

DRAFT

Minutes of the West of England Combined Authority Committee , Friday, 26 January 2024

Members:

Metro Mayor Dan Norris, West of England Combined Authority

Mayor Marvin Rees, Bristol City Council

Cllr Claire Young, South Gloucestershire Council

Cllr Sarah Warren, Bath & North East Somerset Council (attended as substitute on behalf of Cllr Kevin Guy)

1	<p>EVACUATION PROCEDURE</p> <p>The meeting was held at the MShed. The venue’s evacuation procedure was noted.</p>
2	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>Metro Mayor Dan Norris welcomed everybody to the meeting. The following additional persons were present:</p> <p>Cllr Claire Young, South Gloucestershire Council Cllr Sarah Warren, Bath & North East Somerset Council (attended as substitute in place of Cllr Kevin Guy) Mayor Marvin Rees, Bristol City Council Richard Bonner, Chair of the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Board [non-voting member of the Committee]</p> <p>Councillor Ed Plowden, Chair of the Authority’s Overview & Scrutiny Committee Councillor David Wilcox, Vice-Chair of the Authority’s Audit Committee</p>
3	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE LOCALISM ACT 2011</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest declared under the Localism Act 2011. Richard Bonner, Chair of the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Board stated that he believed that his register of interests was up-to-date.</p>
4	<p>MINUTES</p> <p>The Committee discussed the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 6 October 2023. Cllr Warren asked that the recording of the BSIP Prioritising item resolutions (agenda item 15 of that Committee) as ‘unanimously agreed’ be verified as it was unclear from the recording.</p> <p>Cllr Young asked that any discussions about bringing an item forward on bus franchising should involve representatives from the Unitary Authorities from an early stage.</p>
5	<p>CHAIR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS</p> <p>The meeting stood for a minute’s reflection to mark Holocaust Memorial Day being held on 27 January 2024.</p>
6	<p>ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC (QUESTIONS, STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS)</p> <p>Twenty-one questions had been received from Members of the Public ahead of the meeting. These questions along with the Metro Mayor’s responses had been circulated and published on the Authority’s website.</p> <p>In addition, one petition and twenty-three statements had been received by the deadline. These had been circulated and published on the Authority’s website. The following persons attended the meeting and addressed the Committee for up to three minutes each on the topic of their statement or petition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Petition – Cllr Andrew Varney (Bristol City Council) • Statement 3 - Cllr Joanna Wright (Bath & North East Somerset Council);

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement 7 – Ian Quaife; • Statement 10 – Cllr Jos Clarke (Bristol City Council) • Statement 13 – David Redgewell; • Statement 16 – Christina Biggs; • Statement 21 – Cllr Eleanor Jackson (Bath & North East Somerset Council); • Statement 11 – Emilia Melville; • Statement 18 – Cllr Tim Rippington (Bristol City Council).
7	<p>COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIR OF THE WEST OF ENGLAND LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP BOARD</p> <p>Richard Bonner, Chair of the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Board, was invited to address the meeting and made the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He had attended Centre for Cities annual data launch which highlighted the challenges around the region such as connectivity and low attainment for those with little or no qualifications and reminded the region of the importance of long-term investment and planning. He stated the importance of determination and perseverance to achieve the ambitions for the region; • In respect to Bristol Temple Quarter he was pleased to see further plans to support the progression of the Temple Quarter Regeneration Programme, particularly in the context of the ambitious plans to bring forward economic development activity to create the infrastructure to deliver thousands of new jobs, and 10,000 new homes across the area and a boost of billions of pounds each year to the West of England economy; • He welcomed the Culture West project which would bring a blend of Combined Authority, Arts Council, and match funding from partners; • He was pleased to see such positive progress in the Transformation Programme and welcomed conversations to help redefine the role of a Business Board to create a powerful voice of business and bring a strategic perspective to addressing the challenges the region faces; • The LEP Board disappointed that Future 4 West proposals had not been brought back to this committee; <p>The comments had been published with the meeting papers on the Authority’s website.</p>
8	<p>COMMENTS FROM THE WEST OF ENGLAND COMBINED AUTHORITY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</p> <p>The West of England Combined Authority Overview & Scrutiny Committee had met on 22 January 2024 to discuss the items to be considered on this agenda. The comments made thereon had been circulated to the Committee and published prior to the meeting. Cllr Plowden, the Chair of the Authority’s Overview & Scrutiny Committee attended the meeting and addressed the Committee on these points.</p>
9	<p>COMMENTS FROM THE WEST OF ENGLAND COMBINED AUTHORITY AUDIT COMMITTEE</p> <p>The Vice-Chair of the West of England Combined Authority’s Audit Committee, Cllr Wilcox attended as the representative from that Committee. The comments received from the Authority’s Audit Committee had been published and circulated prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Metro Mayor Dan Norris thanked Cllr Wilcox for his remarks and stated that he was happy to</p>

arrange a meeting with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Audit Committee to discuss the issues of collaborative working and the way the Audit Committee was functioning but asked that any discussions held remained private.

10

BRISTOL TEMPLE QUARTER REGENERATION PROGRAMME

This report sought approval to participate in the Joint Delivery Vehicle (JDV) being created to drive forward the comprehensive regeneration of the Bristol Temple Quarter (BTQ) regeneration area. It explained the proposed JDV governance arrangements, including the inclusion of representatives from the Unitary Authorities on the JDV Strategic Steering Board to ensure all partners were involved and informed. The report further explained the proposed JDV operational arrangements, including how land assembly would be achieved, and sought authorisation for the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) or Unitary Authorities to provide “corporate core” support services to the JDV and operating capital by way of a loan facility. It explained that the JDV would procure a Development Partner to build out Phase 1 and plan for the delivery of Phase 2, seeking approval to progress the Outline Business Plan and Delivery Strategy for Phase 2.

Slight amendments to the wording of recommendations (1) & (5) were tabled. The amended recommendations were moved by Metro Mayor Dan Norris and seconded by Mayor Marvin Rees.

Mayor Rees stated that he was pleased with the ambition of the scheme and that this regeneration would be the joint second biggest regeneration scheme in Britain, bringing in 10,000 new homes, 22,000 new job and £1.5bn a year into the region’s economy while the population of the region is set to rise significantly and demand for jobs and homes was rising. He thanked all the partner organisations that had helped bring this to fruition. A Board would oversee the work to bring democratic accountability to the process. He reiterated that this was an exciting project with national significance.

Cllr Warren recognized the benefits that this would provide for the region including for areas that were a short train journey away such as Keynsham and Oldfield Park. She supported the recommendations.

Cllr Young welcomed the economic impacts for the wider region for example as set out in paragraph 1.11 of the report which stated:

“A major innovation hub at Temple Quarter will create exciting opportunities for growth in surrounding places and help connect innovation centres like the South Gloucestershire Tech Arc.”

She welcomed the prevention of urban sprawl and the opportunity to create a highly sustainable answer to some of the area’s housing needs.

[voting arrangements: In order to be carried, a decision on this matter required a majority of the members present and voting, such majority to include the Metro Mayor. Each member present could cast one vote. If a vote was tied the decision would not be carried. There was no casting vote. Co-opted members were not entitled to vote]

It was unanimously

Resolved:

- (1)** That the Committee noted that each of the Unitary Authorities would be invited to appoint a representative on the JDV Strategic Steering Board (Appendix 2) to help

ensure all partners were involved and informed;

- (2)** Authorises the establishment of the Joint Delivery Vehicle (JDV) in line with the principles set out in this report and authorises the Strategic Director of Infrastructure in consultation with the Strategic Director of Resources and Director of Legal and Governance to finalise the arrangements for the JDV and to take such steps as are reasonably necessary to ensure the establishment and efficient and effective operation of the JDV including entering into the Members' Agreement (paragraphs 2.1 to 2.33);
- (3)** Authorises the Strategic Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Strategic Director of Resources to approve the BTQ Business Plan, in consultation with Members of the JDV Strategic Steering Board, prior to establishment of the JDV (paragraphs 2.13-2.14);
- (4)** Authorises the Strategic Director of Resources to provide corporate core support services (including HR, finance and procurement) through either the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority or Unitary Authorities (subject to agreement) to the JDV on such terms as the Strategic Director of Resources shall decide (to include reimbursement of reasonable costs), and provided always that there is no adverse impact on the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority's ability to deliver its wider programmes (paragraph 2.38);
- (5)** That upon receipt of a Reserved Matters decision, the Chief Executive would notify the Combined Authority Committee Members, in writing, of the same and of the Chief Executive's intended decision on the Reserved Matters Issue. The Members would then have two working days within which to notify the Chief Executive, in writing, that they were not content with the proposed decision. In the event of the same, the Chief Executive would cause an extra-ordinary meeting of the Combined Authority Committee to be convened, which shall be convened within 5 working days, for the matter to be determined. In the event that an extraordinary committee was unable to determine the matter within the 5 working day period, the Chief Executive shall be authorised to determine the matter;
- (6)** Notes that the JDV will procure a Private Sector Development Partner (PSP) to deliver Phase 1 and support the development of the Strategic Outline Business Case and delivery strategy for St Philip's Marsh (Phase 2), delegating to the Strategic Director of Infrastructure authority to approve (following the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority's internal due diligence and governance processes) the procurement strategy, including evaluation criteria and contracting principles which will provide the framework against which the JDV procure and contract the Development Partner (paragraphs 2.45-2.48);
- (7)** Notes that JDV once established will directly procure consultants to provide strategic advice to the JDV and to facilitate delivery of the programme;
- (8)** Delegates to the Strategic Director of Infrastructure in consultation with the Director of Legal and Governance and the Strategic Director of Resources authority to agree Delivery Plans for the Infrastructure works as listed in the Grant Funding Agreement dated 20 April 2023 and to enter into (and/or amend) all agreements (including the Collaboration Agreement and the Grant Funding Agreement) as may be necessary to ensure delivery within approved budgets and risk appetite;

(9) Authorises the Strategic Director of Infrastructure to make the balance of the Bristol City Council (BCC) and West of England Mayoral Combined Authority Grant Funding (previously secured from the Investment Fund) as set out in paragraphs 2.40-2.41 available to the JDV following its set up following BCC approval on 7 November 2023;

(10) Authorises the allocation of £6.5m from the existing headroom available within the Investment Fund to make a loan facility available to the JDV, on such terms as the Strategic Director of Resources shall decide (to include the accrual of interest) and for JDV to progress the Phase 2 masterplan and Outline Business Case by 2026 to deliver the next stage of the BTQ Programme; and to delegate to the Strategic Director of Resources to consider and approve the Feasibility and Development Funding Application and to put in place the necessary arrangements to consolidate existing Investment Fund awards and make those funds available to the JDV (paragraphs 2.42-2.43)

At this stage of the meeting (2:43pm) there was an adjournment until 3:17pm.

11 INVESTMENT FUND PROGRAMME

This report updated the Committee on the overall Investment Fund programme and headroom and set out a number of new approvals for funding through the Investment Fund, including £1.5m to establish Culture West.

The recommendations were moved by Metro Mayor Dan Norris and seconded by Cllr Claire Young.

Cllr Young stated that culture was less supported in South Gloucestershire and therefore less well developed than in other parts of the region and needed the additional resources to make it a success. She asked that the Authority's Interim CEO work with the CEOs of the Unitary Authorities to ensure sufficient capacity to deliver this programme. She stressed the importance of collaborative working in this area.

Cllr Warren thanked officers for recommending the approval of the Outline Business Case for Somer Valley Links and additional funding for Midsomer Norton Market Square. She welcomed other initiatives including the solar array project at Fairy Hill, Compton Dando that would also provide community facilities and biodiversity and the £77k that had been awarded to Cleveland Pool in Bath for water source heatpump infrastructure to help heat the lido with renewable energy. Cleveland Pools was due to complete in 2023 and Fairy Hill in 2024.

However, Cllr Warren did feel the issue of delegations that had been raised at the meeting on 6 October 2023 had still not been addressed and asked the Audit Committee to investigate whether the existing delegations for the Bus Service Improvement Plan were fit for purpose. She stated that she supported the recommendations despite the reservations around the wording of the delegations.

Mayor Rees stated that he especially welcomed the approval of a Feasibility and Development Funding Application for CRSTS mobilisation as set out in recommendation (6). He also felt that the Culture West Full Business Case approval was an important regional asset which would attract additional regional investment. However, some groups needed more support to access cultural services than others. The Arts Council had reported that the region had the least diversity amongst audience, performers and staff in cultural services than elsewhere, so it was important that this piece of work recognised the existing inequality and marginalisation and asked for hard metrics to show this was being tackled.

]Voting Arrangements:

- In order to be carried, a decision on this matter required a majority of the members present and voting, such majority to include the Metro Mayor. Each member present could cast one vote. If the vote was tied the decision would not be not carried. There was no casting vote. Co-opted members were not entitled to vote].

It was unanimously

Resolved:

- (1) Approve the updated West of England Local Growth Assurance Framework.
- (2) Approve the Culture West Full Business Case and to award £1.5m. To delegate the approval of grant giving to the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority's Strategic Director of Economy and Skills in consultation with Unitary Authority Economy and Skills Directors. In the event of a consensus not being reached at Director level, decision making will be escalated to the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in consultation with the Unitary Authority CEOs;
- (3) Approve the Outline Business Case for Somer Valley Links and to award £1.414m for B&NES to progress the lower cost alternative package to Full Business Case due for completion by March 2025, and to note the transfer of the project delivery to B&NES post resolution of this business case;
- (4) To approve the Feasibility and Development Funding Application for the CRSTS 2 package/business case for submission by June 2024 and the award of £900k, and to delegate the approval of the detailed scope of work to the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority's Strategic Director of Infrastructure in consultation with Unitary Authority Directors of Infrastructure. In the event of a consensus not being reached at Director level, decision making will be escalated to the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in consultation with the Unitary Authority CEOs;
- (5) To approve the Feasibility and Development Funding Application for the West of England Regional Transport Model and the award of £600k to support the use of the model until 26/27;
- (6) To delegate the approval of a Feasibility and Development Funding Application for CRSTS mobilisation and the award of up to £670k to Bristol City Council to the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority's Strategic Director of Infrastructure in consultation with Unitary Authority Infrastructure Directors. In the event of a consensus not being reached at Director level, decision making will be escalated to the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in consultation with the Unitary Authority CEOs;
- (7) To delegate the approval of applications for the residual balance of the Low Carbon Challenge Fund Extension project to the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority's Director of Environment in consultation with Unitary Authority Environment Directors. In the event of a consensus not being reached at Director level, decision making will be escalated to the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in consultation with the Unitary Authority CEOs.

	<p>This report updated the Committee on measures to improve delivery including presenting the revised draft Terms of Reference of the Portfolio Review Board.</p> <p>It also requested that the Committee considered changes to schemes within the Investment Fund and City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement programmes against the agreed delivery assurance principles. The report also set out a number of actions which are being undertaken with the aim of improving delivery across the Authority's programmes.</p> <p>The Metro Mayor Dan Norris stated that he was disappointed that a number of projects had reported delays in delivery and that whilst he would approve the change requests detailed in the report he made it very clear to all partners delivering projects that his agreement to approve change requests could not be assumed and that he would be looking at all future change requests on a case by case basis. Where projects were significantly delayed, he would be asking officers to bring forward recommendations to reallocate funding to more deliverable priorities.</p> <p>He requested that the Overview & Scrutiny Committee investigate the long delays and report back where they believe the delays were unacceptable.</p> <p>The recommendations were moved by Metro Mayor Dan Norris and seconded by Cllr Sarah Warren.</p> <p>Cllr Warren stated that she welcomed the example of collaborative working. Cllr Young noted that change request Winterbourne/Frampton Cotterell Bypass and Coalpit Heath/Westerleigh Bypass Study which was reporting a delay of 9 months for Movement Study. She wanted to make clear that the title may be somewhat misleading as to what was happening. This was residual funding initially from 2021 to use to study traffic movements in the area to better understand if there were any sustainable alternatives in the future.</p> <p>[Voting Arrangements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In order to be carried, a decision on this matter required a majority of the members present and voting, such majority to include the Metro Mayor. Each member present could cast one vote. If a vote was tied the decision would not be carried. There was no casting vote. Co-opted members were not entitled to vote]. <p>It was unanimously</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Approve the change requests for schemes within the current programmes as set out in Appendix 1; (2) Approve the revised Terms of Reference for the Portfolio Review Board (formerly the titled the Programme Review Board) as set out in Appendix 2.
13	<p>APPOINTMENT OF STRATEGIC DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES (SECTION 73 OFFICER)</p> <p>The Committee was asked to endorse the Employment and Appointment Committee's decision to appoint Rachel Musson as the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority's Strategic Director of Resources (and Section 73 Officer).</p> <p>Metro Mayor Dan Norris formally welcomed Rachel Musson to the Mayoral Combined Authority and stated that Rachel had already made a positive impact on the organisation and he looked forward to working with her moving forward.</p>

[Voting Arrangements:

- The recommendation in this paper was for noting by the Committee, so no vote was required].

Resolved:

To note the Employment and Appointment Committee's decision to appoint Rachel Musson as the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority's Strategic Director of Resources (and Section 73 Officer).

14

TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME

The Committee was asked to note its regular report updating on the progress that has been made across the Transformation Programme and to note progress across the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority Transformation Programme.

The Metro Mayor stated that this work had been started almost a year ago and he believed a lot of progress had been made with many of the actions wither having already been delivered or were very close to completion. He had asked officers to review how this work could be taken forward in the coming year, so that it could be ensured the improvement journey was tracked. A further report would come to the next Committee in March 2024.

Cllr Warren acknowledged how hard all officers had been working on this element of work. She was saddened that the Metro Mayor had not managed to attend any of the pre-meetings attended by the leaders and CEOs and this together with the inadequacy of the Authority's constitution continued to hold the organisation back from delivering as effectively as it could for all its residents.

Cllr Young also thanked officers for their work in improving relationships and welcomed there was now a date set for the facilitated workshop. However, she did agree that the report was overly optimistic in places and stated there were some areas where much progress still needed to be made. She stated that all areas should be tracked even those areas where the workstreams had been completed. She therefore asked that the actions set out in paragraph 11 as follows not be enacted as it was important that the Committee saw a complete set of actions until all the actions were completed and that the Independent Reviewer should be the person to determine this rather than the Authority marking its own homework:

"For ease of tracking, we do not propose to keep reporting on completed transformation actions and they will not appear in future updates on the Transformation Programme."

The Authority's Interim Chief Executive stated that the Authority was not reporting on the completed tasks so that the outstanding tasks could be highlighted more clearly. He stated he was happy for the Independent Reviewer to check the completed tasks as part of the 12 month review to give that assurance.

Mayor Rees stated that there was a danger of merging the aspiration with a description of the present which had lead to a report that was more optimistic that the actual position. He stated that it was important to be clear what was trying to be achieved and the sequence in which it was to be done, He was not confident of a coherent narrative to tell the region which would help raise the region's national and international profile.

[Voting Arrangements:

- The paper was to note and no vote was thus required].

Resolved:

That the progress across the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority Transformation Programme be noted.

15 TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

This report provided an update to the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority Committee on key transport schemes and to secure approval from Committee on critical decisions and associated funding (where applicable) within the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority Transport Infrastructure programme.

The report also detailed further investment in the rail network in the region, allocating £470k for the 10-Year Strategic Rail Plan and £250k for the 25-year Rail Strategic Outline Business Case. Furthermore the Authority is requesting allocating funding for a New Stations study. There was also further funding proposed to progress work to deliver electrification of part of the region's rail network.

The recommendations were moved by Metro Mayor Dan Norris and seconded by Mayor Rees.

Mayor Rees welcomed the Electric Vehicle Charging Action Plan and stated that there was some important considerations including the Clean Air Zone in Bristol which was designed to create behaviour change but in order to be effective support was needed for households and businesses to adapt to the change and the appropriate infrastructure being put in place would be part of this support. Secondly the nature of life in the city with high density living in many areas and a growing population meant that support was needed for those without driveways, in terraces and flats, to own electric vehicles also.

Mayor Rees also spoke about zero emissions buses work and supporting the bus companies to achieve this was important. He stated that he would advocate double-door buses as these aided the popularity of the bus travelling.

Cllr Young also welcomed the EV Charging Action Plan as there were 60s and 70s Radburn-style housing in her authority area where the front doors faced directly onto green spaces where it was difficult to deliver charging points. On rail there were a number of big issues for example the Westerleigh junction was a limiting factor to opening up additional stations. She was concerned that they may potentially be a shortfall in capital funding for the Portishead line project. She welcomed the roll-out of low emission buses.

Cllr Warren welcomed the report which would help provide vital infrastructure improvements in supporting decarbonisation of the transport network. She particularly welcomed the EV Charging Action Plan and the viability study into a potential new station at Saltford. She did, however, flag her reservations on the recommended delegations to a single officer set out in the report.

[Voting Arrangements:

In order to be carried, a decision on this matter required a majority of the members present and voting, such majority to include the Metro Mayor. Each member present could cast one vote. If a vote was tied the decision would not be carried. There was no casting vote. Co-opted members were not entitled to vote]

It was unanimously

Resolved:

- (1) Electric Vehicle Charging Action Plan – Adopts the final version of the Electric Vehicle Charging Action Plan, as set out in paragraphs 1 - 44 of this report;
- (2) Strategic Rail Plan – Delegates to the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority's Strategic Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Unitary Authority Infrastructure Directors, to spend the £470k previously allocated funding for the 10-Year Strategic Rail Plan and £250k for the 25-year Rail Strategic Outline Business Case, as set out in paragraphs 45-69 of this report. In the event of a consensus not being reached at Director level, decision making will be escalated to the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in consultation with the Unitary Authority CEOs;
- (3) New Rail Stations Study - Approves the drawdown of £100k from the previously allocated £720k to progress a New Stations Study, as set out in paragraphs 51.1 and 51.2 of this report;
- (4) Rail Electrification - Approves the award of £200k from Investment Fund (Revenue) to part-fund the Filton Bank (Bristol Parkway to Bristol Temple Meads) Rail Electrification project to Outline Business Case stage. This is subject to the remaining £375k of separate third-party funding being secured to enable the delivery of the proposed scope, as set out in paragraphs 70 - 97 of this report;
- (5) MetroWest Phase 1 (Portishead Line) - Approves the award of £9.66m of previously allocated funding from the Investment Fund. This is subject to the Department for Transport approving the project Full Business Case, addressing any remaining project capital funding shortfall and formally committing (in writing) to taking on any future capital cost risk on the project, as set out in paragraphs 98 - 136 of this report;
- (6) Zero Emission Buses - approves delegated authority to the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority's Strategic Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Unitary Authority Infrastructure Directors, subject to a successful award from the ZEBRA 2 fund, to enter into a grant agreement with First Bus to deliver the proposal as detailed in paragraphs 136 - 159 of this report.

16

MAYORAL AND COMBINED AUTHORITY BUDGET 2024/25 & MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

Prior to the discussion of this item there was an adjournment from 3:51pm to 4:17pm in order for Metro Mayor Dan Norris to fully consider proposed amendments put forward.

The Committee was asked to consider and approve the Budget in respect of the Mayoral Functions and the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority for 2024/25. The report included the revenue and capital forecasts for the financial year 2023/24 based on data from the period April 2023 to December 2023.

The report also incorporated the Capital Strategy for the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority including the detailed Capital Budget, and indicative budget up to 2027/28 and the Treasury Management Strategy for 2024/25.

Metro Mayor Dan Norris welcomed the commitment for the Authority to carry out a role and

purpose review of the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority on the future direction of the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority and its strategic investment priorities.

The Metro Mayor stated that he was unable to vote on parts of the budget and stated he was actively engaged with ministers to see whether any changes could be made as this was not the case in other Combined Authorities.

Metro Mayor Dan Norris set out proposed amendments to recommendations (1), (2), (3) and (4) – recommendation (4) would be split into two parts (4a) & (4b). The wording of these amendments was read out. Cllr Young asked for clarification on the wording of revised recommendation (3) as she understood there was additional wording but accepted advice from the Authority’s monitoring officer that this had been superseded with the proposed revised recommendation.

Mayor Rees asked for advice from the Authority’s Monitoring Officer whether he could move an amendment that noted the ringfencing of £13.6m in the budget for the Future4West programme. The Interim Monitoring Officer stated that as the request was “to note” then all members of the Committee would be entitled to vote on that amendment and a majority decision would prevail. Mayor Rees therefore asked that this element be informally noted.

Mayor Rees also asked for advice on whether he could move an amendment to recommendation 4(d) along the following terms:

“To authorise the drawdown of not more than £650,000 of the allocated project budget and delegate all necessary powers to the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority’s Strategic Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the relevant Unitary Authority Directors to enable the progression of all of the proposed route options examined in the Future4West Strategic Outline Case reporting back to no later than March 2024 committee. In the event of a consensus not being reached at Director level, decision making will be escalated to the Mayoral Combined Authority’s Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in consultation with the Unitary Authority CEOs.”

The Authority’s Interim Monitoring Officer advised that if that amendment were to be formally moved he would advise that as it was nearly identical to a similar amendment moved and rejected at the meeting on 6 October 2023 it would not be allowed to be moved under the provisions of the constitution within six months of being rejected.

Mayor Rees stated he was disappointed not to see a chapter change transport offering included and that the current offering lack resilience. He believed that a mass transit system including an underground element should not be ruled out at this stage with an amount ringfenced for Future4West. He noted that the work on Mass Transit was currently paused but he did not believe that there was time to pause on this matter with transport was the largest contributor to CO2 emissions in the area. He believed that any mass transit systems should have the following characteristics: (i) segregated; (ii) hit the areas of highest density; (iii) be affordable; (iv) be decarbonized; (v) deliver modal shift. There were also practical reasons that could prevent a wholly overground solution such as width of some of the roads along the major routes which could lead to compulsory purchase orders as well as the long term closure of those routes. He did not believe that the best solution should be ruled out until the evidence showed the best solution could not be provided.

Cllr Warren asked that the budget be referred to the Authority’s Audit Committee for further investigation as to whether all the appropriate procurement processes were being followed correctly and to carry out any benchmarking against other combined authorities.

Cllr Young brought forward the following amendment, which was seconded by Cllr Warren:

“that unitary authority members and officers participate in a working group convened by the West of England Combined Authority to explore all funding options available to the Combined Authority to enable delivery of sustainable public transport across the region”.

Cllr Young stated that there were two elements to this, firstly that this did not confined to a transport levy and secondly that a working group could not agree contributions to a transport levy, which was a function of the unitary authorities themselves and would have to be dealt with by those authorities.

Cllr Warren stated that it was important that the remit of the working group was widened to explore all funding options to enable sustainable funding of public transport in the future including how bus franchising may be funded. She stated she would like to see some genuine collaboration in drawing up future public transport options for the region in the interest of all the region’s options.

The amendment was put to the vote with 3 in favour and 1 against. As Metro Mayor Dan Norris voted against the recommendation was not approved.

There was no seconder for the unamended original recommendation (10) so that was not approved.

[Voting Arrangements:

- **Recommendations 1; 2; 3; 8 and 10:** In order to be carried, a decision on these matter required a majority of the members present and voting, such majority was to include the Metro Mayor. Each member present may cast one vote. If a vote was tied the decision would not be carried. There was no casting vote. Co-opted members were not entitled to vote.
- **Recommendations 4-7:** In order to be carried, a decision on this matter required the unanimous vote of the members present and voting, but excluding the Metro Mayor who was not entitled to vote. Co-opted members were not entitled to vote.

Recommendation 9: None required – Recommendations are for noting.]

That Committee:

Resolved:

- (1) Agree to undertake a role and purpose review of the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority, engaging Mayors and Leaders on the future direction of the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority and its strategic investment priorities. This work will report back to the Committee no later than October 2024.
- (2) Authorise the Interim Chief Executive to work with Unitary Authority Chief Executives to develop and agree a programme of effectiveness and efficiency reviews with progress reported back to the Committee no later than June 2024.
- (3) Note the Interim Chief Executive will work with the Unitary Authority Chief Executives to explore opportunities for sharing resources where appropriate during the financial year 2024/25.

(4)

A) Approve the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority budget for 2024/25 as summarised in figure 9a, and the relevant related supporting appendices, but with a retention of £800k (the "Withheld Sum"), split broadly between 50% pay/non pay budget lines.

B) Request that the interim Chief Executive brings a report to committee on the conclusion of the work referred to in recommendation No.2 above to enable the release of the Withheld Sum.

(5) Approve the Mayoral Budget for 2024/25 together with the funding contribution from the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority, (Investment Fund), budget of £687k as set out in Figure 18.

(6) Approve the Capital Budget as detailed in Appendix 5.

(7) Approve the Treasury Management Strategy for 2024/25 detailed in Appendix 6.

(8) Agree the specific Highways and Transport Capital Grant allocations totalling £25m and the pothole funding allocation to unitary authorities for 2024/25 as set out in Figure 15.

(9) Note the 2023/24 forecast position for the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority Revenue Budget as set out in Appendix 7, the forecast position for the Mayoral Functions Revenue budget as set out in Figure 18 and the changes to the Capital Forecast as set out in Appendix 5.

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EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved:

That under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded during the remainder of the meeting on the basis that if they were present during the business to be transacted there would be a likelihood of disclosure to them of exempt information of the following description:

- Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person, including the authority holding that information; and
- Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.

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BRISTOL TEMPLE QUARTER REGENERATION PROJECT - CONSIDERATION OF EXEMPT APPENDICES

The Committee met in exempt session for consideration of the exempt appendices in respect of Item 10 (Bristol Temple Quarter Regeneration Programme). The wording of the recommendation was discussed.

It was unanimously:

Resolved:

The recommendations were agreed as discussed.

(the meeting closed at 4:54pm)

Signed:

Date: