

**West of England Partnership
Joint Transport Executive Committee
24 April 2009**

Greater Bristol Bus Network Progress Update

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide an update on the successful progress in delivering the Greater Bristol Bus Network (GBBN) and to propose updates to the project management arrangements.

Background

2. In 2005 the four West of England Partnership authorities (Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol City, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Councils) came together with First to develop a public transport major scheme bid.
3. The scheme involves almost £70million investment in improving bus services. It comprises £42.3m from the Department for Transport (DfT), £20m from the bus operator First, £5.7m developer contributions and £1.8m local authority contributions.
4. The scheme includes the introduction of ten showcase bus corridors (see Figure 1), which will include bus priority measures, improved bus shelters, real-time information (which tells you when the bus is due) and new buses.
5. The Department for Transport (DfT) confirmed this funding with the award of Full Approval in May 2008, later than anticipated, and since then the authorities have delivered considerable progress with the scheme.

Work done to date - update on the 10 corridors

Corridor 1: M32 into Bristol

- Last summer a 370m dedicated bus way was delivered on Newfoundland Way after junction 3 of the M32. This provides time savings for buses approaching the city centre, improving punctuality and reliability. It provides additional benefits for taxis and motorcyclists that are also removed from the other 2 lanes.

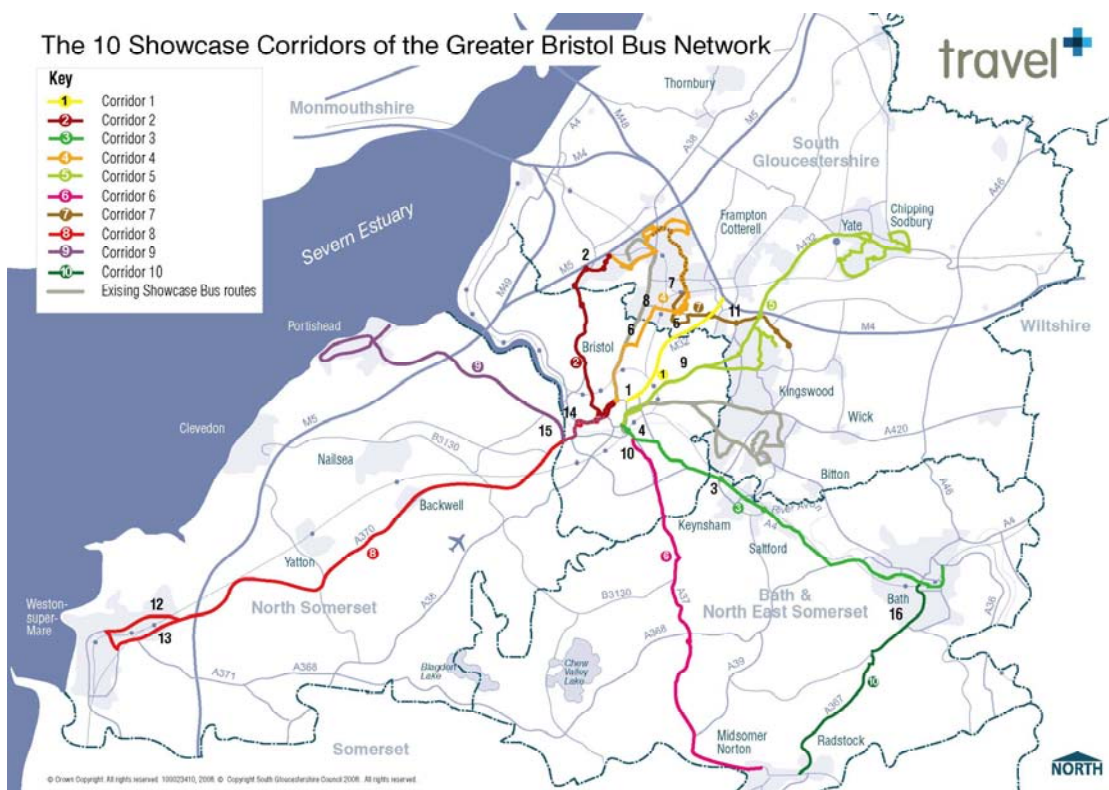


Figure 1 - Greater Bristol Bus Network Showcase Corridors

Corridor 2: A4018 from Cribbs Causeway to Bristol City Centre via Henbury and Westbury

- An extra bus lane has been completed along Lysander Road near Cribbs Causeway to prevent the buses from being caught in traffic entering the Mall.
- First has introduced new buses along this corridor with 30 brand new buses for services 1 (Cribbs Causeway to Broomhill) and 54 (Cribbs Causeway to Stockwood). These buses feature low floor access, more comfortable seating and engines designed to reduce Co2 emissions.

Corridor 3: A4 Bath to Bristol City Centre via Keynsham

- Work has started on the A4 at Hicks Gate. This will improve the junction to give buses priority and also to help prevent accidents and tackle congestion. This work is due to be completed in early June.
- Consultation will be taking place in April on works on the A4 Bath Road.

Corridor 4: Cribbs Causeway to Bristol City Centre via Bradley Stoke, Abbeywood and Horfield

- Work is currently taking place on the A 4174 Ring Road at the Abbeywood roundabout in Filton. The work started in March to build an extra bus lane to allow buses, taxis and motorcycles to travel through the area with reduced journey times. This will also include improved cycling and walking facilities and is due to be completed in September.
- Bradley Stoke and Patchway have seen the introduction of new bus shelters and raised kerbs to improve access.
- The Filton Avenue/Lockleaze Road junction has been improved with new signals to enable late running buses to trigger a green light, along with advanced stop lines for cyclists.

- In April work will start to install a bus gate at New Road, Filton providing time savings for buses travelling towards Bristol Parkway. This should be completed in June.
- Work is due to start in the summer on the development of a bus lane on Filton Avenue northbound which will involve the widening of the existing road.

Corridor 5: A432 from Yate/Chipping Sodbury into Bristol

- Work is progressing along Fishponds and Stapleton Roads to install new fibre optic cabling which will provide improved control of the traffic lights.

Corridor 6: A 37 from Midsomer Norton to Bristol

- On the A37 Wells Road junction with St John's Lane, there has been an upgrade of the traffic signals to include bus priority equipment and an improvement to the pedestrian crossing facilities.

Corridor 7: A 4174 Ring Road from Emersons Green to Cribbs Causeway via UWE, Abbey Wood and Filton

- The westbound slip roads to Hambrook and Frenchay have been lengthened, to reduce the amount of queuing traffic in these lanes causing congestion at the junction.

Corridor 8: A 370 Weston-super-Mare to Bristol City Centre

- On the A370 Locking Road the traffic signals have been upgraded to give priority to buses by allowing the signals to change to green when a bus approaches. Improvements to Baytree Road roundabout have also enhanced pedestrian facilities.
- Bus stop improvements are currently being progressed on along the A370. This includes Yatton, Claverham, Long Ashton, Flax Bourton, Brockley, Cleeve, Congresbury, Hewish and Locking Road.
- A bus lane has been installed on the westbound approach to junction 21 of the M5 on the A370, operational during peak hours, to avoid queues and delays. A new east bound cycleway has also been implemented.
- On the A370 Plimsoll Bridge, an upgrade of the traffic signalisation has been completed to reduce congestion.

Corridor 9: A369 Portishead to Bristol City Centre

- Along the A369 a programme of bus stop enhancements has begun.
- The A369 Bridge Road traffic signals have been improved allowing the lights to change green when a bus approaches, giving priority to the bus.

Corridor 10: A 367 Bath to Radstock and Midsomer Norton

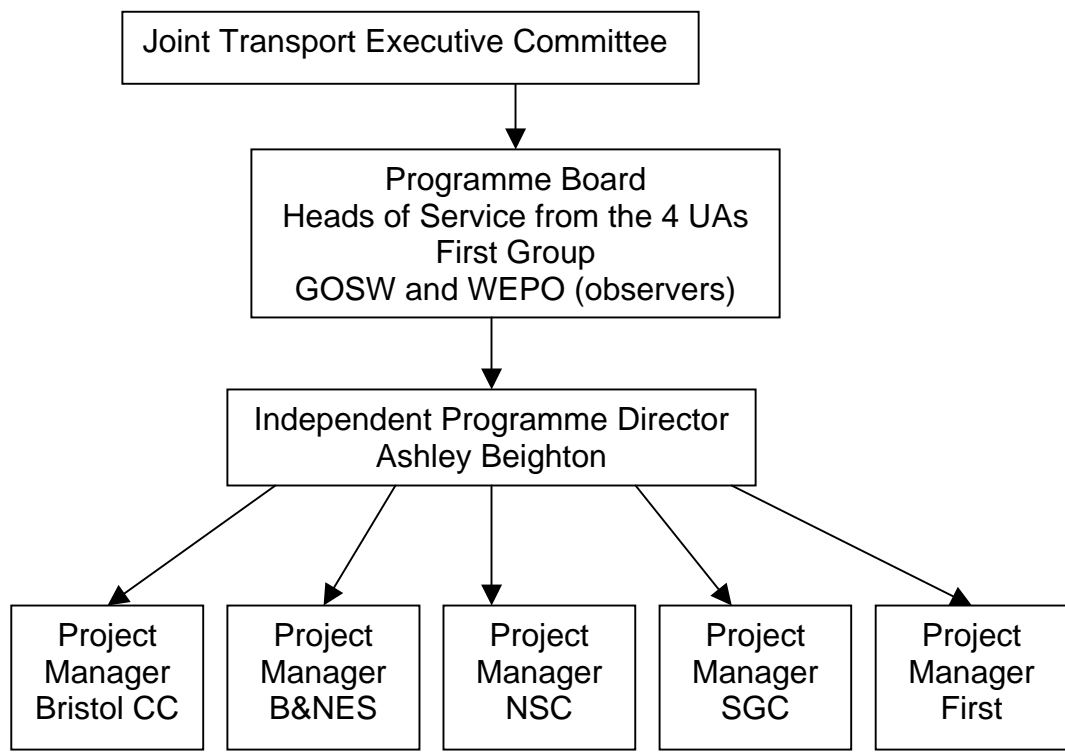
- Work is currently taking place on the A367 at Odd Down on building a new bus lane. The work started mid-march and is due to complete at the end of May.
- Work has started to improve the bus stops with the introduction of raised kerbs, thereby improving accessibility for bus users with new shelters being provided at some locations.

Governance

6. The project governance is as set out in the diagram below which has been approved by the DfT and is consistent with the other major scheme bids being developed in the sub-region (see item 9 on this agenda). Please note that the top

level in the structure has been changed from the Programme Steering Group to the Joint Transport Executive Committee.

7. As the project develops, and as set out in the Programme Handbook, changes may need to be made to ensure that the different elements of the programme deliver the necessary benefits. As the handbook is currently drafted it requires relatively minor changes to be brought to the Joint Transport Executive Committee for approval. This can cause additional delays in the delivery of schemes between meetings of this committee. It is therefore proposed that these arrangements be modified so that the Programme Board has the ability to sign off all changes below £100,000.
8. The Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) for this project up until the beginning of March 2009 was Peter Allen, Interim Head of Highways and Transportation at South Gloucestershire Council. It is proposed that the new permanent Strategic Head of Transportation & Deputy Director at South Gloucestershire Council, Chris Sane, takes over the role of SRO with immediate effect.
9. The financial control of the project rests with the Head of Finance, South Gloucestershire Council. The programme is cash limited and robust project management arrangements are in place to prevent any overspend from occurring.
10. The end of year financial position is being compiled and will be reported to the next meeting of this committee. The programme is on track to spend the full allocation by the end of May 2012.



Recommendation

That the Joint Transport Executive Committee:

- (a) Notes the considerable progress made to date on the delivery of the GBBN scheme.
- (b) Approve the suggested modifications to the project management arrangements to enable all decisions under £100,000 to be dealt with by the Programme Board.
- (c) Approve the proposed change in the SRO position to Chris Sane, Strategic Head of Transportation & Deputy Director, South Gloucestershire Council.

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