

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 23 JUNE 2021**

**OVERVIEW REPORT - REVIEW OF 25 JUNE WEST OF ENGLAND COMBINED AUTHORITY COMMITTEE AND WEST OF ENGLAND JOINT COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**DIRECTOR: SHAHZIA DAYA, DIRECTOR OF LEGAL SERVICES**

**AUTHOR: IAN HIRD, DEMOCRATIC SERVICES & SCRUTINY MANAGER**

**Purpose**

1. The Overview & Scrutiny Committee is asked to review the reports due to be considered at the 25 June joint meeting of the Combined Authority Committee and Joint Committee and formulate any comments they may wish to refer to the committees.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**That the committee identify any comments they wish to submit to the Combined Authority Committee and Joint Committee on 25 June 2021.**

**25 June reports – overview**

2. The agenda for the 25 June meeting has been published and circulated. The agenda papers make clear which items are for decision by the respective committees and can also be accessed from this web link:

**Web link to 25 June agenda papers – Joint meeting of the West of England Combined Authority Committee and the West of England Joint Committee:**

<https://westofengland-ca.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=192&Mid=475>

3. The Combined Authority has continued to review its key activities to reflect changing priorities as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Specific issues relating to the ongoing Covid-19 situation that impact on proposals are addressed in the 25 June committee reports.

4. The Overview & Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider/formulate any specific comments to submit to the 25 June meeting (a standard slot is included on the agenda to enable the Chair to present any comments on behalf of scrutiny members).

5. For ease of reference, **Appendix 1** sets out short summaries of all the 25 June reports.
6. Officer attendance at the 23 June meeting will be limited to an extent due to the ongoing Covid-19 restrictions.
  
7. Arrangements have been made for the following 'overviews' to be given by officers, with an opportunity for members to ask questions/comment:

a. **CLIMATE EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN UPDATE** (agenda item 11)

(suggested time allocation: 30 mins):

*Lead officers:*

*Jess Lee, Head of Strategy & Policy*

*Helen Iles, Senior Policy Officer*

This report includes the following key information:

- An update on progress towards the ambitions contained within the Climate Emergency Action Plan.
- Details of the proposed regional activity in the lead up to COP 26.

On 25 June, the Combined Authority Committee will be asked to approve the following recommendations:

1. Note the commitment to establishing a green recovery fund that will tackle the climate emergency, protect biodiversity, and promote recovery.
2. Support and engage with plans for activity to stimulate a green recovery and in the lead up to COP26.
3. Support the participation of Solar Together
4. Note the wide-ranging action that is being taken to tackle the climate emergency since its adoption in October 2020, including the range of service specific actions undertaken or currently being delivered as outlined in appendix 1.
5. Note the development of key regional data benchmarks to help monitor impact going forward.

b. **INFRASTRUCTURE REPORTS**

(suggested time allocation: 40 mins):

*Lead / presenting officers:*

*David Carter, Director of Infrastructure*

*Andy Strong, Bus Improvement Manager*

**\* BUS NETWORK RECOVERY & BUS INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAMME** (agenda item 12)

This report:

- updates on the National Bus Strategy (NBS).
- seeks Combined Authority Committee approval for the work programme arising from the NBS and the associated budget.
- updates on the Bus Infrastructure Programme and Metrobus Consolidation Package and seeks approval for amendments.
- seeks approval for additional funding for the Bus Infrastructure Programme to accelerate delivery.

On 25 June, the Combined Authority Committee and Joint Committee will be asked to approve the following recommendations:

1. That the Combined Authority Committee and the Joint Committee note the contents of the National Bus Strategy and the work programme arising from it.
2. That the Combined Authority Committee and the Joint Committee agree to publish a Notice of Intent to proceed with the development of a joint Enhanced Partnership between WECA and North Somerset Council (as local transport authorities), Bath & North East Somerset Council, Bristol City Council and South Gloucestershire Council (as highway authorities) and bus operators.
3. That the Combined Authority Committee allocate £900k from the Investment Fund tail for the bus programme for development of a joint Bus Service Improvement Plan and Enhanced Partnership and that approval of the relevant Feasibility & Development Funding Application be delegated to the WECA Chief Executive in consultation with the Chief Executives of the constituent councils.
4. That the Combined Authority Committee approve the change request for the Bus Infrastructure Programme and Metrobus Consolidation Package and the award of an additional £600k from the Investment Fund tail for the bus programme as proposed in this Report and detailed in Appendix 5.

**\* STRATEGIC RAIL INVESTMENT** (agenda item 15)

This report seeks approval of proposals to continue to support the development and delivery of the rail programme.

On 25 June, the Combined Authority Committee will be asked to approve the following recommendations:

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

### **c. INVESTMENT FUND REPORT (agenda item 18)**

(suggested time allocation: 20 mins)

*Lead / presenting officer:*

*Pete Davis – Head of Grant Management & Assurance*

This report seeks approval for feasibility, development and delivery funding, and for change requests for schemes within the current approved programme.

This report includes the following proposals:

- A further £1m allocation for walking and cycling infrastructure.
- A further £234k of masterplanning funding for the (Bristol) City Centre Development and Delivery Plan.
- The Full Business Case for Hawkfield Business Park - The Bottle Yard Studios and an award of £11.82m
- The Full Business Case for the Bath City Centre High Streets Renewal Project and the award of £1.235m
- The Full Business Case for the Bristol City Centre and High Streets Recovery and Renewal Programme and award of £2.725m
- The Outline Business Case for the Common Connections project (developing green infrastructure on the South Gloucestershire and Bristol border).
- The Feasibility and Development Funding Application for the SEND Careers Information and Guidance Collaboration Pilot and an award of £20k
- The Outline Business Case for ISTART (integrated skills development, business incubation and research & innovation offer).
- The Full Business Case for the Careers Hub and award of £180k
- To use £1m of headroom to increase recovery funding and to develop and implement further measures to support economic recovery in line with the Metro Mayor's manifesto commitments. These could include a campaign to support regional re-opening, additional support for high streets, a jobs and skills summit and green skills focused activity in the run up to the UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26). In order to maintain momentum and ensure that the urgent action needed to support recovery is timely, it is proposed that the approval of development funding applications and business cases for these projects are delegated to the Combined Authority Chief Executive in consultation with the Chief Executives of the constituent councils.

### **SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2020/21**

It is proposed that an informal meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be held in July to discuss the detail of a work programme / arrangements for the year ahead. As part of that discussion, members may wish to consider whether they wish to continue the previous practice of:

\* holding informal meetings of the committee at the approximate mid-point between the public meetings of the committee, to enable specific updates/briefings to be received, and agenda planning to take place.

\* Using sub-groups to enable more in-depth work and briefings on specific issues.

**Appendices:**

Appendix 1 – short summaries of the reports submitted to the 25 June joint meeting of the WECA Committee & West of England Joint Committee.

**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; or by email:

[democratic.services@westofengland-ca.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@westofengland-ca.gov.uk)