

Resources Scrutiny Commission
30 January 2024
Budget scrutiny – Part 1



Public Forum

Details of public forum statements received for this meeting are enclosed.



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Public forum statements have been received as follows (the full content is set out on the subsequent pages):

1. Gordon Richardson, David Redgewell and Ian Beckey – transport budgets
2. Ian Quaife on behalf of Bristol Older People’s Forum – Clean Air Zone funds/bus service funding

Please note:

- a. The views and information contained within these public statements are those of the individuals concerned and not of the Council.
- b. No public questions have been received for this meeting,



PUBLIC FORUM STATEMENTS

STATEMENT 1 – from Gordon Richardson, David Redgewell and Ian Beckey – transport budgets

Whilst we welcome this balanced budget, we still have concern that the money to fund the West of England mayoral combined transport authority and North Somerset council joint Bus services improvement plan area for bus and public transport services is frozen at £10 235 million.

With the West of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council being told to resubmit the bus service improvement plan by June 2024.

At the West of England mayoral combined Authority committee meeting, the mayor Dan Norris proposed a meeting with Bristol city council, Bath and North East Somerset council, South Gloucestershire county council and North Somerset council, should meet to discuss the Transport levy for 2024 2025 bus service budget for the combined transport Authority jointly with North Somerset council, But the council leader tried to add in other non related bus service matters.

Whilst the resubmission of the bus services improvement plan, may be acceptable to add to the meeting agenda with bus service subsidies, Trying to add Bus Franchising in the agenda is a totally different subject and is not part of this year's budget process. And whilst this may be a future option for running bus and coach services in the West of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council with North Somerset council as full west of England mayoral combined transport Authority member from the mayoral Elections of 2025, Franchising will take 5 year to bring in and will involve buying Bus and coach Depots bus fleets from stagecoach west, Patchway Depot First group plc Wales and West buses Division at Bristol Lawrence Hill, Hengrove, Bath western island, Weston super mare and wells Big lemon buses at Bristol Parson street station and other operators.

But the community of Oldbury court estate, Vassall centre Fishponds, Broomhill, Stapleton, St Paul's, St Werburghs, Eastville, the Dings ,Brislington and St Anne's park, Bishopsworth, Ashton Vale, need their bus services restored in 2024 2025 budgets, so we still need this meeting of the West of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council and mayor Dan Norris.

On the bus service and Public Transport levy and the bus service improvement plan money and submission for 12th June 2024.

This given the opportunity to restore some of bus services to some of most deprived estates in Greater Bristol, many working class communities have been left without a public bus service since the West of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council joint support bus was underfunded last year by Bristol city council, Banes and South Gloucestershire county council, The following areas of Bristol have lost Public bus services:

Ashton Vale estate, Parts of Bishopsworth, Whitchurch, St Paul's, St Werburghs, Eastville, Stapleton, Broomhill, Fishponds, oidbury court Bromley Heath Downend, Southmead uwe bus station Bristol Parkway railway station, Aztec west, Hortham, Alveston, Thornbury corridor, Part of St Anne's park, Brislington, Easton and the Dings have no access to Public bus service or Westlink Demand responsive bus services.

This is preventing some of the most vulnerable people in society, being unable to access schools, colleges, universities, work, basic food shopping, Community facilities, warm spaces.

Oldbury court estate, Vassall centre the Regional centre for disabled people has no public bus service,

With £26 million pounds of clean air money and allocation for Public bus service we don't under how the clean air money can be paid to the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council for bus service and Public Transport Network levy.

The clean air zone money which we welcome to a result of clean up the city air quality and stopping early deaths for respiratory illness, Asthma attacks and other lung diseases and the money should be spent on walking cycling and public transport Network services including restoring bus services to the most isolated working class estates where new clean compliance of cars is not affordable to residents during the cost of living crisis.

The west of England mayor Dan Norris Does not have Precept powers to raise taxes like the other combined transport Authority's In the west Midlands combined Authority mayor Andy Street or Liverpool City Region mayor Steve Rotherham or Andy Burnham mayor of Greater Manchester combined transport Authority.

When the West of England mayoral combined Authority act make it clear, money should be from Bristol city council, Bath and North East Somerset council and South Gloucestershire county council council Tax payers each Year, So using the clean air zone money in Bristol city council area and Bath and North East Somerset council, Does not appear to support the West of England mayoral combined Authority act. In both cases the money is short term funding so we need to address this issue in the budget setting process especially as the West of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council has to Resubmit ts bus services improvement plan to the Department for Transport funding by 12th June 2024, Including community safety partnership for bus coach and Public Transport passengers Network, Including Bus stop and interchanges shelter maintenance which at present appear to be very poor with Bus shelter and interchanges cover in Graffiti and tagging and lighting not working,

In Old Market, Lawrence Hill, Broadmead shopping centre, Cabot circus, city centre, Park Street, the lack of coach shelter provision within Bond Street Bristol, with both the West of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council, having staff to maintain bus stop shelters, Bristol city council clean carrying out maintenance and West of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council maintaining the bus timetable displays duplicate of Public money and staff at a time when public money is very tight,

We need to transfer the Bristol city council Transport staff with South Gloucestershire county council and Bath and North East Somerset council Staff to the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority, 25 million pounds to capital is transferred to Bristol city council of which 8.7 million pounds for maintenance, But we need to see the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority Acting like an integrated Transport Authority, So we need work towards improving the public transport Network.

The other issue is investment in Local Railway station improvement jointly with west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council, Metro west railway Network Including Bristol Temple meads station to Bedminster, Parson street station, Pill and Portishead line with a station at Ashton, Bristol Temple meads station, Bristol Lawrence hill, Bristol Stapleton Road, Ashley Down station, Filton Abbey wood station, Filton North and Henbury for cribs causeway and Bristol zoo.

So we also need to work with west of England mayoral combined transport Authority to improve the city Region railway Network and make station fully accessible at Bristol Lawrence hill, Bristol Stapleton road, Parson street Bedminster need accessible stations, Through access for all schemes with the Department for transport, but also in Transport the city Transport hub for bus services need accessible public Toilets with Bristol city council investment in community toilets scheme and new public toilets

Especially at park and ride interchange at Brislington Portway park and Ride and long Ashton

Public transport is very important to well being of the city and city region

To fund the Transport levy so as we can restore the city Region bus network, as soon as possible.

Please ask Bristol city council to meet with Banes ,south Gloucestershire county council and North Somerset council and mayor Dan Norris west of England mayoral combined transport Authority to raise the Transport levy to urgently fund support bus services in the city Region,

Gordon Richardson, Bristol Disability Equalities Forum.

David Redgewell, Bristol Disability Equalities Forum Trustee

Ian Beckey, Living Easton.

STATEMENT 2 – from Ian Quaife on behalf of Bristol Older People’s Forum

Bristol Older People's Forum would support the allocation of CAZ funding to reinstate the bus services in Ashton Vale and Oldbury Court. Residents in these areas believe the savage cut by First Bus, which disproportionately affects older and disabled people, is a growing scandal, and based on discrimination and the focus on profit.

'We are isolated, we can't go to the shops or the doctors, or family gatherings - we are completely cut off. This is affecting our mental and physical health. We have to use taxis to go to the local supermarket. Our number 23 bus service, ran every hour was lovely. We need it back!' (Aston Vale resident).