of the infrastructure to climate change will also be considered, with implications for infrastructure and users associated with: higher summer temperatures including the Urban Heat Island effect, and more extreme weather events, including drainage. The most applicable guidance from the Environment Agency, and DfT (including updated DMRB guidance in relation to sustainability) will be built into our design requirements.



17. Land/property Implications:

17.1 None. Individual impact from any proposed schemes will be dealt with as part of the scheme design process.

18. Human Resources Implications:

18.1 Recruitment is underway for a Public Transport Programme Manager (Bus Infrastructure) to drive the efficient and effective delivery of the Bus Infrastructure Delivery Plans.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Bus Infrastructure Investment Narrative

Appendix 2 – Bus Priority Corridors - Map

Background papers:

Bus Strategy Report and Bus Recovery Report detailed elsewhere on the agenda.

West of England Combined Authority Contact:

Any person seeking background information relating to this item should seek the assistance of the contact officer for the meeting who is Ian Hird / Tim Milgate on 07436 600313; or by writing to West of England Combined Authority, 3 Rivergate, Temple Quay, Bristol BS1 6EW; email: democratic.services@westofengland-ca.gov.uk

Appendix 1 – Bus Infrastructure Investment - Background Work to feed into Development Programme

There are a significant number of identified bus infrastructure projects across the region. These have been collated from detailed discussions with officers across the UA's to identify schemes ranging from schemes with existing early feasibility development, to aspirational schemes with only very high-level assessments of benefits and costs.

Over £500m worth of schemes are currently proposed by the UA's, however these have been distilled down to priorities for Phase 1 and Phase 2. We have sought to prioritise work against the key corridors, with these corridors subject to largely qualitative assessment jointly by WECA and UA officers taking into account:

- Alignment with JLTP4 and the Bus Strategy,
- Readiness (deliverability),
- Data availability,
- Operator feedback,
- Passenger numbers,
- Alignment with other investment and Park & Ride sites; and
- UA priorities for interventions.

Improving the consistency and quality of initial VfM assessments for early stage feasibility work will continue to be a requirement of the scheme assessment process. The criteria used have been developed to provide information across a broad range of measures. For example, over the past 18 months, all UAs have declared a climate emergency. Although not specifically referenced in the criteria, the requirements and targets to meet the emergency are captured within the alignment with regional policy, including the recently launched JLTP4.

Carbon Emissions

It is anticipated that metrics for the contribution to climate change and carbon reduction will also be developed nationally as part of the review and improvements to Treasury's Greenbook guidance and WebTAG. However, with no assurance regarding the timescales or approach to be followed nationally, and with the likelihood that Covid-19 could further impact on the development and agreement of a national approach, the regional measure will be used until DfT have stipulated a new measure through WebTAG. Whilst some project work needs to be progressed in advance of these developments, approval of any subsequent funding for later design stages such as OBC and FBC and construction costs would be subject to any amended assessment criteria as this came forward.

Review of WECA Assurance Framework

Following publication of the Local Growth Assurance Framework in April 2019, WECA have also requested that consultants prepare an advisory note regarding the interpretation and application of proportionality for transport schemes whilst ensuring that mandatory requirements in respect of modelling and appraisal in accordance with Transport Appraisal Guidance (TAG) and assessment of value for money are met. This has identified some specific issues associated with bus-based scheme assessment:

For bus schemes generally, a proportionate approach will be acceptable if the scheme does not result in either a change to service provision or highway operation and capacity:

- In these cases, the appraisal is likely to focus on the costs and user benefits (including benefits resulting from journey time and passenger facility quality improvements);
- User benefit calculations should be informed by observed data for existing users.

- Assumptions applied regarding future demand with and without the scheme and the rationale for the appraisal period used should be clearly set out and take into account the lifetime of new assets, renewal cycles and costs.
- Benefits for existing and any forecast new users should be reported separately, and sensitivity testing undertaken to demonstrate confidence in the BCR and value for money assessment. Schemes that are likely to result in a change to bus service provision or are dependent on this to realise benefits should include a robust assessment of the commercial viability of the proposed service changes including forecasts of demand, revenue and operating costs relating to the new or changed services and any other public transport services that may be impacted.
- Appraisal should consider user impacts on other modes where the scheme is likely to result in material changes such as changes to the highway network or potentially abstraction from other modes.

Schemes

To progress the delivery of these infrastructure improvements across the region, it is recognised there is a need for a long-term programme. This allows the infrastructure schemes to better complement each other and be delivered on a regional basis against the agreed objectives of the Bus Strategy, that demonstrably span administrative boundaries and provides opportunities to co-ordinate the infrastructure with other schemes or objectives, and also identify funding requirements.

Whilst it is recognised that further work is required in each scheme and each corridor to refine the approach to a more quantitative approach, some initial work is required to develop these elements and no funding can be allocated without application through WECA Development and Feasibility Application funding and subsequent gateways for SOBC and OBC funding commitments. The required level of justification and quantitative data required must be appropriate to the level of the gateway approach needed.

The scope of the schemes range from addressing current transport challenges, to supporting the delivery of long-term regional growth proposals.

To capitalise and build upon this success, additional bus infrastructure packages have been identified through the comprehensive regional transport evidence base to inform Joint Local Transport Plan 4 (JLTP4) and other regional transport plans.

- Metrobus Consolidation
- GBBN2
- Strategic Development Location (SDL) supporting infrastructure
- Housing Investment Fund (HIF) supporting infrastructure
- Bristol City Council City Centre Framework
- Bath Area Bus Network Infrastructure Schemes (BABNIS)

Two additional qualitative based infrastructure packages have been identified by operators and by LA officers to complement the initial packages.

- First Bus Vision
- Additional strategic corridors

These eight packages contain a substantial amount of proposed infrastructure required across the region up to 2036. A phasing exercise has been undertaken with the objective of

identifying schemes to be progressed initially which provide the greatest amount of regional benefit in the next 5-10 years.

The proposals within the infrastructure packages are currently at varying levels of detail and development. To ensure the packages have been assessed consistently, a high-level quantitative bus infrastructure prioritisation exercise has been undertaken. The process has been developed to be light-touch, objective-led and evidence-based, broadly following the principles set out in DfT Transport Appraisal Guidance ¹.

Three prioritisation criteria have been used:

1. REGIONAL POLICY FIT – Package alignment with JLTP4 / and draft regional bus strategy objectives
2. EVIDENCED NEED - Data availability to provide evidence for issues, e.g. traffic count data, computer models etc. FirstBus have also undertaken detailed exercise looking at data analysis delays / congestion / pinch points are
3. DELIVERABILITY – Readiness of schemes

Table 1 – Criteria Scoring

Criteria	Scoring				
JLTP / Bus Strategy Alignment	Direct Alignment = 1.	2	3	4	No Alignment = 5
Readiness	One or more schemes are ready, awaiting funding = 1	2	3	4	Schemes for corridor are primarily aspiration / concept = 5
Data availability	Information on delay, pax numbers etc available = 1	2	3	4	No data available on corridor= 5

Following initial scoring by Officers within each UA, this provided initial scoring for each bus infrastructure package within their authority, using the scoring criteria set out in Table 1.

The UA scoring has been centrally collated by WECA and a further quantitative prioritisation criteria added to the combined dataset, ‘alignment with existing or proposed P&R sites’ across the region. Corridors with existing P&R sites are scored the highest, as they have the ability to provide additional benefits to existing public transport services.

The outcome of the phasing exercise is shown in Table 2 below. A lower score denotes a higher priority. In summary, the phasing exercise has identified two phases:

1. First Phase - High Priority Projects
All projects are shown to be well aligned with the assessment criteria; providing regional benefit, either on cross boundary corridors or central area upgrades, high alignment with policy; evidenced need; identified deliverability and alignment with P&R strategy
2. Second Phase -
The highest priority corridors are shown to be aligned with the assessment criteria, providing local benefit, alignment with policy, evidenced need and identified

¹ Para 1.1.3

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/712965/webtag-transport-appraisal-process-may-2018.pdf

deliverability. The lower priority corridors are not aligned with one or more of the assessment criteria.

Table 2 – Regional Bus Infrastructure Phasing

1st Phase Cross Boundary Corridors	UA Scores				P&R			OVERALL score inc. P&R
	BCC TOTAL	SGC TOTAL	BANES TOTAL	SUB TOTAL	Existing P&R on corridor? (1)	Planned P&R on corridor? (2)	No P&R (3)	
(High scoring cross boundary corridors)								
A38 (N) - Bristol to Thornbury	4	3		7		2		9
A4 - Bristol to Bath	4		6	10	1			11
A432 / A4174	7	3		10	1			11
A37 (S) - Bristol to MSN	4		6	10		2		12
A37 / A4018	3	8		11		2		13
1 st Phase Central Area Projects	UA Scores				P&R			OVERALL score inc. P&R
	BCC TOTAL	SGC TOTAL		SUB TOTAL	Existing P&R on corridor? (1)	Planned P&R on corridor? (2)	No P&R (3)	
Bristol City Centre	4			4			3	7
Bristol City wide bus stop upgrades	4			4			3	7

2nd Phase Projects	UA Scores				P&R			OVERALL score inc. P&R
	BCC TOTAL	SGC TOTAL	BANES TOTAL	SUB TOTAL	Existing P&R on corridor? (1)	Planned P&R on corridor? (2)	No P&R (3)	
(High scoring single UA corridors / low scoring cross boundary corridors)								
A38 (S)	4			4		2		6
A4 (Portway) - Inc Hotwell Road	5			5	1			6
Bath Park & Ride			6	6	1			7
A367 Bath to Midsomer Norton			6	6	1			7
A4 London Road			5.5	5.5		2		7.5
Bristol Citywide bus lane review	5			5			3	8
M32	6			6		2		8
A370	7			7	1			8
A36 Lower Bristol Road			5.5	5.5			3	8.5
Bath urban area			6	6			3	9
B&NES Other places			7	7			3	10
North West Area (NW of A4018)	8			8			3	11
Northern orbital route		8		8			3	11
B4465/Speedwell Road	9			9			3	12

A420/A431	7	7	14	2	16
-----------	---	---	----	---	----

Phase 1 - Route analysis and prioritisation narrative

- A4 Bath Road (Bristol to Bath Strategic Corridor and Bath City Centre) - the A4 corridor is the key priority and was identified as a key regional intervention as part of the Housing Infrastructure Fund bid in 2019. Considerable feasibility work has been developed along this corridor and there is further development as part of the Mass Transit SOBC. The Saltford end of the corridor is also covered by the current Local Pinch Point Fund bid as submitted January 2020. It is recognised that for the effective operation of this route and its overall accessibility for all, the interface with the Bath City Centre area is critical. BANES are establishing their strategic plan for development of place in support of addressing climate change, air quality and economic development. Work will be commissioned off the back of that work to address the bus infrastructure interventions required.
- A4018/A37 (First Route 2,) – this is a core, urban bus corridor with high passenger numbers and significant potential for growth. First have already worked closely with BCC and SGC officers on the clarification of reliability issues along the corridor and remedial measures. The corridor serves The Mall at Cribbs Causeway, passes a potential Park and Ride/rail interchange at Henbury before serving several key district centres and Bristol City Centre.
- Bristol City Centre - The aim of the city centre framework is to provide enhanced priority for all sustainable transport modes, including buses, walking, cycling and associated public realm upgrades. All forms of transport will be considered on a scheme by scheme basis, but where there is conflict; priority will be given to sustainable transport.
- Ring Road / Route to Yate – The Ring Road is a core corridor with both radial and orbital characteristics and is the route for the m3 metrobus service from Emerson’s Green to UWE and Bristol City Centre. It also serves the Y1 service between Bristol and Yate, which then routes via the A432 to serve Coalpit Heath and a planned Park and Ride site at Nibley.
- A38 (N) Bristol to Thornbury. The A38 (N) corridor is a core corridor providing inter-urban connectivity from the City Centre to the key existing and planned housing and employment in the North Fringe, and intra-urban connectivity to Thornbury. Considerable feasibility work has been undertaken north of Aztec West to support a Local Pinch Point Fund application and other feasibility work has been undertaken within the Bristol City boundary up to Filton.
- metrobus Consolidation – the metrobus network has been running in full since January 2019. Day to day experience has highlighted the need for further infrastructure interventions to address reliability issues and lock in the benefits of this high-profile investment. Officers have worked closely with the two metrobus operators to identify potential interventions along the metrobus routes which feature in this separate package, alongside complementary measures being brought forward through the Ring Road corridor above and a bid for Pinch Point funding for Bedminster Bridges in Bristol City Centre.

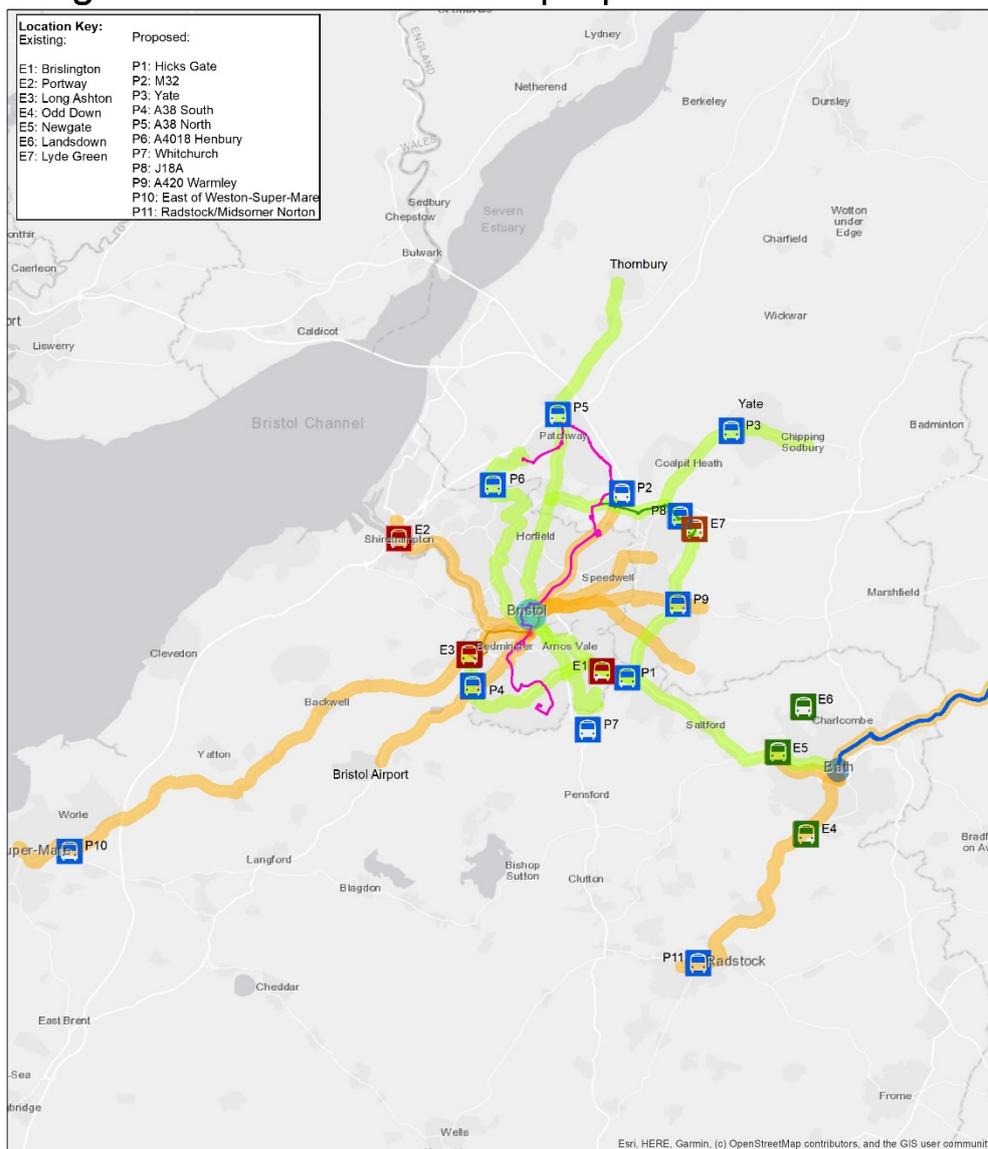
Appendix 2 – Regional Bus Infrastructure Proposals 2020 - 2036

The figure below provides an overview of the regional bus infrastructure proposals discussed within the body of the report.

The Phase 1 corridors focus on improved connectivity between the key urban centres within region, as well as supporting and enabling regional strategic P&R sites.

The Phase 2 corridors develop the network, building upon the Phase 1 infrastructure and improving connectivity into the conurbations, and supporting the later P&R sites.

Regional bus infrastructure proposals 2020-2036



Key

- | | |
|--|---|
| Existing P&R sites | Bristol City Centre infrastructure improvements |
| Proposed P&R sites | Metrobus M1 |
| Existing P&R with expansion proposals | Metrobus M2 |
| Potential A4 "Whippet" corridor | Metrobus M3 |
| Bedminster Bridges Pinch Point | Phase 1 corridors (A4, A38, A37/A4018 & A4174/A432) |
| Bath City Centre infrastructure improvements | Phase 2 future corridors |