

# The Update



## Our Future Transport West of England Sub Region

Progress on the development of a Transport Innovation Fund application  
**March 2008**

The four West of England authorities, Bath and North East Somerset, the City of Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire have united to tackle congestion. In October 2007, we submitted a document called Our Future Transport to the Department for Transport (DfT).

Our Future Transport outlined the sub region's 20 year transport vision and the part that the Transport Innovation Fund (TIF) could play in helping us move towards realising this vision, manage congestion and improve our quality of life. TIF is a Government fund set up to support local authorities who wish to put together a package of measures aimed at tackling congestion in their areas.

Over the last few months, the considerable development work needed to submit an application has been progressing and this document provides an update on the current status of the proposed bid.

# The transport challenge

**Our Future Transport** outlined the current transport picture in the West of England and the key reasons for our proposed TIF bid. Congestion is already a major problem and its continued growth is a big threat to our prosperity and quality of life. There is a clear need for action and change.

## The congestion challenge:

- » **The prosperity of the West of England means our population continues to grow and has led to greater car ownership, increasing pressure on our road network.**
- » **Traffic levels have grown by 21% over the last 10 years – well above the national average and are continuing to grow.**
- » **The draft Regional Spatial Strategy suggests our population could grow by 19% and the number of jobs by 26% by 2026.**
- » **Congestion currently costs our economy an estimated £350m a year.**
- » **Congestion is bad for the economy, the environment, road safety, air quality and health.**
- » **The measures we have in place at the moment will only slow the growth of congestion. There is a clear need for action and change.**

## What's been happening?

Since we submitted Our Future Transport to the DfT in October last year, consultation with a range of stakeholders and further technical work developing the detail of our proposals has been taking place.

To be successful in obtaining TIF funding, the package of transport measures must include a combination of demand management measures, such as road user charging and workplace parking charges, with better public transport services to provide real alternatives to the car.

Our Future Transport stressed that any charges would only be introduced once significant improvements had been made to the transport infrastructure and that charges would not be implemented until 2013 at the earliest.

The document also emphasised that extensive community and stakeholder consultation would be carried out once, and if, the bid is submitted later this year. A further three years technical refinement of the proposed transport measures and ongoing engagement will then follow.

In January, the bid received a big boost when it was awarded an extra £675,000 by Government to continue with the technical work needed to develop the proposals.

We now have a clearer picture of the key public transport and other improvements that would be in place before and soon after a charging scheme is introduced.



# Proposed transport improvements before demand management is introduced

To tackle long-term congestion in the West of England, real alternatives to the car will be needed. Although development work and the process of engagement are ongoing it is clear that substantial improvements will be required before any demand management (road user charging or workplace charging) is implemented. These could include:

## Rail

A number of track and other rail infrastructure improvements will bring more frequent and higher standard services across the West of England network.

**Cross Bristol and Bath Services** - additional carriages and station improvements including parking. Service frequency improvements are also planned for the long-term.

**Severn Beach line** - increase to 30 minute service.

**Smart Card Scheme** - multi-modal smart card scheme for rail/bus.

## Rapid Transit

Where possible, routes are being introduced in the short-term. Elsewhere, improvements to bus based Park & Ride services will be made with the aim of upgrading them to Rapid Transit services as soon as is practical. New destinations are also planned from existing and proposed P&R sites.

**Hengrove to Bristol City Centre** - Rapid Transit route.

**Bristol City Centre to Cribbs Causeway** - Rapid Transit route.

**Emerson's Green to North Fringe** - new Rapid Transit route via the A4174 ring road.

## Park & Ride

**Odd Down and Lansdown to Bath City Centre** – improved frequencies to Park & Ride service and increased parking capacity. Possible Rapid Transit route to coincide with introduction of demand management.

**Portway** - improved frequencies to Park & Ride service and further expansion to site. Possible Rapid Transit route to coincide with introduction of demand management.

**Brislington** - improved frequencies to Park & Ride service.

**Long Ashton** - further expansion of Park & Ride site to meet increase in demand.

**M32 Corridor** - new Park & Ride site with possible link to Rapid Transit route between Bristol City Centre and Cribbs Causeway.

**A37 Whitchurch** - new Park & Ride site.

**Local interchanges for bus and rail**

## Bus

**Bus priority networks** - significant improvements to bus priority networks, stops and interchanges over and above the Greater Bristol Bus Network and Bath Package.

**Service improvements** - new services and increased frequencies will deliver a 'turn up and go' bus service. Better orbital bus services and new services to North Fringe from areas not well served by public transport.

**Concessionary travel** - young people discounts.

**Home to school travel** - increased home to school travel including Yellow Buses.

**More transport to meet demand** - services that broaden public transport catchment areas and provide access for rural areas including feeder services to rail stations/bus interchanges.

## Highways

**Highway capacity** - improvements at Junction 19 & 21 on M5.

**Traffic management** - a range of measures will include 20 mph zones in residential areas and around schools; expansion of urban traffic management and control systems; improved variable message signs and other information systems aimed at improving the efficiency of the road network and public transport access.

**Stoke Gifford bypass** - part of a North Fringe package including the creation of public transport corridors.

## Walking and cycling

Improvements to routes, facilities and information in addition to those already introduced as part of other public transport and corridor improvements.

## Public realm

Significant improvements to open spaces in Bath and Bristol.

## Freight

Expansion of existing freight consolidation scheme in Bristol and extension to serve Bath and North Fringe.

## Smarter choices

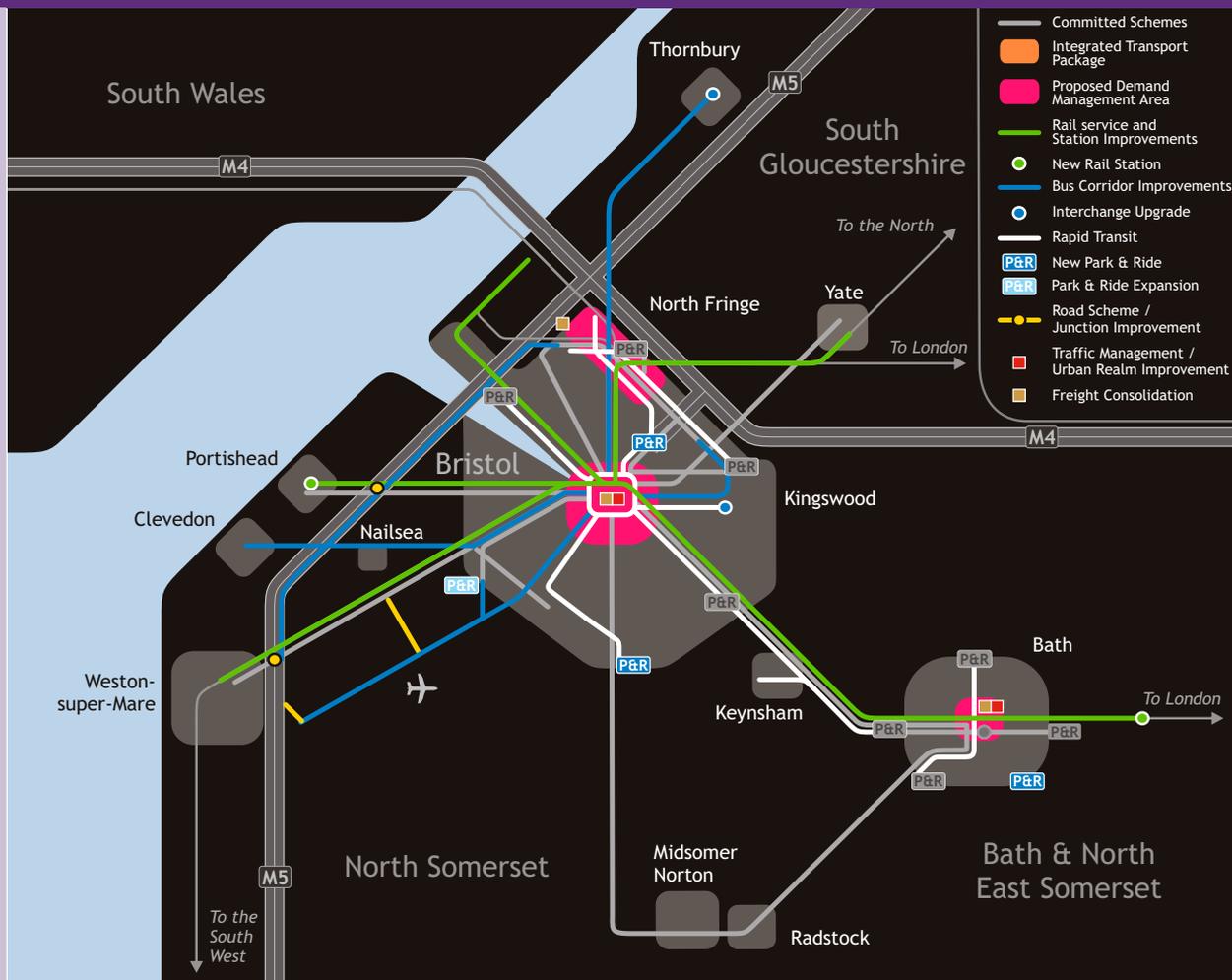
Substantial increase in funding for 'smarter choices' activity - in excess of ten times current levels.

Travel plans, personalised travel marketing, travel awareness campaigns, community transport initiatives.

Personalised travel marketing campaigns.

Car clubs.

## Proposed TIF transport improvements



## Proposed transport improvements alongside or soon after demand management is introduced

Further significant improvements are proposed alongside or soon after the introduction of demand management in the West of England.

### Rail

**Portishead railway line** – re-opening.

Further capacity and frequency improvements on key services.

**Corsham** - possible new station.

### Rapid Transit

Further Rapid Transit Routes or Extensions.

**Bristol to Aztec West, Bradley Stoke, Whitchurch and Bristol International Airport.**

**Kingswood from Bristol City Centre.**

**Keynsham and Saltford from Bath.**

### Park & Ride

**Bath and Bristol Sites** - further capacity improvements.

**A36 near Bath** – new site.

### Highways

**Banwell bypass.**

**Barrow Gurney bypass.**

### Bus

**Bus priority networks** - further expansion.

### Public realm

Further improvements in Bath and Bristol.

### Ongoing funding

Ongoing support for further activity. For example, ‘smarter choices’, freight and public transport.

### Walking and cycling

Further improvements to routes and facilities.

# The bigger picture

**Our Future Transport** stressed that the TIF proposals are a key part of an overall transport vision for the West of England. Several major transport schemes are also progressing which will work together with TIF to tackle our congestion challenge. Since October there have been important developments with some of these other schemes:

- » **The Greater Bristol Bus Network (GBBN):** Funding approval for this package of bus priority measures and other improvements on 10 'corridors' in the West of England is expected in the coming weeks. This work will deliver real improvements to more than 70 bus services.

A communication programme will begin across the West of England from spring 2008 and work on some of the corridors could begin as early as June this year.

- » **Bath Package:** The DfT gave Bath Package Programme Entry status in October 2007. This programme of new and expanded Park & Rides, an East West Rapid Transit Route, 10 showcase bus routes, city centre pedestrian enhancements and variable message signing has the key aims of reducing congestion, pollution and energy consumption whilst improving accessibility, mobility, safety, security, the public realm and supporting regeneration.

We are talking with, and showing our proposals to, those affected by the Rapid Transit Route and expanded Park & Ride at Newbridge and aim to submit our planning applications towards to the end of this year.

- » Development work is progressing to prepare major scheme bids to Government for Weston Package Phase 1, Rapid Transit and South Bristol Link Road (Phases 1 and 2).

## What next?

Subject to political approval by the four authorities, our timetable is to submit a bid known as an outline business case for the £840m package from the Transport Innovation Fund in June/July. Before it is submitted to the DfT, the bid will undergo further development including a thorough process of examination and approval. Even at this stage, it will still require many more years of consultation and development.

### 2008

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**By end of March:** Outline details of demand management proposals

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**April 2008:** Our Future Transport Update 2 on Road Charging proposals

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**End of April:** Details of package schemes and timing of implementation

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**May to June/July:** Proposals seek endorsement from four West of England authorities

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**July:** Outline TIF business case submitted

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**August-November:** Full formal public consultation on the plans

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- » **Write to (*no stamp required*):**  
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**Freepost, (BS 6529)**  
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