

STATEMENT FOR THE WEST OF ENGLAND PARTNERSHIP BOARD MEETING
14 JANUARY 2010

The West of England is a prosperous area with an excellent quality of life and a growing national and international profile. However, rapid growth means that the sub-region faces increasing pressure on its infrastructure (such as RAIL, roads, parks, flood defences and services, eg electricity and telecommunications). In addition, there are too many neighbourhoods which do not share in this prosperity. Public transport, both rail and bus, is key to

Thank you for this opportunity to speak.

It is now ever more important that the West of England Partnership, on behalf of this sub-region, maintains the pressure and sharpens their arguments as regards the need for the electric train units required to provide the Bristol/Swindon and Cardiff/Portsmouth services once the electrification has been undertaken of the Main Great Western line between London and Swansea.

There is a shortage of electric rolling stock and the North continues to lobby hard against us once again in bidding for these vehicles, which are the former Thames Link rolling stock which presently run from Brighton to Luton.

I raised this issue with the Minister, Andrew Adonis, and also the future of the Portishead Railway for rail services – not a bus way – plus the future benefits which would accrue for all parts of the city region, prosperous and otherwise, if this service were to continue to be allowed to connect into central Bristol via the Bristol Harbour line enabling it to link through to Cabot Circus, Temple Meads, Severn Beach, Henbury Loop and Bristol Parkway.

Thank you,

David Redgewell