

WECA AUDIT COMMITTEE - 17 JULY 2020 QUESTIONS & REPLIES

The following questions were submitted by the deadline (full details of questions and the replies are set out in the following pages):

Q1. Question from: Dave Redgewell

Subject: **Transport Functions**

Q2. Question from: Dave Redgewell

Subject: **Transport Functions**

QUESTION 1 - 17 July 2020

Question from: Dave Redgewell

Subject: Transport Functions

Question:

How much money has been spent by WECA mayoral transport authority function on the Covid 19 bus recovery programme and what money has been paid to Bus operators in the West of England Combined Authority area?

RESPONSE:

WECA has so far secured £1.028m of Government grant funding (Covid Bus Service Support Grant) to keep the supported bus network running at a reasonable level during the pandemic and in effect, ensure operators of WECA's contracted services remain in business. This funding has been spent on offsetting farebox revenue losses incurred while services have been running. Operators running previously commercial services that are not contracted to WECA have been able to claim grant directly from Government. We expect the Government to continue funding bus service costs, both to WECA directly and to commercial operators, while passenger numbers remain low.

WECA has committed £9.918m of its own transport budgets up to the end of September to continue bus service contract payments and reimburse operators for concessionary travel. This commitment is in line with the request from Government accompanying the CBSSG award. The breakdown of this spend is as follows:

£8.564m concessionary fare reimbursement (£4.282m for Apr-Jun and the same for Jul-Sep)
£1.354m bus service contract payments (£677k for Apr-Jun and the same for Jul-Sep)

QUESTION 2 - 17 July 2020

Question from: Dave Redgewell

Subject: Transport Functions

Question:

What money was allocated to provide emergency services, provision by using community transport vehicles and were any savings made on this year's budget by not operating services?

RESPONSE:

In line with the decision to commit to continuing contract and concessionary fare payments to bus operators despite services not running fully, WECA Committee agreed to maintain payments to Community Transport providers for their operations at pre-Covid levels in order to ensure they remain in business to start services again. Many CT providers however, have continued to operate, revising their services to support their users by collecting shopping and medical prescriptions. The funding allocated in the WECA budget for Community Transport providers for the first 6 months of the current financial year is £810k. This is all committed.