

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

**ITEM 15**

**25 June 2021**

**REPORT SUMMARY SHEET**

**STRATEGIC RAIL INVESTMENT**

**Purpose**

\* To seek endorsement of recommendations to continue the development and delivery of the rail programme.

**Summary**

This report includes the following key information:

- A proposal to allocate Investment Fund funding to the MetroWest Phase 2 project to deliver the A4018 footbridge.
- A proposal to allocate £150k of Investment Fund funding to develop the step free station proposals for five stations to GRIP 3 option selection.

**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:

\* Transport infrastructure plays a key role in regenerating economies through job creation during construction and permanently, post scheme opening. Better transport connectivity connects communities with educational and employment opportunities. The infrastructure works referenced within this report will contribute positively to the post Covid-19 economic recovery.

\* Investments in railway could significantly reduce carbon dioxide emissions from transport, and its contribution to air pollution, while providing access to efficient and sustainable transport for all. Expanding rail transport in growing urban centres will also increase reliability, reduce congestion and noise pollution, and improve local air quality. This is important for the long-term health and resilience of the region.

**Recommendations**

- **Recommendation 1:** It is recommended that WECA Committee increases the scope of the MetroWest 2 project to include a footbridge link to the A4018. It is

recommended that an additional £140k be allocated for the MetroWest Phase 2 project to progress the A4108 footbridge to outline design by December 2021.

- **Recommendation 2:** It is recommended that WECA Committee allocates £150k of Investment Fund funding to develop the step free station proposals for five stations to GRIP 3 option selection.
- **Recommendation 3:** It is recommended that WECA Committee continue to cash flow the delivery of the Bristol Temple Meads Eastern Entrance in advance of central government funding decisions.

**Contact officer:** David Carter

**Position:** Director of Infrastructure

**Email:** [David.Carter@westofengland-ca.gov.uk](mailto:David.Carter@westofengland-ca.gov.uk)

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

**DATE: 25 JUNE 2021**

**REPORT: STRATEGIC RAIL INVESTMENT**

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

**AUTHOR: KATE TREVORROW – RAIL PROGRAMME MANAGER**

### 1. Purpose of Report

1.1. To seek endorsement for the recommendations 1 to 3 to continue the development and delivery of the rail programme.

### 2. Impact of Covid-19 Pandemic

2.1. 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:

- Transport infrastructure plays a key role in regenerating economies through job creation during construction and permanently, post scheme opening. Better transport connectivity connects communities with educational and employment opportunities. The infrastructure works referenced within this report will contribute positively to the post Covid-19 economic recovery.
- Investments in railway could significantly reduce carbon dioxide emissions from transport, and its contribution to air pollution, while providing access to efficient and sustainable transport for all. Expanding rail transport in growing urban centres will also increase reliability, reduce congestion and noise pollution, and improve local air quality. This is important for the long-term health and resilience of the region.

### 3. Recommendations

- **Recommendation 1:** It is recommended that WECA Committee increases the scope of the MetroWest 2 project to include a footbridge link to the A4018. It is recommended that an additional £140k be allocated for the MetroWest Phase 2 project to progress the A4108 footbridge to outline design by December 2021.
- **Recommendation 2:** It is recommended that WECA Committee allocates £150k of Investment Fund funding to develop the step free station proposals for five stations to GRIP 3 option selection.
- **Recommendation 3:** It is recommended that WECA Committee continue to cash flow the delivery of the Bristol Temple Meads Eastern Entrance in advance of central government funding decisions.

#### 4. MetroWest Phase 2: Henbury Line & Yate-Gloucester Line Henbury Station to A4018 Footbridge Funding

- 4.1. The new Henbury train station is proposed as part of the MetroWest Phase 2 programme of works and represents the terminus of the Henbury spur. It is located within South Gloucestershire and is one of three new MetroWest Phase 2 stations. It is located adjacent to proposed new housing delivered by Persimmon.
- 4.2. The station is bounded by the railway line to the south and the A4018 to the west. As a result, although easy access will be provided to new developments to the north, pedestrians and cyclists travelling from existing housing to the south (principally within the City of Bristol) need to travel more than a kilometre to reach the station.
- 4.3. In order to reduce the distance travelled by station users from the south (including persons with reduced mobility), it is proposed to construct a footbridge that connects the A4018 immediately north of the railway to the western edge of the station.
- 4.4. The distance between the station and residents south of the railway line is reduced below 800m with the footbridge in place, meeting the SGC target for proximity of train stations to residents
- 4.5. An initial feasibility study has been undertaken for the footbridge. Further details are available in Appendix 1.
- 4.6. A summary of the impact of including the footbridge within the MetroWest 2 project is:
  - **Financial:** It is estimate that the cost of developing and constructing the footbridge will cost between £2.5m and £3.5m;
  - **Business Case:** While there are recognised benefits of constructing the footbridge, it is likely to reduce the BCR of the Full Business Case, given the significant cost and relatively short length and associated relatively small journey benefits. Work on a Transport Economic Assessment for MetroWest Phase 2 is ongoing with an output due imminently. It is expected that with level 3 benefits this should achieve a benefit-cost ratio of 2 however this remains a risk until completion of the full business case. If this risk transpires the full business case will be brought to WECA Committee demonstrating the strong strategic alignment of the project and requesting endorsement to proceed to delivery.
  - **Consents:** The footbridge will mitigate concerns expressed by Bristol City Council regarding access by Bristol residents to the station, and South Gloucestershire Council concerns about the large distance to the station.
  - **Risks:** The footbridge design is at an early stage; poor ground conditions, unexpected design complexity and other issues could all complicate the delivery of the footbridge.
- 4.7. The issues associated with not delivering the footbridge include:
  - Reduced use of the station by City of Bristol residents
  - Lower use of the station while the Persimmon development is being delivered
  - Greater likelihood of objections from statutory consultees at Planning

**Recommendation 1:** It is recommended that WECA Committee increases the scope of the MetroWest 2 project to include a footbridge link to the A4018. It is recommended that an additional £140k for the MetroWest Phase 2 project to progress the A4108 footbridge to outline design by December 2021.

## 5. Step Free Stations

- 5.1. In December 2020, WECA Committee authorised the allocation of £100k towards a feasibility study which looks at increasing accessibility to stations with the West of England by making these stations step free.
- 5.2. Increasing station accessibility was noted within JLTP4 which stated “*stations will be brought up to a new high standard with improved passenger facilities and levels of accessibility, making them step free to enable all passengers to travel by train.*”
- 5.3. The DfT published its Inclusive Transport Strategy in July 2018.
- 5.4. Initial site visits have been undertaken and feasibility reports are being prepared. Discussions are ongoing with stakeholders on which stations should be progressed to the next stage of development.
- 5.5. To continue the development of five stations a further £100k is requested to be allocated from the Investment Fund.

**Recommendation 2:** It is recommended that WECA Committee allocates £150k of Investment Fund funding to develop the step free station proposals for five stations to GRIP 3 option selection.

## 6. Bristol Temple Meads Eastern Entrance Update

- 6.1. Bristol Temple Meads Eastern Entrance represents an essential component of the infrastructure that will help facilitate successful delivery of the urban regeneration of land around Temple Meads rail station. The scheme will overcome existing and future operational issues at Bristol Temple Meads railway station. The station has passenger capacity constraints, regularly reaching capacity during peak periods, and this problem is likely to be exacerbated in future years as demand for rail travel grows, as a result of significant investment in an improved station, and new passenger rail services (for example through the introduction of MetroWest services).
- 6.2. The OBC for the Eastern Entrance was approved by Joint Committee in June 2019. Network Rail, as owner of Temple Meads rail station, will take responsibility for delivery, progressing the scheme through their GRIP governance process to project completion and have been instructed to undertake GRIP 4 option development for the new entrance.
- 6.3. The delivery works are being delivered in two phases; phase 1 will extend the subway under platforms 13 and 15 with the aim of using the existing Bristol East Junction Remodelling track closure for this work to minimise disruption, and phase 2 will deliver the construction, fit out and commissioning of the station building.
- 6.4. At WECA Committee on 19 June 2020, two key decisions were delegated to WECA CEO in conjunction with Unitary Authority CEOs:
  - To approve the Eastern Entrance full business case
  - To approve the signing of an Implementation Agreement with Network Rail to enable the delivery of the Eastern Entrance
- 6.5. Whilst we continue to seek funding for this scheme, a complementary full business case (FBC) has been developed in case WECA are required to cash flow the scheme in

advance of any funding announcement. The FBC has been reviewed and the Assessment Summary Table is shown in Appendix 2. The FBC calculated a BCR of 2.5 representing high value for money in accordance with HMT's Green Book.

6.6. The WECA and UAs CEO approved the FBC on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2021 on the following basis:

- To approve the FBC for the Eastern Entrance, in principle, as a value for money project.
- To approve use of the WECA Investment Fund to cash flow work on GRIP 5, to enable Phase 1 (subway extension) of the Eastern Entrance to be delivered during summer 21.
- For WECA to enter into an Implementation Agreement with Network Rail, in advance of any funding announcement, to enable work to commence, subject to legal review.

6.7. Following approval of the FBC, phase 1 GRIP 5 detailed design commenced in March 2021 with the aim of using the existing blockade in summer 2021 to extend the subway. Phase 2 GRIP 5 will commence in autumn 2021.

**Recommendation 3:** To continue to cash flow the delivery of the Eastern Entrance in advance of central government funding decisions.

## **7. Risk Management/Assessment**

All project and commercial risks are established in risk registers for each project, and escalated to a corporate level, and reported to WECA Committee as necessary.

## **8. Public Sector Equality Duties**

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

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

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- The Act explains that having due regard for advancing equality involves:
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

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.

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## **9. Finance Implications, including economic impact assessment where appropriate:**

The financial summary of funding for schemes within report:

- MetroWest Phase 2 - £54.163m project cost, addition to scope requested and £0.14m to progress additional scope, further funding will be requested at FBC.

- Step Free Stations - £0.1m allocated, £0.15m requested to progress to business case.
- Bristol Temple Meads Eastern Entrance - £23.65m project cost.

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

## 10. Legal Implications

There are no additional legal implications arising from this report. Legality will be verified for individual projects through relevant due diligence prior to approving formal allocations.

Advice given by: Shahzia Daya, Monitoring Officer, WECA

## 11. Climate Change Implications

On 19 July 2019, the West of England Combined Authority declared a climate emergency, recognising 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.

Each report/proposal submitted for Combined Authority / Joint Committee approval is assessed in terms of the following:

Will the proposal impact positively or negatively on:

- The emission of climate changing gases?
- The region's resilience to the effects of climate change?
- Consumption of non-renewable resources?
- Pollution to land, water or air?

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

Taking the above specifically into account, please comment on any climate change implications arising as a result of this report, and include details of any mitigation:

- Maximizing the opportunities to enhance services in a joint up way that enable integration of transport services, and in particular, a shift to more sustainable forms of transport
- Maximising the opportunities to minimise the carbon footprint of any construction project, through deliver to the whole life of the infrastructure.

## 12. Land/property Implications

There are ongoing discussions for land agreements required for the temporary and permanent works for MetroWest Phase1b Portishead Line. Requirements and restrictions agreed as part of these negotiations are tracked and monitored to demonstrate compliance.

## 13. Background papers:

- *MetroWest – Update & Funding Decision*. Reviewed at Joint Committee on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2019
- *Bristol Temple Meads – Outline Business Case approval*. Approved at WECA Committee on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2019.
- *Strategic Rail Investment*. Reviewed at Joint Committee at 19<sup>th</sup> June 2020

**14. 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 on 07436 600313; email: [democratic.services@westofengland-ca.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@westofengland-ca.gov.uk)



6. In order to reduce the distance travelled by station users from the south (including persons with reduced mobility), it is proposed to construct a footbridge that connects from the A4018 immediately north of the railway to the western edge of the station.
7. The distance between the station and residents south of the railway line is reduced below 800m with the footbridge in place, meeting the SGC target for proximity of train stations to residents.
8. A more detailed discussion of delivering the footbridge are in subsequent sections, but in brief:
  - **Financial:** It will cost between £2.5m and £3.5m to deliver the footbridge.
  - **Business Case:** The footbridge is likely to reduce the BCR of the Full Business Case, given its high cost and relatively short length (and therefore relatively small journey benefits)
  - **Consents:** The footbridge will mitigate concerns expressed by Bristol City Council regarding access by Bristol residents to the station, and South Gloucestershire Council concerns about the large distance to the station
  - **Risks:** The footbridge is at an early stage; poor ground conditions, unexpected design complexity and other issues could all complicate the delivery of the footbridge
9. The issues associated with not delivering the footbridge include:
  - Reduced use of the station by City of Bristol residents
  - Lower use of the station while the Persimmon development is being delivered
  - Greater likelihood of objections from statutory consultees at Planning

## 10. Consultation

The footbridge itself has not yet been subject to consultation.

## 11. Other Options Considered

Other options include:

### 11.1. Not proceeding with the footbridge

- This is not recommended given the benefits to residents that the footbridge represents.
- There will be another opportunity at Full Business Case stage for the footbridge to be reassessed.

### 11.2. Delivering a footbridge in another location (over the railway)

- The cost and safety concerns of building a footbridge over the railway mean that this option is not recommended.
- Construction impacting on the railway will have knock-on impacts on the programme, requiring additional closures of the (freight) line and therefore increasing cost.

### 11.3. Delivering steps instead of a footbridge

- This option would be significantly cheaper and provide a direct access to the station from the A4018.
- However, it would not be compliant with our legal duties as those unable to use stairs would not benefit from the route. It would also remove the benefit of cyclists being able to use the footbridge.

## 12. Risk Management/Assessment

Risks mitigated by this proposal:

- Risk of objections at planning from statutory bodies
- Risk of negative equalities impacts as persons with reduced mobility will be more able to access the station

- Potentially improved risk of limited fire evacuation routes, as there will be multiple routes to leave the station

13. Risks associated with this proposal:

- Reduced BCR leading to issues securing funding for MetroWest Phase 2. It is expected that with level 3 benefits this should achieve a benefit-cost ratio of 2, however this remains a risk until completion of the full business case. If this risk transpires the full business case will be brought to WECA Committee demonstrating the strong strategic alignment of the project and requesting endorsement to proceed to delivery.
- Unexpected design complexity or the results of ground investigation increase costs or programme timings. Surveys will be undertaken in the next design stage to minimise risk exposure during construction.
- Increased project scope leads to programme delay. An integrated programme will be created to address this.

**Public Sector Equality Duties**

14. As stated above, the footbridge will mitigate existing concerns regarding all users being able to easily access the station
15. The station itself will be compliant with our duties with or without the footbridge, but this increase in scope represents an opportunity to improve access to the station for all users.

## Appendix 2: BTM Eastern Entrance Business Case Assessment Summary Table

Scheme Details		Appraisal Summary		Recommendation/ Conditions	
<b>Project Name</b>	Bristol Temple Meads Eastern Entrance	<b>Strategic Case</b>	<p>The Eastern Entrance scheme is identified as an essential component of the infrastructure that will help facilitate successful delivery of the urban regeneration of land around Temple Meads railway station. It is stated that the area around Temple Meads rail station has the potential to realise 5,000 new homes and 10,000 new jobs to 2036.</p> <p>The scheme seeks to overcome existing and future operational issues at the station including existing passenger capacity constraints during peak periods, which are expected to be exacerbated in future years as demand for rail travel grows.</p> <p>The delivery of this scheme will support a number of local and regional policies including the Local Industrial Strategy, Bristol Temple Quarter Spatial Framework, the DfT Transport Investment Strategy and Network Rail's Western Route Strategic Plan.</p>	<b>Funding Source(s)</b>	Underwriting through Investment Fund
<b>Scheme Promoter</b>	WECA	<b>State Aid</b>	The scheme will provide open access infrastructure.	<b>Approval Requested</b>	Full Business Case
<b>Date of Submission</b>	4/12/20	<b>Economic Case and Value for Money</b>	<p>A transport economic appraisal has been undertaken and the scheme presents a BCR of 2.5:1 representing high value for money. The value for money statement is shown below.</p> <p>The central BCR forecast and conclusion that the scheme should provide High value for money is accepted noting the current level of uncertainty regarding future rail travel demand and current stage of design and cost estimation, both of which could result in the scheme providing lower value for money than currently forecast.</p> <p>A letter has been provided by the WECA Director of Infrastructure confirming approval of the business case and the value for money statement.</p>	<b>Grant Award</b>	N/A
<b>Funding Underwritten</b>	£23.65m (including £2.5m previously awarded)				
<b>Total Scheme Cost</b>	£23,647,548 (Preparation £4.46m; Main works £11.45m; Possessions £2.01m)	<b>Risk</b>	The costs include risk based on QRA (P90 value) of £4.965m and inflation allowance of £0.770m. Whilst the QRA has taken into account the risks due to current stage of design and costs (GRIP Stage 3), it should be noted these are at a much earlier than would normally be expected for a Full Business Case	<b>Grant Recipient</b>	N/A

	Risk £4.96m; Inflation £0.77)		Listed building consent will be required in order to construct the Eastern Entrance building		
<b>Match Funding %</b>	0%	<b>Delivery</b>	<p>There are significant delivery risks for the project given the compressed timescales for implementing the Phase 1 subway works within the rail possessions currently planned for Bristol East Junction in summer 2021</p> <p>It will also be important to closely monitor potential changes in design, costs and delivery programme, and ensure suitable governance procedures are in place to deal with any significant changes as they arise.</p> <p>There is an interdependency regarding the need for temporary and permanent land take from the University of Bristol development site.</p>	<b>Payment Basis</b>	N/A

<b>Scheme Description</b>	<b>Recommendation to Chief Executives</b>	Approval of the Full Business Case
<p>The scheme will be delivered in two phases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Phase 1 will optimise the existing Bristol East Junction Remodelling track closure to deliver the construction works to extend the subway.</li> <li>Phase 2 will deliver the construction, fit out and commissioning of the station building.</li> </ul> <p>The entrance would be opened in September 2023</p>	<b>Conditions of Approval</b>	None

#### Record of Approval

<b>WECA S73 Officer</b>		<b>Chief Executives</b>	
<b>Name</b>	Malcolm Coe	<b>Date of Meeting</b>	21 January 2020
<b>Date</b>	13 January 2021	<b>Decision</b>	Approved
<b>Signature</b>			