

West of England Combined Authority Committee meeting on 17 March 2023

Statements received from the public

1. [David Redgewell, South West Transport Network and Railfuture Severnside](#)
2. [Andrew Smith, Reclaim our Buses](#)
3. [Jackie Head, Chew Valley Area Forum, Climate & Nature Emergency Working Group- Sustainable Transport Subgroup](#)
4. [Ian Beckey, Gloucestershire catch the bus service campaign and Brendon Taylor, Bristol Disability Equalities Network & Somerset catch the bus campaign](#)
5. [Joanne Adams](#)
6. [Martin Garrett, Transport for Greater Bristol](#)
7. [David Andrews, Chair – Bath Trams and Claverton Energy Group](#)
8. [Angela Ardron](#)
9. [Damien Valentine and Clive Turner, Bus Campaigners](#)
10. [Christina Biggs, Friends of Suburban Bristol Railways](#)
11. [Jevon Smith, Bristol Disability Equalities Forum](#)
12. [Ian Downey](#)
13. [Cllr Liz Hardman, Bath & North East Somerset Council](#)
14. [Cllr Ed Plowden, Bristol City Council](#)
15. [Matt Griffith, Director of Policy, Business West](#)
16. [Cllr Emma Edwards, Bristol City Council](#)
17. [Edwin Paheja](#)

1. David Redgewell, South West Transport Network and Railfuture Severnside

The west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council is responsible for the Region public transport Network.

With the bus service improvement plan and the city region sustainable transport strategy

But with over£ 108 million pounds of bus service improvement plan money

We are still see some of deepest bus cuts in any city region.

Whole communities are losing their bus services in South/ East and North Bristol in April 2023

With no replacement bus services

and in June 2023 in part of Bath and North east Somerset and South Gloucestershire council areas.

With Demand responsive bus services only being able to operate in Deep rural areas

And a very small part of Bristol in Brislington, keynsham, Totterdown Avonmouth and Severn Beach.

And just 2 bus service improvement plan service due to start operating

On 522 Bristol bus and coach station to Arnos vale Brislington keynsham marksbury Timbury paulton, Midsomer Norton Westfield Radstock peasdown st john and Bath spa bus and coach station

On the Northern end of the Bristol city council to st Pauls St werburges Eastville park Fishponds road oidbury court Downend Emerson green puckchurch westerleight yate bus station route .

From Emerson green puckchurch westerleight yate bus and coach station and Yate North as service 525 .

With a large number of bus services being withdrawn in South Bristol being service on 1st April 2023

96

Brislington ,knowle Hengrove hospital ,imperial park Hartcliffe.

516 Whitchurch estate , Hengrove knowle

52 Bishopsworth to Hengrove hospital and Bristol city centre.

91 Bristol city centre, Bedminster, Knowle Hengrove , Hartcliffe

23 Ashton vale, Southville, Bedminster Bristol city centre and Broadmead.

636 whitchurch stockwood keynsham.

In East Bristol the service.

47 Bristol city centre St Paul's st werburgess Eastville park Fishponds road oidbury court Downend Emerson green puckchurch westerleight yate bus station and yate been withdrawn.

Leaving community's without public transport.

2 disability equality centre are left without public transport st Paul's learning centre and west of England centre for independence living

In oidbury.

508 Bristol city centre st Phillips ,Lawrence hill Easton Eastville and Southmead hospital bus station.

Service 17 keynsham town centre Hanham , kingswood corsham hospital,Hillfield, staple hill Fishponds, Eastville park,

Horfield Southmead hospital bus station.

Evening services.

In North east Somerset.

Bus service are being withdrawn in june 2023 .

179 Bath spa bus and coach station to

Timbury paulton,Midsomer Norton.

672 Bristol city centre Bedminster Highridge Bridgwater road to the chew valley.

172, Bath spa bus and coach station to peasdown st john Radstock Westfield midsomer Norton paulton and wells bus and coach station.

Evening service.

768 Bath spa bus and coach station to Timbury paulton,Midsomer Norton Westfield Radstock .

82 Radstock, Town service.

Radstock Westfield,midsomer ,Norton paulton Town service.

In North Bristol Greater Bristol and South Gloucestershire.

Service 10 11 shirehampton/ Avonmouth Dock Lawrence Weston Westbury on Trym Southmead hospital bus station uwe bus station Bristol parkway station Bradley stoke Aztec west Hortham Alverston Thornbury.

Section better Southmead hospital bus station Uwe bus station and Bristol parkway Aztec west Hortham Alverston Thornbury.

Is withdrawn on 1st April 2023 .

Service 85 84 is planned to be withdrawn in June 2023 yate park and ride yate rail station yate bus station chipping sodbury Wickwar charfield and Wotton under edge

622 Cribbs causeway bus station Overton ,Alverston ,Thornbury yate bus station and chipping sodbury.

With west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council bus service improvement plan bus services .

A number of bus services were planned but never let at tendered.

Service we need looking at working with Bus operators to create new bus services.

St Anne's park, Bristlington, Knowle Hengrove whitchurch estate Hengrove hospital imperial park Hartcliffe withywood long Ashton park and ride.

This was to be service 521 524 and could be incorporated into a new South Bristol commercial bus service.

A service could be developed in From Ashton vale Southville Bedminster st John lane Redcliffe Bristol Temple meads station Bristol Broadmead shopping centre, st paul ,st werburgess Eastville park ,Stapleton ,Broomhill Fishponds, oidbury court Downend Bromley heath winterbourne Frampton cotterell.

A service Bristol city centre Anchor Road Bedminster, parson street, Highridge Dundry Chew magna Chew valley and onward to cheddar or wells bus and coach station

This was 527 with extended to wells bus and coach or cheddar.

Service 179 Bath spa bus service cuts Timbury, Farmborough ,Paulton, Midsomer Norton Tesco and wells bus and coach station.

We also have Demand responsive bus services in Radstock, Westfield Midsomer, Norton paulton

We need fixed timing point on this route it could be subcontracted to Liberia travel with a 27 seater bus service.

The west of England mayoral combined transport Authority is with North Somerset council joint transport Authorities and need to deliver a full universal bus service.

The Act of parliament that set up the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority which put a joint Duty on the unity councils Bristol, Banes and South Gloucestershire council. and the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and the metro mayor Dan Norris to maintain public bus services and cross border services.

In to North Somerset council.

We urgently need universal bus service plan for the Greater Bristol and Bath city region for a Network.

Not just a bus service improvement plan

That improve bus service on the following bus and sustainable transport corridors.

Bristol M32 to Bradley Stoke Aztec West Alverston Thornbury.

Bristol M32, Hambrook, Coalpit Heath Yate Park and Ride, Yate Railway Station Yate Bus Station and Chipping.

Cribbs Causeway Bus Station, Henbury Brenty Westbury on Trym, Southmead

Henleaze Clifton Down Station Park Street City Centre Broadmead Bristol Temple Meads Station Totterdown Knowle Hengrove Whitchurch/Stockwood.

Bristol Bus Station Totterdown Knowle Hengrove Whitchurch Pensford Clutton Farrington Gurney Wells Bus and Coach Station Glastonbury and Street.

Farrington Gurney,

Paulton, Midsomer Norton, Westfield, Radstock, Peasdown St John Bath Spa Bus and Coach Station.

This corridor starts from Wells Bus and Coach Station via Chilcompton Shepton Mallet interchanges.

The Bristol Bus and Coach Station Bristol Temple Meads Station, Arnos Vale Bristlington, Keynsham, Salford Newbridge Weston and Bath Spa Bus and Coach Station

Bristol Pill and Portishead.

Bristol to Nailsea.

Bristol to Clevedon.

Bristol Bus and Coach Backwell Congesbury Worle Interchange and Weston Super Mare Bus and Coach Station

London Transport Peak Hour Service every 15 minutes actually Transport London frequencies are every 5 to 7 minutes and Universal Service Network.

Many corridors have reduced evening and Sunday services.

349 Bristol Bus and Coach Station Bristol Temple Meads Station, Arnos Vale Bristlington Keynsham Park Estate Loss of Evening Service.

The corridor service contracted to First Group PLC.

Are £7 million pounds in the West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority to First Group PLC.

£4 million pounds on service by North Somerset Council to First Group PLC.

Public Transport Network is one of the main functions of setting up the West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority with partnership with North Somerset

council through the bus service improvement plan and metro west railway Network plan .

But mayor Dan Norris has no precepting powers and is reliant on the Transport levy from Bristol city council, Banes and South Gloucestershire county council.

As the Auditor have said the support bus services and Demand responsive bus services is very high risk strategy..

The bus service strategy need sort out

With some bus service improvement plan services new and supported bus services as per Somerset council, Devon and Cornwall councils.

On metro west railway .

We welcome the investment in Bristol Portway parkway station.

A further £1, 2 million for station track and signalling work to Network rail western route.

But the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority is being asked to 02 million pounds of revenue support from the Seven Beach st Andrew road Avonmouth Dock station Portway parkway station shirehampton sea mills Clifton Down station, Redland, Montpellier Bristol Stapleton road Bristol Lawrence hill Bristol Temple meads train service which operates as a through service to Bedminster parson street Nailsea and Backwell yatton for clevedon worle parkway Weston million.

Weston super mare .

The revenue support is for 3 years to the Department for transport and First group plc Great western railway.

But we need more tickets machines

To protect revenue on the Bristol Temple meads station to Severn Beach line train service.

The west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council.

Will need to revenue support the Bristol Temple meads station Bedminster parson street pill and Portishead metro west railway service.

The Bristol Temple meads station Lawrence hill, Stapleton road Ashley Down Filton Abbey wood Filton North and Henbury for cribbs causeway.

We still need planning permission granting by south Gloucestershire county council to Network rail western route and Firstgroup plc Great western railway to start work on this line .

These routes will require 3 years revenue support from the metro mayor Dan Norris and the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council.

Banes council South Gloucestershire council and Bristol city council will need to add money to the subsidies via the Transport levy.

Like bus and ferry railway revenue support needs addressing.

We welcome the half hourly train service from Bristol Temple meads station to keynsham oidfiled park Bath spa Freshford Avoncliff Bradford on Avon Trowbridge and Westbury from may 2023 metro west railway.

With Wiltshire council.

Bristol Temple meads station to Filton Abbey wood Bristol parkway station yate charfield new station cam and Dursey stonehouse Bristol road new station and Gloucester central.

With Gloucestershire county council.

Service starting in May 2023 .

We hope the metro west railway branding can be applied.

On mass transit system light railway.

Its important to develop the system for the Greater Bristol and Bath city region

We need to develop on light rail system.

Mass transit system.

Light rail system are operating in all other city regions

Liverpool city region.

Mersey Rail.

Mayor Steve Rotherham

West Midlands metro .

Expansion with mayor Andy street's.

South Yorkshire combined transport Authority.

Sheffield super tram .

Mayor of South Yorkshire combined Authority.

Nottingham super tram.

Newcastle upon Tyne.

Tyne and wear metro

North of Tyne mayor

Greater Manchester combined Authority metrolink .

Metro Andy Burnham.

Blackpool tramways .

Scotland.

Scottish government.

Edinburgh Tramway.

Glasgow underground.

Transclyde

Wales .

Welsh government.

Transport for Wales.

New light rail system in Cardiff and the valleys

Ireland.

Transport for Ireland.

Dublin lus

And Dart .

West Yorkshire combined Authority.

and Transport for the North

With the Department for transport are Developing a mass transit system light rail system .

Gloucestershire county council are

Looking at Hardwick Gloucester Cheltenham and Bishop cleve.

Are looking at mass transit.

So why not in the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council area.

The Greater Bristol and Bath city region needs a mass transit system to be developed.

With Lee Rowley mp minister for leveling up Local government looking at the governance review and plan for the Authority.

We need a west of England mayoral combined transport Authority with North Somerset council and the local Enterprise partnership being a full member of the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority.

We need the Transport and housing Board open to public as the Transport Boards are in the west Midlands combined Authority.

Liverpool city region.

Great Manchester combined transport Authority.

We also need to the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council.

Bus service improvement plan meeting in public on line .

Like Somerset county council Devon county council and Cornwall council.

Unless in contract negotiations with public transport operators

Public transport meeting should be held in public at the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council.

Stakeholder business and passenger are the heart of everything the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council.

Carry out.

Please put passengers

are the heart of the Transport Authority.

Passenger pay taxes and also vote for the unity councils at Bristol city council, South Gloucestershire county council.

Banes council North Somerset council and the west of England mayoral combined Authority metro mayor.

We need to transfer officer from the Transport Department's at Bristol city council Banes and South Gloucestershire council to the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority.

And public transport infrastructure bus shelters interchanges facilities bus and coach and railway interchanges.

We need west of England mayoral combined transport Authority.

To run all universal bus service provisions.

Metro west railway Network.

Metro bus services.

Ferry services.

Coach services.

Ticketing and passenger information.

Main highways.

We need a transport Authority with North Somerset council as a full member.

And co production of services with Bristol city council Banes South Gloucestershire county council and North Somerset council.

We must make the governance review work for passenger and communities.

So we do not get constant monitoring by the Department for leveling up minister lee Rowley mp minister for local government and Mark HARPER mp secretary of state for transport.

Especially as all our transport project are subject to gateway reviews by the Department for transport.

It very important the Bristol city council Banes South Gloucestershire council and North Somerset council as partners

Make the west of England mayoral combined combined Authority works for the city region and we work with the Elected regional metro mayor Dan Norris with 40 000 votes majority.



Trams v underground: The Bristol mass transport debate

planetradio.co.uk

2. Andrew Smith, Reclaim our Buses

To reduce congestion, improve air quality, lower carbon emissions, and generally for the wellbeing of its communities, the West of England needs to make many more of its journeys by bus. However, the bus service is currently in turmoil with routes and timetables changing all the time. Not only does this make it far less likely for any of the above to be achieved, but it also imposes significant hardship on those that depend on this service.

The Mayor recently launched an Enhanced Partnership (EP) aimed at improving bus services. However, an EP will just not deliver the increase in bus usage we require.

An EP is one of the two options that the Mayor could have chosen. The other is Franchising, this can deliver the increase, as London demonstrates. It is also the option most other Mayoral Combined Authorities are pursuing.

People will only make much greater use of the bus service, making it part of their daily routine, if the network is comprehensive and stable. The failure of deregulated bus services since 1986, to provide such a network, is a major factor in the large decline in bus usage.

In a deregulated bus market commercial decisions determine the network, which makes it uncertain and unstable. This is amply demonstrated by our area. The Bus Act (2017) is a tacit admission by the government that bus deregulation has been a disaster.

However, as the government guidance on Enhanced Partnership states:

“all EP schemes exist within a deregulated bus market”

And so, even with EPs we will still have a deregulated bus market, in which the lack of a comprehensive and stable network will continue, with the consequent failure to increase the number of bus journeys.

The argument is often advanced that franchising is too expensive, referencing Greater Manchester. However, as Bus Back Better, the National Bus Strategy, states there are many models of Franchising. The only requirement is that:

“the authority or authorities identify the local services that they consider appropriate to be provided in an area under local service contracts”

The essential point is that, with Franchising, the network is determined by the authority according to the needs of the community. Until a scheme is prepared and assessed you cannot possibly know the cost.

And any cost must be set against the cost of not franchising: More journeys by car, increasing congestion and emissions; loss of amenity to the community in where to work and shop, especially where no other form of transport exists; cost to the local economy, restricting the employers access to staff, and businesses revenue.

If the Mayor really wants to address the bus crisis in the West of England, then he needs to publish a statutory notice that the Authority intends to prepare a franchising assessment, without delay.

3. Jackie Head, Chew Valley Area Forum, Climate & Nature Emergency Working Group - Sustainable Transport Subgroup

Since 2021 our group (Chew Valley Area Forum, Climate & Nature Emergency Working Group- Sustainable Transport Subgroup: CVAF C&NE(ST)WG) have been having joint meetings with Transport Planners in B&NES & the Authority, following our report 'Have Your Say: Sustainable Transport in the Chew Valley' which received responses from 410 households across the area.

Over these 2 years we have lobbied for more reliable, joined up and frequent public transport to enable people to leave their cars at home and help decarbonise transport in the region.

New fixed route services

During this process we saw the development of proposals for new fixed route services, funded by BSIP funding to help the transformation happen. More recently we wrote 'Making a case for the 672' a report which included clear evidence that this service was of vital importance to a number of individuals for whom transition to DRT was likely to be problematic.

We are very disappointed to learn via a correspondence between Sarah Warren & Dan Norris, which Sarah forwarded to us, that (apart from the 522) these BSIP fixed route services will not be going ahead.

Within the correspondence Dan Norris made a number of statements suggesting why the decision had been taken and we would like to respond to these and ask further questions in relation to them.

Dan Norris Letter: *It would be inappropriate to use BSIP funds to operate fixed route services competing with WESTlink. The cost of WESTlink is far more financially viable than fixed route services, and analysis by independent specialist indicated potential for very low or no public subsidy requirement for these services in the future. This in stark contrast to supported services, where we have seen costs increase, on average by 116%, and patronage fall since 2019. The operating cost for supported services is no different to those fixed route BSIP tendered services, in fact the 527 tender was more than triple the cost of the existing 672 service, a service with low patronage, leading to high public subsidy, possibly a reason this subsidised council service was not supported by B&NES through levy funding beyond its contract termination date.*

You speak of the BSIP fixed route proposals as competing with WESTlink but **our vision would be for a fixed route service as complementing WESTlink**. Given that the BSIP proposed fixed routes were put out to tender as hourly services and the existing 672 is a twice daily service it is hardly surprising that the costs would be significantly higher.

Question 1: Can you explain why your Authority's Transport officers scoped and put out to tender the x5 BSIP routes as hourly services if they were seen as competing

with WESTlink and this was unrealistic in terms of delivery? Why did you not include lower frequency options?/why has this reduction in frequency not been considered in relation to these routes when tenders came in higher than anticipated?

Funding options: In response to questions we put in advance of the CA meeting on 18th January Dan Norris responded thus:

Secondly, I am also shortly introducing a Community Innovation Fund that local groups will be able to apply for to secure grants to help run hyper-local buses. I am able to do this thanks to the large sum of money I secured – the second highest in the UK - for new and innovative bus solutions.

But we are not able to find any reference to the Community Innovation Fund, on the Authority’s website

Footfall: From recent tender documents (and an estimated figure received from the Transport team in the CA on 15th February 2023) it is clear that whilst COVID saw a dramatic decrease in passenger footfall, there has been a year on year increase in footfall since. This despite the fact that it is a service that is so infrequent.

672	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23 (estimate)
Passengers	16,328	3,103	6,233	7,532
Revenue taken	£23,932.00	£6,522.85	£14,0005.70	unknown

Our view is that footfall on the 672 would be likely to increase when people have the option of DRT to use **in combination**, to get them to other parts of the Chew Valley and beyond, which are not currently served by bus routes. If an additional planned 672 return journey, which enabled people to travel after school and return in the evening were introduced, we believe it might increase uptake further.

Many rural villages in the Chew Valley do not have workplaces, schools or basic shopping facilities within their immediate boundary, so people need to travel away from their villages to sustain normal life. The inadequacy of existing services forces car use, and the combination of the 672 and DRT or 526 & DRT could make it possible to dramatically reduce car use.

We appreciate that DRT, although presenting challenges in terms of transition, behaviour change and customer journey costs doubling, may have some benefits in terms of accessing key areas **beyond** the Chew Valley (such as Bristol, Bath, Keynsham, Midsomer Norton & Wells), we fear it will not have the **capacity**, without a fixed route within the Chew Valley, to provide for all journeys **within** the valley given that our research carried out in 2021 (in the Have your Say: Sustainable Transport in the Chew Valley: 410 households) showed that:

- 85% of journeys to work were by car and 25% of all workplaces were **within** the Chew Valley.
- 77% of all education, 72% of exercise undertaken and 60% of all medical appointments took place **within** the Chew Valley
- 57% of all shopping trips were **within** the Chew Valley
- **Overall** 50% of all journeys taken by people living in the Chew Valley are **within** the Chew Valley
- **Overall** 82% of journeys travelled in the Chew Valley were by **car**

In addition, in response to a question raised by us related to the meeting on 18th January, Dan Norris replied:

WEST link and the Community Innovation Fund are not designed to replace fixed route services. Indeed, this money specifically cannot be spent on supported buses. Where there is a social need for a bus it is unitary councils responsibility to fund it via the transport levy and I cannot make any commitments on supported services as I do not control the budget.

Question 2: Can the Mayor explain how the DRT is being explained as an alternative to the fixed bus route of 672 in his letter to Sarah Warren, given that in his response to our question he said WESTlink was ‘not designed to replace fixed route services’? Will he now reconsider the idea of a fixed route service to support DRT in the Chew Valley?

4. Ian Beckey, Gloucestershire catch the bus service campaign and Brendon Taylor, Bristol Disability Equalities Network & Somerset catch the bus campaign

We are very very concerned about the lost of west of England mayoral combined
transport Authority and North Somerset council

support bus services being withdrawn on the 1st April 2023 and June 2023

Funded by the the Transport levy .

From Bristol city council Banes and South Gloucestershire council

Especially the 96 St Anne's park Bristlington, knowle, Hengrove,Hospital whitchurch,
Hartcliffe

With no replacement bus service for passengers travelling to colleges and schools
and South Bristol hospital having to bus service.

With 52 Bishopsworth to Bristol city centre via Hengrove hospital cancelled

516 Whitchurch estate Hengrove hospital Bristol cancelled.

636 Whitchurch stockwood keynsham bus service cancelled.

91 Bristol city centre to Bedminster, Hartcliffe.

23 Ashton vale,Southville, Bedminster Redcliffe Bristol Broadmead

512 Hengrove to Bedminster.

511 Totterdown to Bristol.

513 , 514 Bristlington knowle

47 Yate bus station westerleight puckchurch Emerson green Downend oidbury court
Fishponds road Eastville park St werburges st Paul's Bristol city centre

508 Bristol city centre st Phillips Lawrence hill,Easton, Eastville Horfield Southmead
hospital bus station.

10 11 Avonmouth Dock/ shirehampton Westbury on Trym Southmead hospital bus
station uwe bus station Bristol parkway station Bradley stoke Aztec west Hortham
Alverston Thornbury.

Withdrawn section Southmead hospital bus station to Thornbury

By the metro mayor Dan Norris.

Because the council failed to fund the Transport levy.

But froze the levy leading to 42 bus service being withdrawn the largest number of
bus service withdrawn in any city region in England..

In June in South Gloucestershire council.

84 85 yate park and ride yate railway station yate bus station charfield wickwar wootton under edge.

622 cribbs causeway bus station, Olverton Alverston Thornbury yate bus and coach station.

17 keynsham Kingswood corsham hospital Hillfield staple hill Fishponds Eastville park Horfield Southmead hospital bus station.

Evening service.

672 Bristol bus station Bedminster Highridge Dundry Chew valley

82 Radstock, Westfield, Midsomer Norton, paulton

768 Bath to Timbury paulton, Midsomer Norton Radstock .

179 Bath spa bus and coach station Timbury Farmborough Paulton, Midsomer Norton.

172 Bath spa bus and coach station peasdown st john, Radstock , Westfield midsomer Norton, paulton wells bus and coach station

Evening service.

With all these main line bus service's being withdrawn

We now very concerned that the bus contract for the Demand responsive bus services via we DRT and E-zec medical service merger with ERS medical services.

Have failed to fine enough Bus drivers

To run the service from 1st April 2023.

So their concerns that Bristlington knowle Hengrove Totterdown may not have a local bus service.

Keynsham town service to saltford whitchurch.

Chew valley area link to main line bus on 376 , 172 street Glastonbury wells bus station to Bristol Temple meads station and Bristol bus and coach station.

And the Scottish city link Falcon coaches from Plymouth, Newton Abbott Exeter , cullompton, Wellington , Taunton Bridgwater , East Brent, churchill Bristol Airport Bristol Bond street.

Service around Avonmouth and Severn Beach.

Service in rural areas out of yate bus station chipping sodbury.

Thornbury toward Wotton under edge.

Midsomer Norton and the somer valley.

With the only bus service improvement plan routes being 522 Bristol bus and coach station Bristol Temple meads station, Arno vale keynsham Marksbury Timbury

paulton, Midsomer Norton Westfield, Radstock, Peasdown St John and Bath Spa bus and coach station.

525 Emerson Green Puckchurch Westerleigh Yate bus station Yate North

With the government minister Lee Rowley local government minister Department for Leveling Up and Mark Harper MP secretary of state for transport

Looking at the governance of the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority with North Somerset Council.

We are shocked and very disappointed that so many communities will be cut off from bus services and now with no demand responsive bus services in place either in some cases not until the summer.

Leave people unable to get to work school college university hospital and medical services or even food shopping.

Whilst main line bus services are welcomed the investment in main road bus service of 7 million pounds in the West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority and 4 million pounds in North Somerset Council.

Awarded to First Group PLC owned by pension funds staff unions and small shareholders.

Many other communities are cut off from the Public Transport Network in the West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority and North Somerset Council area.

Railway services on the Metro West Railway are also welcome at Bristol Parkway.

Gloucester Central to Westbury line train every half hour from May.

Cam and Dursley Yate Bristol Parkway station Filton Abbey Wood Bristol Bristol Temple Meads station Keynsham Oldfield Park Bath Spa Freshford Avoncliff Bradford on Avon Trowbridge Westbury.

But the West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority and North Somerset Council needs a universal public transport network bus coach and ferry service like Transport for London.

5. Joanne Adams

I am a 52 year old female living in Westbury on Trym. I have worked in the Nuclear Industry for 30 years since I graduated from Bristol University in 1992. I am currently a Senior Project Manager working on decommissioning projects at Berkeley Nuclear Site in South Gloucestershire. Eight months ago, as an outpatient at Bristol Eye Hospital, I was told by my consultant that I could no longer drive due to an incurable eye condition called glaucoma. This was devastating and potentially career/life changing. However my company have been very supportive and I have managed to continue to work by a combination of lifts from colleagues and WFH. However this was never going to be sustainable in the long term and I have been searching for a different solution for some months.

In January 2023 I accepted an internal job move to work in the Company's Head Office at Aztec West from April 2023. I applied and accepted the job on the basis that I would be able to get the Number 10 and 11 buses to and from work. Although the service was slow and it would take an hour to cover the 6.6 miles distance between my house and work I gladly accepted the position as I would be able to independently be able to get to work on my own steam despite my disability. I also support the green agenda and was pleased that I would be heeding the advice to use public transport where you can. However I am now horrified and devastated to find out, just a few weeks before I begin my new job, that the Number 10 and 11 buses are going to terminate at Southmead Hospital.

There are literally no other realistic options for me to get public transport from my house to Aztec West. I work long hours and already a 2 hour commute on top of a 9.25 hour day was going to be a stretch but one which I was willing to accept if it meant that I could maintain my independence, continue to work in the Company I love and be part of the green agenda despite my disability.

I know this is a Public Statement rather than a question but I would like to ask all present how they think I should get to work when my new job starts in April 2023?

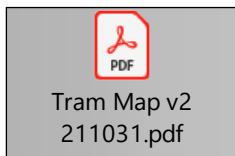
6. Martin Garrett, Transport for Greater Bristol

We applaud Mayor Norris's efforts to a stronger Transport Authority and bus-rail integration, both desperately needed. As is bus franchising and mass transit.

It has been wrongly suggested that building tram routes causes massive disruption. But new trams routes in other cities, are opportunistic, largely not sticking to busy thoroughfares.

Please take a look at the map (below) as an example of what could be done on part of a first possible route, Bath to Bristol:

Instead of installing trams on the busy A4 approaches into Bristol where there isn't a temporary alternative for car commuters (who would eventually use the tram), modern trams can be largely off-road, apart from street- running in the already traffic reduced city centre, through the understory at Temple Meads (Cf. Manchester Piccadilly) and along Feeder Road. It also brings public transport to St Philips, and Avon Meads Retail (for the first time) and makes use of Whitchurch Rail Alignment (Tesco superstore and Callington Road Hospital) with other route potential, then travels out to the new Hicks Gate P&R via the car parks of the retail sheds, alongside the A4.



Tram Map 1

A similar approach can be taken with other routes.

We'd be happy to explore further.

7. David Andrews, Chair – Bath Trams and Claverton Energy Group

Bath and Bristol area trams association fully endorse the comments by Gavin Smith of TFGB. We note that a far greater coverage of residents would be achieved with surface running trams and this would overall create a much greater diversion of drivers to Trams. typically about 30% of drivers leave a car at home instead taking a new tram service. It has been repeatedly shown that nowhere including Bristol Metrobus do buses have the same modal shift because buses cannot offer the same quality, comfort, reliability, and speed through traffic. Also we note on street running intermingled with cars is quite normal for trams in the UK and on the continent, segregating routes are not necessary.

8. Angela Ardron

The DRT roll out, specifically in the Chew Valley is of great concern to many in the community, due to the lack of engagement, lack of information and the fact that our scheduled bus routes cease to exist come June.

With no public engagement to date I believe that this will lead to those who rely on schedule bus services jumping in their cars, having to take alternative employment or using alternative transport measures, due to not knowing how the DRT will run.

The DRT could be a fantastic opportunity for the Chew Valley, opening up other potential routes for public transport. At present I do not believe this to be the case. As The Combined Authority has stated DRT is not designed to replace scheduled bus routes but to enhance it, however in the Chew Valley the exact opposite is happening.

Trying to use DRT to replace a scheduled bus route is one of the main reasons why DRT services fail in the UK, this along with not having any long term funding and lack of engagement, two things that also apply to this roll out.

Considering that this is one of the largest DRT services in the country and that The Combined Authority are already under scrutiny by the levelling up minister, due to the severe reduction of scheduled bus routes, The Combined Authority needs to do more to ensure that people, especially in rural areas have adequate options with regards to sustainable transport. Without these options it will be very hard for people to change their habits and will have an impact on carbon emissions.

The 672 is a well used bus service for the community, especially commuters, the elderly and students, who all rely on this service. I myself use this service on a regular basis to commute to work and is generally full most mornings.

As you might be aware there is currently a petition to save the 672 and allow a schedule bus route to remain in the Chew Valley to work in conjunction with the DRT and currently has 897 signatures. Showing that there is a demand to keep this service.

I therefore make two requests to the committee.

That you consider pushing back the roll out of the DRT until proper engagement with the community has been established, especially those who currently use scheduled bus routes within the Chew valley.

And that you also work with Bathnes to ensure that a scheduled bus route remains in the chew valley to Compliment the DRT roll out.

As I have said before, we need to ensure that people have choice in terms of sustainable transport options within the Chew Valley. Without this choice it is very hard to encourage people to change their habits and think about reducing their carbon emissions. Thank you.

9. Damien Valentine and Clive Turner, Bus Campaigners

Save the 179

We are here today to ask that the 179 bus route be continued beyond the current June deadline and changing it's route to operate between Bath and Wells.

While we recognise that the 522 does offer a direct service to Bath for some of the communities along the current 179 route, journey times are now three times longer. A twenty five minute trip to Bath is now an hour twenty minutes. When you factor in the return trip, that's nearly three hours of bus time per day. In addition to that, the villages of Camerton and Tunley, along with a large portion of Farmborough where the 522 bus stops are inaccessible to many residents, will be left with no bus service at all.

By changing the 179's destination to Wells:

Two popular cities are connected with a bus service that takes roughly an hour, significantly shorter than current services.

Passengers needing access to Paulton, Midsomer Norton and Radstock will be unaffected as the 522 and DRT covers those needs.

Timsbury and High Littleton are both excellent transfer points for passengers wishing to change from the 522 and 179.

Timsbury's Conygre Hall car park (right next to the bus stops) also offers a safe place for DRT minibuses to park to drop off passengers and wait for others coming on the mainline buses.

Creates a fast bridge across transit corridors along the A37, the A367 and the route served by the 522.

Eases the burden on the DRT minibuses, especially at school and rush hour times.

Opens up Wells, Farington Gurney (and the excellent Farrington's Farm shop) to Cam Valley residents for shopping and job opportunities.

Pre-pandemic, First Bus were very interested in the route, as they saw the fast connection between Bath and Wells as being able to grow into a self-sustaining route without the need for additional support. It was dubbed the Bath-Wells Express.

Unfortunately, at the time there was no funding available for new bus routes. Now there is and other operators have expressed an interest in the route as one with potential.

With BSIP funding, this is a route that could be introduced to the benefit of all of the communities that it serves.

The full proposal has been emailed to Dan Norris and to Kevin Guy, it is also available on request from campaigners Damien Valentine and Clive Turner.

10. Christina Biggs, Friends of Suburban Bristol Railways

STATEMENT on Mass Transit

Friends of Suburban Bristol Railways (FoSBR) asks the West of England Combined Authority to give their full support to the development of a regional mass transit system.

The region desperately needs a fully integrated public transport network. Suburban rail can form the spine of this, as outlined in FoSBR's Plan for Rail.

Existing modes of transport are and will be insufficient, even if fully integrated. We need the step change that a mass transit system would provide.

We recognise that costs may be considerable, however it is essential that a system is put in place ensure decarbonisation and net zero. Work is needed to consider how best to achieve this.

Rail already provides rapid transit - from Filton Abbey Wood to Bristol Temple Meads is eight minutes, from Stapleton Road to Avonmouth is 16 minutes and from Avonmouth to Parson St is 35 minutes.

The existing suburban rail network serves parts of the city that provide employment and some with significant deprivation. In addition to current proposals, there are other locations where stations can be built on existing lines, such as Lockleaze, Long Ashton, Chittening and Saltford. Lines such as the Henbury Loop and the proposed spur at Hallen Marsh Junction, or the line from Yate to Thornbury can increase the network. A revitalised Pilning station could provide access to employment for a large catchment in South Wales. Rail can and must provide the spine of a future transport network.

We urge the West of England Combined Authority and our local authorities to work together to continue to develop a mass transit system to supplement and extend the suburban rail network. We consider that light rail is most likely to achieve modal shift away from car dependency. We are agnostic as to whether some tunnelling may be necessary.

Reference: [Reducing car use in the West of England – can rail do the job? - Rail Professional](#)

11. Jevon Smith, Bristol Disability Equalities Forum

With 42 plus bus service being withdrawn in the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority area and into North Somerset council area in April 2023 and in June 2023 .

Many communities of the west of England mayoral combined Authority.

Will be left without an public bus services.

We must make this clear this is in urban Greater Bristol and Bath city region.

Where west link Demand responsive bus services are not available.

School and colleges journeys.

Bristlington school and st Bendon college from st Anne's park Bristlington knowle Hengrove, Hartcliffe south Bristol hospital Service 96 .
Park centre.

Service 96 St Anne's park Bristlington knowle Hartcliffe.

Service 91 Bristol knowle Hengrove Hartcliffe is withdrawn.

Service

Service to South Gloucestershire college and city of Bristol college.

Filton.

The bus service are withdrawn from

Avonmouth Dock/ seven Beach.

10 Lawrence Weston, Westbury on Trym Southmead hospital bus station, uwe bus station Bristol parkway station Bradley stoke Aztec west Hortham Alverston , Thornbury.

Planned to be withdrawn between

Southmead hospital bus station uwe bus station Bristol parkway and Thornbury.

Service 11 Shirehampton, Westbury on Trym, Southmead hospital, bus station

Uwe bus station and Bristol parkway station.

No link between Bristol Southmead hospital and Bristol uwe and Bristol parkway station.

No service to uwe bus station and south Gloucestershire and Stroud college and city of Bristol college.

Stagecoach west have asked the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority to extend service 10 11 from Southmead hospital bus station and uwe bus station to Bristol parkway station.

Service 10 Southmead hospital bus station to uwe bus station Bristol parkway station Bradley stoke Aztec west Hortham Alverston Thornbury.

Service 622 Cribbs causeway bus station, Olveston, Alverston Thornbury.

Tytherington , Yate bus station and chipping sodbury.

Links cut to Marwood school and castle school Thornbury.

With only 16 seater Demand responsive bus services to replace Double Decker buses.

96 Hartcliffe Hengrove knowle Bristlington st Anne's park.
Connections at Bristlington for 349 A4 to keynsham schools.

Southmead hospital bus service cuts .

See service cut from Bristol st Phillips marsh, Barton hill Easton, Eastville Park
Horfield Southmead hospital bus station.

Withdrawn.

Service 17 keynsham town centre railway station Hanham, kingswood corsham
hospital Hillfield staple hill Fishponds Eastville park, Horfield Southmead hospital bus
station.

Evening service withdrawn.

Reductions on Southmead to Bristol bus station service.

Y6 Southmead hospital bus station cribbs causeway bus station, Bristol parkway
station, winterbourne, Frampton cotterell Coalpit heath yate bus station.

Reductions in service.

Avonmouth Dock ,Lawrence Weston Westbury on Trym Southmead hospital bus
station service 10

Service 11 shirehampton Westbury on Trym Southmead hospital bus station .

Both service proposed being withdrawn

to uwe bus station and Bristol parkway station.

The only service from Southmead hospital bus stations are first group plc west of
England buses.

Southmead hospital bus station Horfield Eastviile Stapleton road station Easton
Oid market Broadmead Bristol city centre Bedminster, Southville, Ashton Gate. 24

Cribbs causeway bus station Brentry Henbury Southmead hospital Gloucester Road
Horfield, Bishopton Bristol city centre Redcliffe Bedminster parson street Hartcliffe
Hengrove hospital.

76 .

505 Long Ashton park and ride Clifton Down station Horfield Southmead hospital bus
station.

13 .

Bristol city centre to Bishopton,Horfield Southmead hospital bus station to Sea mills,
shirehampton Dursey road.

But we are very concerned about access to the Regional hospital at Bristol

Southmead hospital NHS .

North Bristol Trust .

With the 47 Bristol city centre to st Paul st werburgess Eastville park Fishponds road
Fishponds oidbury court Downend Emerson green puckchurch westerleight yate bus
station.

Also withdrawn passenger can not interchanges at Tesco Eastville for the 17 to
Southmead hospital bus station.

South Bristol hospital lost the .
516 Whitchurch estate Hengrove hospital knowle.
96 st Anne's park, Bristolington knowle Hengrove hospital, Hartcliffe

91 Bristol city centre Bedminster, knowle Hengrove hospital imperial park Hartcliffe.
52 Bristol city centre, Hengrove hospital Bishopsworth.
636 Keynsham, stockwood, whitchurch
All hospital bus services.

In Paulton Somerset hospital.
Service 82 Radstock, Westfield, midsomer Norton paulton .

Bath spa bus and coach station
Peasdown st john Radstock Westfield midsomer Norton paulton wells bus and coach
station.
Evening service.
179 Bath bus station Timbury Paulton, Midsomer Norton.
786 Bath to Timbury Midsomer Norton Radstock.

In view of these hospital bus service cuts and service to schools and colleges.
What discussion took place at west of England mayoral combined transport Authority
and North Somerset council with school college and universities about bus services
cuts .

And university hospital Bristol and Weston. NHS Trust .
North Bristol NHS trust.
The North Somerset Bristol and South Gloucestershire integrated care Board .
The Bath Swindon and Wiltshire integrated care Board .

Government guideline for Bus service improvement plan money and covid 19 bus
operators recovery grant.
Say the access to work school colleges university Hospitals and Health care
food shopping and Health care.
Are very important.
So did the Transport Authority even though the money is through the transport levy
from Bristol city council South Gloucestershire council Banes council.
Talk to the other vital public bodies.
The present situation leaves children and students unable to get to school and
colleges. University.
Patients and staff without bus link railway stations to Southmead hospital.
A point raised by First group plc Great western railway and stagecoach west.
And bus railway integration meeting on Monday with the west of England mayoral
combined transport Authority and Sevenside rail partnership.

The children who use the 47 From Bristol city centre to st Paul st werburges Eastville
park Fishponds and oidbury court Downend.
With have to use the Bristol Temple meads station to Montpellier station.
As the have no other public transport.
As 47 and 506 Bristol city centre st Phillips, Barton hill Lawrence hill Easton Eastville
Horfield Southmead hospital bus service is withdrawn.

No service Twerton to Bath university.

Whilst we welcome West of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council.

Improvement to main line bus frequency with first group plc west of England buses. Of £11 million pounds buy peak and higher frequencies.

And the mainly deep rural plus Bristlington knowle Hengrove keynsham Totterdown Demand responsive bus services.

And Avonmouth and Severn Beach.

Most of Greater Bristol and Bath city region urban areas has no Demand responsive bus services.

And unless the model is changed to 27 to 30 seat buses with some timming points like Wiltshire council service.

Devize to Pewsey.

The children and students will not have a enough seats for school and colleges journeys.

Please will the metro mayor Dan Norris hold talks with the local councils Bristol city council Banes ,South Gloucestershire council and North Somerset council.

And public bodies Heath and Education on bus service cuts.

We welcome investment in new Bristol Temple meads station to Gloucester central trains service

Bristol Temple meads station Bath spa and Westbury train service.

By first group plc Great western railway metro west.

And we must go ahead with mass transit light rail system.

We welcome Demand responsive bus services in rural areas.

Linked to main line buses coaches and train services.

12. Ian Downey

Proposed cuts to bus services in the Chew Valley

On 18th January 2023, West of England Combined Authority and Bath & Northeast Somerset (B&NES) Council announced a planned cut to multiple – in fact all - bus services that serve the Chew Valley as of April this year. This includes the 672, a long standing fixed route used by many in their daily life.

It is simply not acceptable to remove so many bus services at one stroke across a rural community, where public transport provision is already poor. Especially now, some 2 months further on from that decision and still without proper clarity on what the plans are to replace it. Plus, when other parts of the Combined Authority are touted to gain “London levels” of bus frequency.

The timing of the planned withdrawal of the 672 (and other services in the Chew Valley) in such an abrupt manner without much consultation will seriously undermine people’s trust in the new DRT offer, which in turn diminishes the potential success of DRT in our area. I note that the Combined Authority’s own audit committee has identified a paucity of information and consequent high levels of risk and uncertainty in the planning of the proposed DRT alternative.

This at a time when efforts to win over hearts and minds to make an important modal shift for decarbonisation and more active travel are already difficult. Not helped either by central government recently cutting back on previous budget commitments for active travel.

The frequency of 672 buses has been cut back before and now provides only the most basic service. But, one that is relied on by many commuters, and others for shopping trips, hospital appointments, etc. In the summer many school pupils would normally see it as a convenient service for getting to their work experience locations.

The 672 provides a useful, timetabled point-to-point service. It is my only public transport route to Bristol from the Chew Valley. I use it regularly to get to my office. Many of my fellow passengers are also regular users making similar journeys and I notice an increasing number of them realising this advantage. Indeed, one reason I recently changed job to work in Bristol was the advantage of a local bus service based on a regular (albeit sparse) fixed timetable with regular stops. Without it I have concluded that I will have no other option than to revert to using a car for this and other journeys as efficiently.

The West of England Future Transport Zone programme speaks of user centred design and putting passengers in control. I have to say that in my experience the level of awareness raising and passenger engagement, a key element of promoting transition to a disruptive, experimental alternative – has to date been lacking if not invisible. The way the cuts and proposed DRT have appeared in the press as an apparent fait accompli in the local press does not come across well and I suggest is not the best way to engender support. In addition, there is no public information about the plans posted at bus stops. On checking at time of writing the DRT page of the Combined Authority website turns up with an unfortunate “404 – Page Not

Found” error. <https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/transport/future-transportzone/dynamic-demand-responsive-transport/>

In developing an innovative new product or service, the offer of at least a minimum viable product (MVP) needs to be at least as "good" as current provision (journey time, punctuality and price, etc.) or better. Otherwise existing and potential passengers will wonder: what's the point? When Council Tax bills have increased and the Mayor has significant funding for bus provision but is unwilling or unable to contribute to funding supported bus services then I regard a simultaneous diminution or removal of basic services as a bad deal.

A great deal rests on trust and predictability. In the case of the 672, the status quo (such as it is) does actually work as a reliable, fixed timetable spinal route. Maintaining or increasing this service would provide a more credible justification and transition pathway for the wider DRT proposals. There is a sense of implied reliance on passengers' good faith, which may be over optimistic. In the days ahead as more people return to regular work attendance, general travel, etc. they and their employers will be less willing to tolerate the risk of uncertain levels of bus availability and variable, less time-efficient routes. An approach being implemented from scratch to "learn lessons" and be "hopeful" of success does not inspire confidence without a good deal more preparation.

Other practical matters need to be part of the advance information and pitch to passengers by the Combined Authority members and the intended providers, which include:

- How will the DRT manage with the poor/variable phone signal across the Chew Valley? Its very patchy and unreliable. How could passengers rely on a) getting a booking done, b) getting updates if (when) bus delayed, etc. Especially in light of long term BT plans to withdraw landlines by 2025
- How are the DRT fare collections planned to be accessible for all abilities? E.g. pay the driver (card/cash), PAYG on account, online at time of booking, etc? It needs to be flexible for all abilities of passenger. Landline removal is also a relevant issue here.
- Where are the zones and how will inter-zonal travel be arranged.

In the apparent absence of any more meaningful engagement to date I am not persuaded that the proposed new service(s) are currently credible. The uncertainty of clever algorithms and likely inconvenience of multiple links to other feeder buses do not offer a compelling equivalent service or an improvement on what is (it seems temporarily) available. This is counter intuitive when this is a key tenet of the Bus Service Improvement Plan – BSIP). More and better evidence is therefore necessary before proceeding.

I understand there is some extended support for the 672 from B&NES until June 2023, which is welcome but nonetheless, the imminent prospect of the proposed cuts all round is a fundamentally regressive step. This will remove any ability for people to reliably go about their business and leisure by public transport in the Chew Valley, without a credible alternative available.

The proposed action risks compromising policies on promoting active travel, achieving CO2 emissions reductions, decreased pollution/congestion, etc. Promoting bus travel is an important element of achieving all those objectives. It is vital infrastructure to enable mobility at a time when parking costs in Bristol have doubled, and a clean air zone introduced. Bus passenger volumes are increasing. The cuts as currently planned would leave no buses in the Chew Valley at all.

This will also undermine recent B&NES investment to improve highway infrastructure and accessibility around the Chew reservoir area. New bus stops and better pathway access have been specifically installed to improve access and presumably attract visitors. The proposed cuts mean visitors will have to drive to the area more than ever (where car parks are already regularly full) nullifying the benefits of promoting sustainable, accessible, active travel. This just squanders the potential benefits of that outlay.

It remains unclear how or where the proposed DRT minibus services will operate in the Chew Valley. A rudimentary map and outline details appeared in the latest (March) edition of the Chew Valley Gazette but this is inadequate and casts doubt on the level of readiness and consequent uptake and sustainability. Personally, I think it risks being less convenient, more time consuming and expensive compared to the current 672 bus service provision. Hence it is an unattractive option.

In summary, the proposed cuts are being made without adequate consultation and without the proper explanation of a comparable or improved alternative. They undermine the collective the Authority members' credentials on air quality, emissions and congestion. These bus services are crucial in connecting isolated communities and persuading drivers to use public transport instead. My experience over the last 12 to 18 months is that bus usage has increased. Their proposed removal makes a mockery of the aspirations to promote active travel. It causes great anxiety and inconvenience to residents and visitors alike.

The intended plan to leave rural areas with zero bus services at short notice and with little information on a proposed and untested alternative is unacceptable. It creates undue uncertainty for many people and risks jeopardising uptake. It represents very poor value for money for the taxes we pay. I expect more concerted endeavour from the Authority and B&NES to develop a more flexible approach and to secure government support for deploying some of the significant available Combined Authority resources to pre-existing supported bus services under threat as well as complementary innovations.

I urge the Combined Authority and B&NES to reconsider this decision, the implementation approach and timetable. I anticipate better information and good news on what actions they propose to take to ensure the continuity of these vital services for outlying districts beyond April 2023.

13. Cllr Liz Hardman, Bath & North East Somerset Council

I am one of two Labour ward councillors for Paulton. I love my community. I write this statement as a plea to the local authority leaders to apply better wisdom in future, when working as part of this Combined Authority. It is the residents you are hurting.

On 11 January, BBC Radio Bristol's listeners were promised by its Leader (Cllr Kevin Guy) that Bath & North East Somerset Council would keep "every single one" of the supported buses it ran.

But a week later, at The Combined Authority Committee on 18 January, the same local authority announced it was saving only "every single one" in Bath – and that those in North East Somerset would in fact be axed. There was no apology. Only defensiveness. We sought to understand how the decision had been reached, but B&NES' Cabinet refused to provide the figures it used, on the numbers of affected passengers, and on the CO2 impacts on the area.

In addition, in the face of inflation, B&NES even cut their real terms council bus spending. And did so knowing full well these buses are what take children to school, get people to the NHS, to the shops, into Bath, to friends and to work. To boost the rural economy and save our planet, they should increase – not decrease – the transport levy, as Labour pledges it will, in its forthcoming local manifesto.

In North East Somerset, around half of the residents have no car access. Taxis are hard to come by and expensive. But B&NES chose to cut our buses and will not show their workings. Instead, all residents get is deflection of any responsibility: the repeated mantra that we should ask The Combined Authority – even though the decision was made, and jealously guarded, by B&NES.

If the local authority leaders had worked as residents need them to – together within the CA – we would all be in a better place. Decisions and responsibility would be shared; residents would get transparency. The Combined Authority would have been able to do its job and take a big-picture view.

But council leaders have ignored residents' needs and instead insisted that only **they** should pick and choose what local buses to keep or cut. By definition, transport is about crossing boundaries. The 'my bus, my decision' approach we have seen this year is going to ruin lives.

14. Cllr Ed Plowden, Bristol City Council

The Combined Authority's commissioned report from Solace outlines a long list of fundamental weaknesses, including a lack of clarity about core purpose; a lack of required strategies; no significant organisational development plan or operating principles; leadership problems; a need to update its constitution; and a need for support to address these problems.

However, it appears that despite warm words, there is a level of denial about the problems, and the Audit Committee has roundly dismissed the attempts to implement a convincing plan as demonstrating little, if any, progress and appearing to be little more than an attempt to placate auditors and Scrutiny.

Sorting out these multiple issues will take considerable leadership, effort and capacity, and it is clear that across all political parties involved in Scrutiny, this is seen as a number one priority for genuine progress to be made. Without a clear strategic sense of direction, the organisation will continue to be at risk of fighting a series of tactical "running battles".

However, the confrontational approach between leaders continues, with further blame and divisive comments being played out in public, often proactively. Even operationally, there are clear differences between the Unitary Authorities as to how to deliver programmes and the published timetable of meetings demonstrates no more than a business-as-usual approach.

With hundreds of millions of pounds of investment to be delivered over very short timescales, this is not harmless political game-playing; it is essential that we see a change of attitude and that steps are taken to address it urgently. WECA's leaders must put aside their personal differences and agree a realistic action plan in order for us to see meaningful progress in the region.

There is one ray of hope: It appears that my question to the Metro Mayor about franchising has at least flushed out that there is now a consensus that Bus Franchising should at least be studied, an essential first step towards actual franchising. This is not a quick fix, and that is exactly why we need to start now. I urge the four Leaders to agree to progress this with urgency and to ensure that it considers options for precepting powers to be granted as part of this package. Hence, we would have some hope of addressing our broken commercial model.

Instead, there is a proposal in the paperwork to spend yet more money investigating a mass-transit system. This is despite the fact that existing reports have not been made public; rather, the only thing that has been made public is clear differences of opinion and interpretation by the Bristol Mayor and the Metro Mayor as to the merits of different options and wildly different associated costs.

Before committing another £13.6 million of public money as part of the Future4West project, the existing reports desperately need to be made public so that this further proposed allocation of public funds and the scope of the work can be given full public scrutiny. How can the public be expected to get behind a vision for future transport

without being able to see whether the options being taken forward are realistic or not?

15. Matt Griffith, Director of Policy, Business West

Business West is the business leadership organisation and Chamber of Commerce for the West of England area.

Transport has long been a priority issue for our members. It matters for the ability of staff to get to work and the ability of firms to predictably, quickly and sustainably move goods and services around our region. In short, it matters on a range of critical ingredients for our economic prosperity and the future plans of our businesses.

In successive surveys we have conducted of our members, transport is always identified as one of our key regional weaknesses and the issue that businesses want to see properly addressed and delivered on, with high ambition.

Our weakness in transport is not only a drag on current and future economic growth. It is also a serious obstacle to delivering for our worse off citizens and on our region's economic inequalities.

A failure to build a full transport system in our city region has been felt hardest in our areas of deprivation for whom lack of transport infrastructure and provision cuts away the ability to access opportunities to work or grow a business.

The lack of access for communities in South Bristol to the businesses and opportunities of Bristol city centre. The difficulties for the rural areas and towns of BaNEs to access to the centre of Bath. The wasting of the current boom in employment opportunities in Avonmouth and Severnside due to lack of access for our poorer communities in South Gloucestershire, Bristol and North Somerset - so much so that up to half of new jobs created by some companies in Severnside are now going to people from South Wales, not those who could benefit from the West of England.

A failure to deliver our full ambitions on transport would also hurt our ambitions to deliver net zero.

Our performance on car use, compared to more sustainable modes, is considerably worse than other better performing English cities. This is particularly pronounced in journeys where active travel options are less viable - journeys of over a couple of miles both into and around our town and city centres. I.e. in our ability to travel by public transport on key route corridors and do so in the greenest and most convenient way possible. We can only build these viable non car options if we understand and articulate these options better.

The West of England has under invested for decades in transport and transport infrastructure and lacks the level of provision and service similar to other comparable cities, both UK and European. This means high levels of congestion, a high carbon footprint and a poor image for the city region which deters visitors, residents and investors from making our region the best place to live, work and invest in their futures.

One of the reasons for this has been both a failure to properly co-ordinate what we want, and a failure to properly understand and articulate our future case for investment to central government.

The past few years under a combined authority and in the years leading up to this have been a success - and our recent high levels of funding allocations from central government for transport investment have been tribute to our ability to work together and have been very warmly welcomed by the business community, even more so compared to the failures of the past.

But success has to be planned for in advance, and we must now do the work that sets out the next stage of our ambitions. If we do not, the risk is that we fail to build

the pipeline of future transport needs and the gap between these needs and our level of investment and delivery remains unfulfilled.

One of the key lessons from successful city regions is that transport is a decades long process; grounded in a long term vision and planning and in significant investment in evidence and institutional capacity. This is what London, Manchester and Nottingham have done. Internationally, it is what Copenhagen, Bordeaux and Freiburg have done. When you visit these cities and are amazed by the level of cycling or public transport provision, this is the result of decades long plans and ambitions and the dull but vital work of making the case to departments of transport and finance.

One of the reasons for the success of both London and Manchester is that they have the transport evidence and knowledge to be able to persuade and argue with the Department of Transport on the merits of their case. Successive Mayors of London and Manchester have been proud of having, through Transport for London and Transport for Greater Manchester, superior arguments and evidence in making the case to DfT. We should learn from this success.

It is notable that the competition on transport, particularly from English cities and from English Metro Mayors, is now intensifying, with new ambition on large scale transport investment in new public transport infrastructure corridors from several cities who will compete with our region, both for future government funding and future business investment and relocations. For example, Tracey Brabin's mass transit ambition in West Yorkshire. This week's Budget also included a new settlement with Greater Manchester, bringing their regional rail budget under control of their Metro Mayor in a sign that government is willing to be ambitious to work with city regions on better long term transport planning and integration.

The West of England Combined Authority offers, for the first time in decades, the ability to ambitiously plan and deliver our region's transport needs at the level of our functional economic geography - meeting the full requirements of our citizens and businesses.

Although the funding of this will inevitably be in part opportunistic - given the current funding settlement between central government and combined authorities - taking advantage of these opportunities can only happen if the evidence and costings for different levels of ambition exist. If we do not have the evidence for these options, we will have impeded our ability to win future funding.

Having a strong evidence base would also allow us to make the case for more ambitious forms of local funding - such as devolved fiscal powers - or forms of transport powers - such as franchising of buses. Given the economic strength of our region, again, having a well evidenced and ambitious set of transport asks should form the backbone of our future ambitions for devolution.

Our economic strength therefore strengthens the case for having ambition on transport. But we cannot achieve this without fully understanding and being able to evidence and argue with government.

That is why the business community strongly supports the investment now in transport studies that properly evidence and understand the options for future transport investment and urge the committee members to vote in favour of this

16. Cllr Emma Edwards, Bristol City Council

I would like to make a statement on item 11, the Investment Fund Programme, which includes over £13m unallocated funds for “future4west”. The paper states that “Work continues on the Future4WEST SOC”. It would seem that this debate over mass transit and whether or not that comprises an underground in Bristol is still rumbling on, and this one sticking point – which is actually the difference between billions of pounds and many years work – still dominates any sensible conversation about the future of transport in Bristol.

I have recently been asked about what ‘side’ we are on, or why Greens are against ambitious future mass transit plans. Let me be absolutely clear that Greens support a mass transit scheme and recognise there is a major need for this in Bristol and the region. We have repeatedly brought budget amendments and motions to Bristol Council that would provide a solid revenue base for major transport upgrades, as well as reducing unnecessary car journeys through the city centre. Mayor Rees recently made a point in Full Council about projects that were happening now that should have happened years ago, and how future generations would regret us not acting now. On this we agree. For example, a Workplace Parking Levy – which Greens proposed in 2021 – has been used to great success by Nottingham to fund their tram system. A report two years ago suggested that Bristol has missed out on £100 million by not introducing this policy in 2011 when it was first considered.

But, should that mass transit system be, or include, an underground? If we value effectiveness, speed of delivery, carbon reduction or value for money – which we should! – the answer is surely ‘no’! Even the generously written reports Bristol’s Mayor has commissioned found underground options had the worst value for money, and each line could take a decade to deliver. That’s not a solution compatible with action on the climate emergency, or with fixing Bristol’s transport system. It is not observably backed by anyone in the region, or crucially from investors or the government, nor from the main opposition party on Bristol Council or in Westminster. It would also be vulnerable to the effects of climate change itself – we’ve seen underground systems in cities around the world increasingly impacted by climate related flooding, something recent IPCC reports are quite clear about.

It’s unfortunate that for the last five years this pipe dream has taken the place of sensible, evidence-led conversations about transport and the tough decisions involved. Because transport in UK cities requires prioritising our limited road space to benefit the city overall and support active travel and public transport. It seems Bristol’s Mayor is unwilling to recognise this challenge and instead would prefer to declare the matter unsolvable – better to demand an impossible solution, commission another report and rush off a press release, than accept that making space for more efficient transport options like bikes, buses, or even trams might involve taking some space away from private motorists. Marvin Rees is quick to accuse others of lacking ambition for not buying into this vision – but Labour’s track record on transport suggests this is projection. For seven years Bristol’s transport has stagnated, traffic has piled up, bus services are cut, bike lanes have been pulled out, and cyclists and pedestrians are treated as an afterthought when changes are

made such as outside Temple Meads, or during work on Ashley Down train station. This refusal to challenge the dominance of private cars means our city is frequently among the worst in the UK for traffic.

Because we have ambition for Bristol to be not just better, but the best UK city for transport, Greens do accept that as well as action in the short and medium term (to make it easier and safer for people to walk and cycle in Bristol, to bring buses under local control and upgrade the service), in the longer term the city needs a proper mass transit system that is reliable, efficient and can reduce car journeys. Little talk is given to trams for example, one of the most enjoyed and successful mass transit systems there is. This is not a nostalgia for the past, but to embrace modern technology as trams evolve to be greener, quieter, and easier to implement. Modern trams often don't need tracks, or over head cables and can be tailored to fit to a city. They can be narrow to share space with cars, or operate on segregated routes. When I visited Birmingham last week, more tram tracks were being laid; other cities in the UK are getting on with the challenge. Even cities with complex designs and pinch points. That also means there's an established construction industry, with experts and predictable costs. They're popular, and in fact the city already managed to run a comprehensive tram network in the past.

So rather than go on with a love letter to trams and our preferences for an overground mass transit system, I must return to the present day. These discussions about 'mass transit' decades ahead must not continue to take the place of practical action to improve our transport in the short and medium term. Expensive consultants reports or imaginary maps are just jam tomorrow (or jam in 30 years) as far as the vast majority of Bristolians are concerned. The Bristolians we as councillors represent, just want to get around the city as easily as possible, today. I don't need to go over what they are as they have been well covered, but franchising buses and a focus on active travel to help clean up Bristol's air, have to be priorities.

This time last year, Greens brought a motion to Bristol Council last year asking for a proper study comparing an underground with all other options for cost effectiveness and carbon reduction – it sounds like The Combined Authority may have done that which is great. But let's see that report published so the public can make their minds up. We can't keep kicking this can down the road forever.

17. Edwin Paheja

We would ask the mayor to urgently find a solution to the loss of bus service to the poorest communities in Greater Bristol.

Service 47 / 5 / 626 will leave st Paul st werburgess Eastville park Stapleton Broomhill Fishponds oidbury court Downend Emerson green puckchurch westerleight yate bus station and yate North .

Without a bus service.

Only Emerson green to yate bus station and yate North is replaced with service 525 service by stagecoach west.

These are the poorest communities in Bristol with no bus services.

No access to Bristol disability equalities forum st paul learning centre

West of England centre for independent living in the vassal centre, Fishponds Bristol.

Access to health care food shopping.

It has been stated by the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority.

That the 47 was a commercial bus service.

It is funded by covid 19 bus service operators recover from the Department for transport through the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority along with service 72 .

506 Bristol city centre st Phillip Barton hill Easton Eastville Horfield Southmead hospital bus station.

The Evening service have been

Withdrawn on 17

Keynsham town centre, railway station.

Hanham, kingswood, corsham, hospital Hillfield, staple hill, Fishponds, Eastville park Horfield Southmead hospital bus station

Service 23 Bristol city centre Redcliffe Bedminster Southville and Ashto vale.

Service 96 St Anne's park, Bristlington knowle, Hengrove, Hartcliffe, South Bristol hospital.

Which serv Bristlington schools.

Service 91 Bristol city centre Bedminster knowle Hengrove Hartcliffe.

52 Bishopsworth South Bristol hospital to Bedminster and Bristol city centre.

516 Whitchurch estate Hengrove hospital knowle.

Hengrove to Bedminster. 512 .

Only Bristlington knowle and Totterdown are replaced by Demand responsive bus services.

But with buses not big enough to take children to school or college.

Or Staff to and from the Hospitals

On shifts .

This has left the poorest part of Greater Bristol without public transport.

The west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council Bristol city council Banes and South Gloucestershire council.

Must find ways of protecting the public transport and bus Network.

And to look at using Bus service improvement plan money to develop new bus services in South and East Bristol.

For the council to fund the levy to the west of England mayor Dan Norris to run bus trains and ferry services.

The west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council need more bus planning staff

To look at the bus Network.

The combined Authority and North Somerset council must work for passengers and communities.

For save bus service 5 campaign.