

COMMENTS FROM: WECA OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

COMMENTS TO BE SUBMITTED TO: WECA COMMITTEE

WECA COMMITTEE MEETING DATE: 30 NOVEMBER 2018

At their meeting held on 28 November 2018, the WECA Overview & Scrutiny Committee reviewed the reports to be considered at the 30 November 2018 WECA Committee.

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee decided to submit the following comments (the Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee will receive an opportunity to present these comments at the WECA Committee meeting):

General comment:

Carbon neutral target – The committee noted the recent motion approved by Bristol City Council about Bristol being carbon neutral by 2030. In light of this, the committee felt that WECA should be asked to consider what action it will be able to take to assist Bristol in meeting this target, once the proposal is confirmed by the BCC executive.

Comments on WECA Committee agenda items:

Agenda item 10 – Investment Fund

No specific comments

Agenda item 11 – Love Our High Streets

Overview & Scrutiny Committee comments:

1. Some concern expressed about engagement levels with ward councillors in terms of the pilot selection, although the tight timescales associated with the pilots were noted.
2. Re: recommendation 4, the committee felt that clear future criteria must be set to guide future scheme selection, including details of any public engagement.
3. The committee generally welcomed the overall initiative.

Agenda item 12 – Investment to support delivery of housing and infrastructure

Overview & Scrutiny Committee comments:

Whilst broadly supporting the proposals, the committee commented re Paragraph 5:

1. Issue of the revolving acquisition fund: The committee suggested further clarity was needed about how land value uplift would be captured and monitored; and further detail about how the “profit” will be recycled across the constituent authorities.
2. Clarification was needed about constituent authorities’ capacity in terms of leading on masterplanning.

Agenda item 13 – Transport functions

Overview & Scrutiny Committee comments:

The committee asked that a clearer narrative be provided for their information about the transport functions now held by WECA and so that the general public can understand as they felt there is considerable confusion in the general public currently about this.

Agenda item 14 – Key route network

Overview & Scrutiny Committee comments:

1. Cross-boundary co-ordination: there was a need for clarity about inter-authority responsibilities where KRN roads cross boundaries (e.g. South Bristol Link).
2. Clarity was sought about how WECA will look to secure resources to undertake its responsibilities under Part 2 of The Transport Act 2000.

Agenda item 15 – Transport update

Overview & Scrutiny Committee comments:

1. Designing in inter-operability of vehicles: In terms of any future mass transit / light rail / tram train schemes, it would be preferable for vehicles to be capable of functioning on different routes.
2. Paragraph 39 - light rail / tram train study: Concern was expressed about potential cost implications of funding this infrastructure (e.g. as experienced in Rotherham).
3. Paragraph 43: Station accessibility improvements: in this context, the importance of Lawrence Hill and Stapleton Road stations should be recognised in terms of promoting wider access to the rail network (also reducing pressure on Temple Meads). Concern was expressed in particular about the lack of accessibility at Nailsea, Backwell and Parson Street stations.

4. Bus strategy:
 - a. The development of the strategy, including the doubling of passenger numbers, is urgent and should be progressed as quickly as possible.
 - b. It was felt that the Enhanced Partnership option should be explored as part of this.
 - c. It was suggested that there may be learning available from Greater Manchester's investigation of franchising options.
 - d. Clarification was sought about which, if any, bus services are currently subsidised by WECA.
 - e. A query was raised about ensuring that the bus strategy takes appropriate account of major new housing developments and the need for joined-up thinking around this.
 - f. Bus operators are declining to consider bus services which they consider are going to be uneconomic for them which is going to lead to the JSP sites being without local bus services unless there is revenue funding to subsidise them, rather than just capital funding for infrastructure.
5. Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan: Clarification was sought about the level of engagement with cyclists in designing routes / future routes.
6. Bristol Area Feasibility Study: Clarification was sought about how scrutiny can input to this work.

Agenda item 16 – Update on the preparation of an Infrastructure & Investment Delivery Plan

Overview & Scrutiny Committee comments:

No specific comments

Agenda item 17 – Joint Assets Board update – terms of reference

Overview & Scrutiny Committee comments:

1. It was questioned whether a wider range of Council member input is possible in terms of the Board's membership.
2. In relation to the terms of reference, clarity was sought about who will take decisions on assets, and whether constituent authorities will retain control and direction over assets. If authorities do not retain this control, there is a potential issue about whether this affects/impacts on an authority's accounts.

Agenda item 18 – WECA & Mayoral budget outturn – April – September 2018

Overview & Scrutiny Committee comments:

No specific comments

Agenda item 19 – Treasury management monitoring report – April – September 2018

Overview & Scrutiny Committee comments:

No specific comments on the report, but a more detailed briefing was requested about treasury management and the forthcoming budget /investment process.

COMMENTS FROM: WECA OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

COMMENTS TO BE SUBMITTED TO: JOINT COMMITTEE

JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING DATE: 30 NOVEMBER 2018

At their meeting held on 28 November 2018, the WECA Overview & Scrutiny Committee reviewed the reports to be considered at the 30 November 2018 Joint Committee.

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee decided to submit the following comments (the Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee will receive an opportunity to present these comments at the Joint Committee meeting):

Agenda item 10 – LEP One Front Door funding programme

Overview & Scrutiny Committee comments:

No specific comments.

Agenda item 11 – LEP & IBB budget outturn

Overview & Scrutiny Committee comments:

No specific comments.

Agenda item 12 – MetroWest Phase 1A & 1B – gateway decision

Overview & Scrutiny Committee comments:

1. Letter from Chris Grayling: Whilst fully recognising the importance of the development of the Portishead line, there was deep concern (with regard to the reference in the Secretary of State's letter about the Government only considering support if it includes a solution to Portishead) in the committee's view that this should not be a barrier to or jeopardise the development of other essential rail line improvements such as Severn Beach, Bath-Bristol line, Henbury phase 2. It would not be acceptable to delay the whole local rail programme if one element of it was deemed to be undeliverable.
2. An alternative option to heavy rail for the Portishead line has been suggested and this could be a way of overcoming the requirement stated in Chris Grayling's letter.
3. The committee requested a more detailed breakdown of what is happening with all the MetroWest phases.
4. It will be important to ensure that the Light Rail and Tram/Train study is completed as soon as possible.

Agenda item 13 – Joint Local Transport Plan consultation

Overview & Scrutiny Committee comments:

No specific comments.

Agenda item 14 – Joint Spatial Plan update

Overview & Scrutiny Committee comments:

No specific comments.

Agenda item 15 – Update on the preparation of an infrastructure and investment delivery plan

Overview & Scrutiny Committee comments:

No specific comments.

Agenda item 16 – Joint Assets Board update – terms of reference

Overview & Scrutiny Committee comments:

As per comments submitted to the WECA Committee, i.e.:

1. It was questioned whether a wider range of Council member input is possible in terms of the Board's membership.
2. In relation to the terms of reference, clarity was sought about who will take decisions on assets, and whether constituent authorities will retain control and direction over assets. If authorities do not retain this control, there is a potential issue about whether this affects/impacts on an authority's accounts.

Agenda item 17 – Invest in Bristol and Bath review

Overview & Scrutiny Committee comments:

No specific comments on the report. It was suggested that a briefing note be prepared for the committee on the potential impact of Brexit on inward investment into the region.