

# The West of England Partnership

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
WEST OF ENGLAND PARTNERSHIP  
JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
10<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2008 AT 10.00AM**

**Members of the Joint Committee**

**Bath and North East Somerset**

- P Councillor Eleanor Jackson (substitute for Councillor John Bull)
- P Councillor Caroline Roberts
- A Councillor Martin Veal

**Bristol City Council**

- P Councillor Barbara Lewis - Chair
- P Councillor Dr Jon Rogers
- P Councillor Charlie Price (substitute for Councillor Colin Smith)

**North Somerset Council**

- P Councillor Tony Moulin
- P Councillor David Pasley
- P Councillor Clive Webb

**South Gloucestershire Council**

- P Councillor Dave Hockey (substitute for Councillor Pat Hockey)
- P Councillor Geoff King
- P Councillor Ian Smith

**WEPJSC**

**46.10/08 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors John Bull and Martin Veal (Bath and North East Somerset); Councillor Pat Hockey (South Gloucestershire Council) Councillor Colin Smith (Bristol City Council).

**WEPJSC**

**47.10/08 PUBLIC FORUM**

There were no requests to address the Committee.

**WEPJSC**

**48.10/08 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 23RD SEPTEMBER 2008 AND RECONVENED ON 8<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2008**

It was agreed that as the minutes had only just been tabled, consideration be deferred to the next meeting.

**WEPJSC**

**49.10/08 SUMMARIES AND RESPONSES TO EARLIER VIEWS EXPRESSED BY THE COMMITTEE**

The Committee received summaries and responses to earlier views expressed by the Committee on the following matters –

- 1 Joint Waste Core Strategy
- 2 Phase 2 Waste Strategy
- 3 Phase 3 Waste Strategy
- 4 Governance: Joint Committees.

Members focused in particular on the summary and responses on the Joint Waste Core Strategy. The following changes were proposed :–

- (1) Page 3, left-hand column – Delete reference to a continuing need for landfill” and replace with “regarding a need for landfill provision, reliance must be kept to a minimum”;
- (2) The paper to include reference to emerging technologies;
- (3) Page 4, right-hand column – Add definition of what is meant by “recovery” and what is meant by “recycling”.

It was asked that the changes be made before public consultation takes place.

**Resolved-** that it is recommended that the **Joint Waste Core Strategy paper be amended in accordance with the changes proposed in the preamble to this minute.**

**WEPJSC**

**50.10/08 TRANSPORT MAJOR SCHEME BIDS**

### **(A) WESTON PACKAGE**

The Committee received a report and presentation outlining the progress made and the future programme for the development of the Weston Package Major Scheme Bid.

The officer presenting focused in particular on the transport schemes forming the Package, and the project timetable. It was hoped that if the DfT accepted the bid by Autumn 2009, construction would start in 2011/2012, with completion anticipated in 2015.

In response to a Member's query, the presenting officer advised that a park and ride scheme at Worle Station had not been considered because of the constricted access to the site. Alternatively, two nearby park and ride facilities close to the A370 were proposed. It was aimed to improve the interchange between bus and rail, and to improve both pedestrian and cycle access to the station.

Reference was made also to Junction 21 of the M5. The focus was on enabling local traffic to get across the junction more easily. Further proposed significant improvements, such as the provision of a new junction would be deemed a totally new scheme, and not part of Phase 1.

### **(B) RAPID TRANSIT – ASHTON VALE TO TEMPLE MEADS**

The Committee received a report that provided an update on the proposed Rapid Transit (RT) route from Ashton Vale to Temple Meads. The aim was to provide high quality reliable rapid transit.

A copy of the Executive Summary of the West of England Rapid Transit Technology Review was tabled.

Councillor Geoff King declared a personal interest in this item by virtue of being an employee of First Bus.

The recommendation was to adopt a bus-based option. The tram option was not currently available in the United Kingdom, and the DfT had indicated that it would be several years before the technology was widely accepted. Similarly, there were concerns regarding ultra light rail relating to cost, capacity and the flow height of the vehicle. This option was also more costly in terms of fuel consumption. This could undermine the ability to access RFA funding.

It was noted that the bus-base scheme in Cambridgeshire was proposing to operate the buses using 100% biodegradable fuel from recycled waste.

The Committee was informed that key stakeholder consultation would take place in October 2008, and public consultation would start in November 2008 using public exhibitions, leafleting local residents, and website information. It was anticipated that a bid would be submitted to the DfT in early 2009.

Some Members expressed concern that focus appeared to be solely on a bus-based option, and excluded the possibility of tram or ultra light rail.

Officers explained that a rail-based option at some time in the future was not specifically excluded. However, it was important to have regard to what was deliverable for the bid to be submitted to the DfT in 2009. Modelling forecasts indicated a much greater patronage base for buses. It was emphasised that the proposed vehicles would be of a high standard, and that as part of the public consultation it was intended to provide a demonstration vehicle.

It was reported that the public wanted a reliable service. It was envisaged that the scheme would convey 3,500 to 4,000 passengers with a frequency of one bus every 3 to 5 minutes. The subject of integrated ticketing was being actively pursued. The need to balance the needs of all road users, as well as better facilities for pedestrians and cyclists, was recognised.

The Committee was further informed that work had commenced on the Line 3 route options, and that officers were already starting to look at line options in Emersons Green.

**Resolved- that the reports be noted.**

The Committee received a report that provided an update on the following current and upcoming rail issues in the West Country. –

**1 Cardiff to Portsmouth New Trains Bid**

Councillor Tony Moulin whilst welcoming the bid as a step towards delivery of the “Bristol Metro”, commented on the need for new rolling stock not just existing rolling stock being transferred to other local services.

**2 Re-opening Portishead Rail Link**

Councillor David Pasley highlighted the significant local business interest in developing the rail link to help bring local jobs to Portishead. He asked that these stakeholders be engaged.

**3 Office of Rail Regulation and Network Rail Business Plan Funding**

**4 Route Utilisation Strategy**

Councillor Dave Hockey referred to the expansion of staff at the Ministry of Defence (MoD) facility at Filton Abbeywood. He hoped that MOD support for the new trains bid had been obtained.

Councillor Dr Jon Rogers enquired about the possibility of the currently redundant track between Bristol Temple Meads and Bristol Parkway being used as a cycle path.

Officers advised that Network Rail had a long-term aspiration to reinstate four rail tracks between Bristol Temple Meads and Bristol Parkway. and that it was unlikely they would contemplate the provision of a cycle path alongside that route.

**5 Severn Beach Line**

Reference was made to the agreement of Network Rail to a turn round facility at Clifton Down Station. Some rail users who travelled beyond Clifton Down were opposed to this proposal but the Committee was informed that approximately 80 per cent of the passenger use was between Bristol Temple Meads and Clifton Down.

A Member enquired about the possibility of providing a station at Portway. It was noted that whilst First Great Western may be supportive of this idea, Network Rail had said this might require the closure of Shirehampton station because of its close proximity.

The need to secure the engagement of Network Rail in the above matters was acknowledged.

The Partnership Chief Executive said he would report back to the Committee on meeting held with Network Rail.

#### 6 Severnside Community Rail Partnership

The National Rail Community Awards made to staff were acknowledged.

**Resolved- that First Great Western's bid for new trains on the Cardiff to Portsmouth service be endorsed.**

#### **WEPJSC 52.10/08**

#### **JOINT LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN – 2008 PROGRESS REVIEW**

The Committee received a working draft of the Joint Local Transport Plan (JLTP) 2008 Progress Review for agreement with the Government Office for the South West (GOSW) in November 2008.

Members expressed disappointment that whilst bus patronage had increased, the level of increase had slowed considerably,

Councillor Tony Moulin having regard to the shortage of train rolling stock, and the need for a more integrated bus service, considered that the JLTP targets needed to be aspirational.

The Chair requested that the West of England Partnership report on air quality be circulated to the Committee.

**Resolved- that the draft progress review be noted.**

#### **WEPJSC 53.10/08**

#### **REGIONAL FUNDING ADVICE - REGIONAL FUNDING ALLOCATION FOR TRANSPORT MAJOR SCHEMES**

The Committee received a report that outlined Government guidance and programme for an extension to the Regional Funding Allocation (RFA) for the South West.

Discussion focused on the submission of a priority list of West of England schemes to the DfT, and who was responsible for deciding the priorities. The Committee was informed that the Directors of Development in the four Unitary Authorities had prepared a draft list which would be discussed with the relevant Executive Members.

The Committee asked that to have access to the priority list as soon it was available. Members were advised that the papers would be circulated when the officers' work was complete.

The Chair asked that the Committee's dissatisfaction with their lack of involvement be noted.

**Resolved: that the report be noted.**

**WEPJSC  
54.10/08**

## **GOVERNANCE: JOINT WORKING AGREEMENTS**

The Committee considered the draft proposed Joint Working Agreements which set out the arrangements for joint working under the auspices of the joint committees being established by the West of England Partnership.

It was emphasised that DEFRA and the DfT needed to be satisfied that the West of England Partnership had in place satisfactory governance arrangements.

Committee Members raised the following matters.

The joint agreements did not contain any reference to a joint protocol for communications and public relations.

The Committee was advised that officers were discussing a better approach to communications, and that a joint protocol may emerge.

There was no reference to the use of substitutes at meetings of joint committees.

It was explained that the matter of substitutions was covered by the recently approved constitution, which would form an appendix to the joint agreements.

Reference was made to the subject of call in arrangements. It was confirmed that the provision in paragraph 6.4 of the Joint Agreement was an additional safeguard to the call in arrangements that exist in each of the four Unitary Authorities.

Reference was made also to the Procurement Cost Allocation. It was commented that the wording used implied that a decision on cost had already been made.

It was clarified that the appointees to the Joint Waste Management Committee were the Members.

Some Members expressed concern that the Committee Members were having to deal with such a wide breadth of issues, and that it was hoped that there would have been separate sub-committees /sub-groups for waste and transport.

The Partnership Chief Executive explained that reporting to additional sub-committees/sub-groups would be extremely demanding. It was hoped that effective agenda planning, and use of substitutions, would ensure that Members were not disadvantaged.

**WEPJSC  
55.10/08**

**WEST OF ENGLAND RAPID TRANSIT TECHNOLOGY REVIEW  
– EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**Resolved- that the Executive Summary of the West of England Rapid Transit Technology Review tabled earlier in the meeting (Minute 50.10/08 refers) be considered at the next meeting of the Committee on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2008.**

The meeting concluded at 1.05 pm

**CHAIR:.....**