

**West of England Partnership  
Joint Transport Executive Committee  
17 September 2010**

## **Member and Public Forum**

- 1. Appendix 1: Statement from Mr David Redgewell of South West Transport Network (dated 26 August 2010) to the Partnership Board on 31 August 2010, subsequently referred to this Committee**

### **-New Local Enterprise Partnerships and Transportation and Planning / RFA2**

Comments noted. Business and Council Leaders have been working hard to develop a joint submission for a Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) for the West of England area. It is based around the natural economic area of the four West of England councils and was submitted to government to meet the 6 September deadline. We now have to wait for government to review all the submissions across the country and let us know what the next steps are.

For more information please visit

[www.westofengland.org/local-enterprise-partnership](http://www.westofengland.org/local-enterprise-partnership)

### **-Bus Quality/Low Floor Buses**

Comments about maintaining subsidies for bus, rail and ferry services are noted and have been forwarded to the 4 authorities. Agenda Item 8, the Bus Improvement Programme on this agenda includes an update on the network review and bus contracting arrangements.

The fundamental principle of low floor buses with wheelchair access remains (and by 2015 all bus services have to be DDA compliant). Contracts in the area are likely to specify low floor buses unless there are 'exceptional circumstances' and accessibility forms part of the Quality Partnership Schemes (QPS) being developed as part of the Greater Bristol Bus Network.

### **-Passenger Representation**

Comments about the importance of passenger representation to the new LEP arrangements have been noted. The governance arrangements of the LEP are yet to be finalised.

### **-Bath and neighbouring authorities**

The Partnership is working with our neighbouring authorities (Wiltshire, Swindon, Somerset, Gloucestershire, Monmouthshire and the Welsh Assembly Government) identifying cross boundary transport tissues.

### **-Rail**

As part of the LEP proposal we are keen to have influence over national infrastructure providers. The Partnership is preparing a joint response to the Department for Transport's 'Reforming Rail Franchising' consultation. Agenda Item 11 on this agenda outlines the draft Action Plan being developed with the Rail Industry, following the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding in July 2010.

**2. Appendix 2: Statement from Mr David Redgewell (dated 13 September 2010) on the Lack of Customer Information and up to date Timetables on the Bus and Rail Network, Appendix 2**

On 10 September Mr David Redgewell visited Council, First Travel Centres, Information Points and Tourist Centres throughout the Partnership area and has subsequently provided detailed comments highlighting certain omissions of customer information and up to date timetable information for bus, rail and ferry services. This detailed information has been forwarded to the Public Transport officers in the 4 authorities to action, as appropriate.

**3. Statement from Julie Boston of Friends of Suburban Bristol Railways, FOSBR (dated 13 September 2010) on the need for a half hourly cross Bristol train service**

“Friends of Suburban Bristol Railways (FOSBR) urge West of England Partnership to negotiate with train operating train companies and Network Rail to introduce a half-hourly cross Bristol train service as promoted in the 'rail vision' West of England Joint Local Transport plan 2005 - 2011.”

FOSBR are urging the Partnership to negotiate with the rail industry to introduce a half - hourly cross Bristol train service. Agenda Item 11 on this agenda outlines the draft Action Plan being developed with the Rail Industry, following the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding in July 2010, which includes the development of a Greater Bristol Rail Plan.

**4. Appendix 3: Statement from Ian Crawford of Transport for Greater Bristol Alliance (TfGB) (dated 16 September 2010) on the need to set up a local Integrated Transport Authority (ITA)**

The Partnership has debated this issue and has decided against setting up an Integrated Transport Authority (ITA).

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Statement from Dave Redgewell on behalf of the South West Transport Network:  
**New Local Enterprise Partnerships and Transportation and Planning**

This is one of the most important meetings of this partnership since it was set up, since the abolition of Avon County Council. With the abolition of the RDA and what appears to be no regional coordination bodies being left, the WoE Partnership must take a leadership role in planning, transport and regeneration.

We are aware that Bournemouth and Poole and Dorset have had a meeting in Dorchester to set up their Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and are working closely with Hampshire, Southampton and Portsmouth. They already have Solent Transport to further their joint transport aims and investment. Devon and Cornwall have been working through the South West RDA to set up a LEP for Devon, Cornwall, Torbay and Plymouth which may include parts of Somerset but these discussions are still on-going. It is clear that these LEPs will have housing, economic, and transportation powers.

Who will have transportation powers for the Greater Bristol Area? The other 11 city regions will in choose their transport powers under the ITA or under transport powers of the local authorities and will take over the RFA transport and regional powers. The risk is that there will be even more of an un-level playing field between Greater Bristol and the Northern Regional Cities for example. These already have ITAs and will benefit further by having the additional power as an LEP to allocate central government funds.

Whatever the outcome of the original RFA2 bids for the Greater Bristol Metro, the Portishead Railway line and the North-South Rapid Transit and Weston Super Mare package, we need to find a way of continuing to fund and operate and improve the existing bus, rail and ferry network.

A strong Local Enterprise Partnership may be able to use the new Growth Fund to assist with public transport infrastructure investment in tandem with regeneration and growth. But this kind of initiative needs commitment from all local authorities and a firm lead from the WoE.

**RFA2 Projects**

Meanwhile if the projects do not go forward we need to also build upon the success of the Greater Bristol bus network and improvements on the local rail services incrementally in the Greater Bristol Area including works to the stations, bus stations, (e.g. Bath, Keysham, etc) and we must maintain the subsidies for the Greater Bristol Bus network that are about to go out to competitive tendering.

This includes the evenings and Sundays services, and some daytime services in the 4UAs being led by Bristol, the rail services especially the Severn Beach line and services extended to Taunton and Weston on Sunday and evenings, and the ferry services in Bristol Harbour.

## **Bus quality**

So much work has been done by councillors and members alike through the WoE transport executive on the Greater Bristol Bus network to ensure low floor buses are operational. It would be contrary to the Disabled Discrimination Act and the Goods and Services section if all the work done jointly with First Group and Rotola Group plc (the parent company of Wessex Connect) is undermined by the awarding on contracts to companies with few low floor vehicles (such as Faresaver). This company for example has been awarded three mainline contracts the Bristol to Chippenham 634/635, the Bath to Marshfield (79) and the 271 272 X71 Bath to Devizes via Melksham. Before the buses were super-low floor 2-3 years old. These will be replaced by a mixture of vehicles, some operating from Bath bus station and some operating from the Guildhall. The Faresaver buses are often older vehicles, with some new buses only, these spread thinly on core routes, and the older buses are non-low floor and non-accessible.

## **Passenger representation**

Within the new LEP partnership there still needs to be passenger representation. We are anxious that the transport forums are still available at the Greater Bristol level and at the local authority level. Passenger representation needs to be heard loud and clear not just the voice of the business community. The RDA for instance consisted of Social and Economic Partners and local passenger representation this kind of set-up needs to be replicated in each of the city region areas.

This will need discussing in the sense that the role of Passenger Focus and the Office of Rail Regulation and the Traffic Commission are still up for review.

WoE Core Strategies are hinged on the successful delivery of public transport the public transport policies are absolutely key. We need to safe-guard public transport in order to deliver housing and employment without congestion.

We are concerned about the Bath City Region which looks to both West Somerset and Wiltshire. How will the transport links in terms of running buses and trains with these adjacent authorities be taken on board?

## **Rail**

The new Rail Franchises Consultation Regions mentions the need for localism in rail networks. This means taking some responsibility from central government for running the local rail network with a devolved budget from the DfT. Otherwise the budget will be controlled by the DfT itself and the SW will miss out. Southampton and Liverpool for example, has control as do many other city Bristol. Nottingham and Southampton/Portsmouth/Bournemouth Poole are already taking the powers. They for example are opening the Swanage line and also putting rapid transit on the Fareham Gosport. Meanwhile we are losing the Portishead Line. We must take action!

David Redgewell  
South West Transport Network

17<sup>th</sup> September 2010  
College Green 1,  
BRISTOL  
1030.

Delivering the Greater Bristol Bus Network  
Information Service, Lack of Coordination &  
Publicity BY THE Greater Bristol Authorities  
Additional Statement

For West of England Partnership  
Transport Executive 17-9-2010  
Lack of Customer Information  
From Timetable Changes on the  
Greater Bristol Bus and Rail networks

On Friday I check all Council / First Group  
Travel Centres and Information Point for  
Bus network Rail network Ferry Information  
BRISTOL Tourist Information Centre, operator  
Tourism Destination Bristol

Supply of Bus and Rail Information out of date:  
Weston Super Mare Council Tourist Information Centre  
No Information No New Timetable Books  
First North Somerset Book or Somerset County Council  
Sedgemoor or Mendip Books. First Travel Shop NO  
Timetable Books.

Yate, Council office nibby leaflet in Rack 5  
Services NO SUNDAY services 329 South Gloucester Council  
or 689 Bristol To Yate / 620-29 BATH Yate Strand

BATH Tourist Information center 2,

Rail Station. ONLY Network Charges leaflets.

Bus Information or Rail Information at  
at Tourist Information point out of date  
Wrong routes.

Keynsham Connect Point Few timetables

No maps for BANES

Midsomer Norton lack of Bus Timetables  
for the Area.

Bristol Temple Meads Display ~~ON~~ Booking  
office Wall falling DOWN Reported by  
phone Director of Transport BRISTOL Staff.

NO ACTION NO Delivery of service

Travel Centre Bus and Rail timetables up to date  
First Great Western Bus and Ferry. But NO  
Wells, Glastonbury, Street, Bridgewater Yearly Timetables

BATH, A4 Roadside Display BANES 9<sup>th</sup> Sept  
Wrong Service No's 418, 419 Wrong timetable  
Information. NO SP1, SP2 routes.

Thornbury Some Information leaflets  
CASTLE STREET OFFICE (SG-CE)

No 207 Thornbury Gloucester Service

No X27, 329, 689 Bristol to Yate Timetable.

No New 200 timetables or Town Service timetables

Kingswood Very few leaflets 6/7 40, 41  
Corkal Point. SG-CE  
Service NO Travel Guide or train timetables

For Lawrence Hill or Keysham Kingswood  
nearest Rail heads.

Bristol Bus Station Travel Shop

No Timetable for any South Gloucestershire

Services X27, 329, 689, 200, 17, 30 ect series

No Timetables for Weston Super Mare North

Somerset or BATH and Northeast Somerset

Books or Mendip area BOOK NO Ferry

Rail Timetable in Council Display Bristol City

Council Just a few Bristol City leaflet in rack

No North Somerset or BANES leaflets, Reported

TO BRISTOL CITY Council Transport Service publicity  
Manager BY Phone.

BATH Bus and Rail Station NO Bus timetables

First BANES EDITION. 734, 700, 716 Timetables ONLY

No Service 20, 12 leaflets ONLY SP1, SP2, 18 X 39  
Time tables NO other BANES Timetables

4

Bradford on Avon timetables out of date  
in Tourist Information Centre.

Trowbridge timetable uptodate and amendment  
for Bus and trains.

Wells, timetable books Mendip/Sedgemoor  
Travel centre Rail timetables uptodate except

WYMOUTH LINE Route (27) Guide

Highbridge and Burnham on Sea

Timetables uptodate

STROUD NO 29. 620 BATH TO STROUD  
VIA Yate Bus Station NO Timetable Bus Station  
Travel Centre

Bradford on Avon Information Here to catch  
the Bus out Date and Town plans

BATH Trimbridge House

ONLY Council leaflet for 734. 716. 700

Park and Ride and-42 NO Services 20  
U18 eat

5.

Checked BRISTOL Bus Station Travel  
Centre 12.30 No Timetables  
North Somerset Council, South Gloucestershire  
Council, B.A.N.E.S area or Mendip  
booklet or First Group area Books, Rail  
or Ferry Timetables.

Checked Bath SPA Travel Centre  
0930 NO BANES leaflet NO BANE  
Area Book First West Wilts or North Wilts  
or Mendip Timetables on Display Just serve  
8-18 SP1, SP2 X39.

BRISTOL Bus Station

Avon and Somerset Support Services

Toilet not Working Hand Dyeer defective

2 weeks out Badly change room sign falling off.

Must Bus now Do not have Penalty Fare Notices  
or How to Contact the Traffic Commissioner Bus use UK  
or Passenger Focus Consumer protection Notices removed  
From First and Flight H&M&K Fleet

### **Statement to the West of England Partnership – Joint Transport Executive Committee by TfGB**

Traffic congestion and consequential pollution is worst in city regions where there is no effective control over public transport, Greater Bristol being a case in point as shown by a recent survey which showed this city region to be very reliant on the private car with poor public transport.

Most major city regions in Britain have set up what are now known as Integrated Transport Authorities (ITAs) with the powers to control bus operators, plan rail infrastructure and set fares. Additionally they enjoy financial security with a dedicated budget to deliver public transport. The current Government is an advocate of rail and it is fairly predictable that they will not support bus rapid transit. Without an ITA the Partnership will struggle to win funding for public transport schemes especially in the present economic climate where any money available will go to those schemes which deliver more sustainability.

The removal of regional government and the setting up of Local Enterprise Partnerships is an opportunity for the Partnership to take control of local public transport and attract funding with an ITA. An ITA would inevitably improve Greater Bristol's performance indicators and allow us to catch up with cities like Nottingham not to mention bigger city regions with ITAs.

On traffic congestion and pollution you delude yourselves with your own reports – the rest of the public transport industry nationally has noted your position and an ITA is the best option.

Ian Crawford

Transport for Greater Bristol Alliance (TfGB)

16<sup>th</sup> Sept. 2010