

**WEST OF ENGLAND COMBINED AUTHORITY
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
4th April 2022**

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The following questions were submitted by the deadline:

Questions from: David Redgewell

Subject: Transport issues

Q1

What progress is being made by the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council to protect the city region bus Network from major service cuts from the 24th March 2022 to the following services :-

92 Bristol city centre to Whitchurch estate via Knowle.

T2 Bristol bus and coach station, Stoke Croft Montpelier station approach, Bishopton, Horfield, Filton, Patchway, Cribbs Causeway bus station, Aztec West, Almondbury, Hortham Rudgeway Alveston and Thornbury.

This will cause hardship to passengers with no other bus services to Filton College and Cribbs Causeway from the Thornbury villages and the Gloucester Road areas.

Y2 Bristol bus and coach station to Yate bus station and Chipping Sodbury via Eastville Park, Fishponds, Downend, Bromley Heath, Winterbourne and Coalpit Heath.

Y4 Bristol bus and coach station via Eastville Park, Stapleton, Frenchay Winterbourne, Frampton Cotterell, Coalpit Heath and Yate. This service will terminate at Yate park and ride and not the bus station in the town centre.

The Yate Park and Ride being not very safe interchanges in the evening due to poor lighting. There is also a need for a through tickets on services which go on to Bristol bus station

Rural bus services from Weston Super Mare to the Chew Valley have been withdrawn completely and Weston Super Mare town services have suffered network reductions with four services cut.

Rather than bus services terminating at the Bath & Brislington Park & Ride sites these services should continue onward as part of a network to Bath Odd Down, and the Newbridge park and Ride site.

There is a need to provide extra subsidies to the bus network especially with the Department for Transport grant of 150 million pounds being withdrawn in England from October 2022. Bus services are still only carrying 65 to 70% of pre covid passenger levels.

REPLY

Several of the changes to bus services taking place from 24th April are due to a shortage of drivers within the industry. The changes proposed are designed to reduce the number of lost journeys, improve reliability and, where possible, maintain commercial viability. Some services, such as the T2 and Y2 have been withdrawn due to long-standing low passenger numbers (that existed pre-Covid), but alternative services are available for passengers to connect to their destinations.

A replacement half-hourly service has been secured between Hengrove Park and Broad Walk Shops and will run until 27th August whilst a longer-term solution is sought.

Safety issues related to lighting levels at Yate P&R are a matter for the Highway Authority and your concerns have been passed on to South Gloucestershire Council.

The Combined Authority will continue to support bus services where possible within financial means and is working with bus operators towards a longer-term sustainable network and to deliver the priorities within the Bus Service Improvement Plan.

Passenger numbers are now up to around 76% of pre-Covid levels and continuing to gradually increase, although concessionary travel remains lower at around 58%.

Q2

What progress is being made on the Metro West rail network including the reopening of the Bristol Temple Meads to Portishead railway line via Pill regarding the development consent order from the Secretary of State, the leasing of rolling stock from the Department for Transport operated by First Group's Great Western Railway? This should include an option for a future station at Ashton Gate. On the Bristol Temple Meads to Henbury loop line, what progress is there on the train services and planning permissions for stations at Ashley Down, Filton North and Henbury for Cribbs Causeway park and ride and bus interchange. We would like a clear timetable for reopening of these railway services/routes by Network Rail Western Region, the West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority and North Somerset council.

REPLY

MetroWest 1b (Portishead line) - The Combined Authority and North Somerset Council are currently working with Network Rail and DfT towards a positive Development Consent Order (DCO) approval and funding for the project. We are anticipating a

positive DCO decision by mid April 2022 and upon receipt, the project will progress towards a construction phase, with detailed design the next key activity to be started.

MetroWest 2 (Henbury, North Filton and Ashley Down stations) - The Combined Authority are working with the local planning authorities to progress planning applications for North Filton and Ashley Down. Henbury station planning submission has been delayed due to emerging design issues associated with the flood zone the site is located on. Once the project has secured planning for the stations and full funding (Both expected to be resolved by the end Autumn 2022), there will be a much clearer view of the future station opening dates.

Henbury Park and Ride - The Combined continue to explore the feasibility of a Park and Ride near to the station at Henbury. This forms part of a wider programme to look at Park and Ride locations across the region.