

**REPORT TO: WECA OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**DATE: 23 JANUARY 2019**  
**REPORT TITLE: INFORMATION ITEM**  
**METROBUS PROGRAMME UPDATE**

**AUTHOR:**

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**Purpose of Report**

- 1 To provide an update on the progress of the Metrobus programme

**General background**

- 2.1 The Metrobus programme has been delivered as 3 separate, jointly-promoted, projects with a different local authority taking the lead for delivery of each. South Gloucestershire Council is the lead authority for the North Fringe to Hengrove (NFH) project, Bristol City Council is the lead for the Ashton Vale to Temple Meads (AVTM) project and North Somerset is lead for the South Bristol Link (SBL) project.
- 2.2 Each individual project has its own Project Board and there is an additional Integration Board that covers cross cutting aspects that are relevant to each project. Primarily this covers the bus stop infrastructure, smart ticketing, stop information and service operations.
- 2.3 Oversight of the 4 Metrobus Boards is provided by the Programme Assurance Board, which is made up of Strategic/Executive Directors (or delegates) from the 4 West of England Authorities.

**Latest update information**

- 3.1 Service m1 (Hengrove to Cribbs Causeway) started operating on Sunday 6th January. It is operated by Bristol Community Transport (BCT), who are sub-contracted by First Bus with brand new bio-methane powered low emission buses, which meet the quality standards set by the QPS . As part of the launch of the service there was free travel to all passengers for the day. The m1 operates every 10 minutes between 0600 and 2400 (Mon-Sat) and every 20 minutes between 0900 and

2400 on Sundays.

- 3.2 There is some infrastructure outstanding to support the operation of the m1 service. This includes one bus shelter (northbound at Harry Stoke) and 12 iPoints. These iPoints will be installed by the start of February, and the contingency of short term acceptance of on bus contactless payment is in place until these installations are complete. Each shelter where this applies has clear information for the public.
- 3.3 Service m3 (Emersons Green to City Centre) was also changed on the 6th January to increase the number of Monday-Friday peak hour journeys. It now operates every 15 minutes at these peak times, having previously been every 20 minutes. 2 of the journeys each peak hour will operate more directly between Emersons Green and the City Centre, not calling at UWE Frenchay. This will provide shorter journey times for passengers from Emersons Green, Lyde Green and Ring Road stops to the City Centre. The reduction in frequency at UWE is more than offset by the m1 and this change should also benefit passengers alighting at Begbrook
- 3.4 Service m2 (Long Ashton Park & Ride to City Centre) has been operational, using the new Guided Busway, since the 2<sup>nd</sup> September. The busway is now also used by the A1 Airport Flyer service.
- 3.5 There are two metrobus routes without a commercial offer at present; Hengrove to City Centre via South Bristol Link; and Emersons Green to Bristol Parkway. Discussions with operators are continuing on options to provide services that make use of the infrastructure and serve the communities.
- 3.6 As the metrobus project is approaching closedown, the transition to business as usual arrangements is ongoing. The metrobus Board has been established, to oversee: the operation of metrobus services, the delivery of authorities' commitments in relation to maintenance and enforcement, and to consider amendments to existing metrobus routes.
- 3.7 Ongoing monitoring of service performance is undertaken by authorities and operators at the metrobus Performance Review Group (PRG). This Group is made up of officers from each authority and operator representatives. The purpose of the Group is to review both operational performance of metrobus and the maintenance and enforcement commitments from the authorities in support of metrobus services.
- 3.8 The PRG seeks to identify areas of delay on metrobus services and explore potential remedies. In operational terms the services are generally operating well, however service m3 is not meeting its timetable due to AM peak time traffic congestion on the A4174 Ring Road. South Gloucestershire Council have been monitoring this, and are considering the available options for improving m3 punctuality. Service m1 is experiencing some issues with driver route familiarity, as well as congestion around Bedminster Bridge. It is early days of operation on the m1 and we will continue to monitor this as we generate more performance data.
- 3.9 The PRG will also agree the publishing of monitoring information on metrobus service performance.
- 3.10 The new 'buy before you board' ticketing arrangements appear to be working well, with few adverse comments. The majority of passengers are using the mobile ticketing app. The iPoints have proven to be generally reliable, with most problems being resolved quickly.

## Consultation

- 4 Non-applicable (in the context of this being an update report for information).

## Other Options Considered

- 5 Non-applicable (in the context of this being an update report for information).

## Risk Management/Assessment

- 6 Project risks have been managed throughout the delivery programme and overseen by the Project Boards and Programme Assurance Board. There are no risks associated with this report as it is an update report for information.

## Public Sector Equality Duties

- 7 *The public sector equality duty created under the Equality Act 2010 means that public authorities must have due regard to the need to:*
- *Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimization and other conduct prohibited by the Act.*
  - *Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.*
  - *Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.*
- 7.1 *The Act explains that having due regard for advancing equality involves:*
- *Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.*
  - *Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.*
  - *Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.*
- 7.2 *The general equality duty therefore requires organisations to consider how they could positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations. It requires equality considerations to be reflected in the design of policies and the delivery of services, including policies, and for these issues to be kept under review.*
- 7.3 There have been Equalities Impact Assessments provided through the planning and delivery of the metrobus programme. As an update report, there are no further Equalities Issues arising as a result of the report.

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**Finance Implications, including economic impact assessment where appropriate:**

- 8 The report provides a progress update on each of the metrobus routes, and as such there are no additional financial implications arising from this report.

The metrobus programme met the economic criteria for the DfT funding submissions in 2009/10 delivering a benefit cost ratio in excess of 2.0. The post completion economic impact will be assessed as part of the agreed metrobus Evaluation plan.

Advice given by: Chris Holme (BCC Finance Manager)

**Legal Implications:**

- 9 There are no legal implications to the report but it should be noted that due to recent legislation, technical changes will need to be considered to the Quality Partnership Scheme.

Advice given by: Nancy Rollason (Deputy Monitoring Officer BCC)

**Land/property implications**

- 10 Non-applicable

**Human Resources Implications**

- 11 Non-applicable

**Recommendation:**

- \* **That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes this update on the metrobus programme.**

**Background papers:**

None

**West of England Combined Authority Contact:**

Any person seeking background information relating to this item should seek the assistance of the contact officer for the meeting who is Ian Hird / Tim Milgate on 0117 332 1486; or by writing to West of England Combined Authority, 3 Rivergate, Temple Way, Bristol BS1 6ER; email: [democratic.services@westofengland-ca.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@westofengland-ca.gov.uk)