

## Public statement to Joint Transport Executive Committee – 12 November 2009

### Rail Utilisation Strategy – (RUS)

The following are our comments that we hope will assist Bristol City Council in responding to Network Rail's RUS

- We welcome the upgrading of the Parson Street and Bedminster track and the island platforms at Parson Street and Bedminster stations.
- We welcome the inclusion of the Portishead Line but are most concerned that trains will not run until 2019. This is unacceptable in the context of new housing and the Stadium at Ashton Vale, both of which need railway stations to support their development ASAP.
- The track needs to be re-doubled between Temple Meads and Filton so that local services can run as well as long distance services. The Severn Beach line for example needs a much higher frequency and could be achieved by a quadruple track.
- Similarly the track needs to be doubled between Montpellier and Clifton Down to give even a train every 15 minutes.
- We are concerned that there is no provision made for future rail services serving growth areas in South Gloucestershire.
- In general the RUS fails to locate new housing and other development and thus gear rail provision accordingly.
- We feel that the lack of mention of a new station at Newbridge between Bristol and Bath is an omission
- We welcome the new cross-city lines: Gloucester to Portishead line service and Weston to Gloucester. However, we do not understand why the double track around the Weston loop has been omitted.
- It is unclear why the opportunity for a new station at Charfield and Stonehouse has been missed.
- We welcome the Clifton Down to Bath shuttle service extending to Frome and Warminster as the limits of the Greater Bristol conurbation.
- We are concerned about the lack of provision of tram-train rolling stock for the Severn Beach, Portishead and Henbury loop lines. Given the shortage of good heavy rail rolling stock, tram-train may be the answer and better than second hand rolling stock hand-me-downs from Centro and TfL.
- We need to insist again on 4 car units for the Cardiff-Portsmouth service and make sure that improvements for this line go forward. More services on the Bristol-Weymouth line are supported, with the possibility of a Parry People Mover at Yeovil to connect the two stations.
- We support electrification but believe that this might be extended to certain local lines.
- New stations at Corsham, Purton and Wotton Bassett need to be put into the RUS, and also at Long Ashton/Flax Borton to support the airport and new development.
- We support the Trans Wilts line and the doubling of the Kemble-Swindon single-track line with more services between Cheltenham and Southampton.

**Bus Services:**

Members of the West of England Partnership may be aware of the reinstatement of a number of bus services in the North Somerset area - and the pleasure with which this news has been greeted by members of Campaign for Better Transport (CfBT). I understand this relates to services 351, 352 and X1, although concerns continue for the 353 between Bristol and Weston via Hotwells during evenings.

CfBT also continues to have concerns about the availability of low floor accessible vehicles on routes 10 and 233, X31 and wishes to question whether Faresaver has in fact purchased ex-Arriva low floor buses for the latter routes.