

Overview & Scrutiny Management Board 30th November 2020 Public Forum



Statements and Petitions

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Public Forum Statements

S1: David Redgewell, South West Transport Network and Railfuture Severnside

☑ Whilst we welcome North Somerset Council joining the city region, in view of local government reorganisation in the Somerset region we feel that the home for both North Somerset council and Bath and North East Somerset is in the Bristol Bath city region, not in rural Somerset unitary authorities.

We understand that the Government must provide funding support for enlargement of the city region.

To cover the cost of improving the bus network in and around North Somerset there should be agreement to fully fund the regeneration of Weston Super Mare, Clevedon, Banwell, Winscombe, Nailsea and Backwell, Portishead, Bristol Temple Meads station and Temple Quay which is a major gateway to the city region and the South West.

To fund Metro West, North Somerset Council membership will require further money to upgrade Nailsea and Backwell station with full disabled access and for upgrading of Weston Super Mare railway station interchange and lifts.

There should be Metrobus infrastructure improvements to Nailsea and Clevedon, a light rail system line around Greater Bristol and the Bath city region with a line into Bristol Airport. It is also important to make improvements to bus links from Yatton station to Clevedon or have a fixed link.

A new road and Metrobus services are needed to improve public transport around Locking and Banwell.

With a new settlement at Yanley in South West Bristol again these will require Metrobus services and bus priority measures.

Light rail and Metro West system links.

A new station is required at Ashton Gate on the Pill and Portishead line. Light rail to south west Bristol new developments and to Bristol Airport.

It is very very important we build a strong Bristol and Bath city region with the port and airport being in North Somerset.

Like the West Midlands and Greater Manchester, the new West of England, Greater Bristol and Bath city regional plan includes the North Somerset Council area. However, it is essential that the Government is transparent and ensures that the Bristol and Bath city region is given sufficient funding in 2021 for North Somerset Council to join WECA and pay for transport in the area.

North Somerset Council should join WECA in 2021 not 2025.

Of course we must look at post Somerset and Gloucestershire reorganisation of local government to see whether the sub region should include Gloucestershire who have talked about joining in the past with Wiltshire and Swindon.

However, at present the most important issue is for the Government to negotiate with the West of England Combined Authority, Bristol City Council, BANES, South Gloucestershire Council and North Somerset Council to fully fund the expansion of the West of England combined authority. Otherwise there will be insufficient funding for MetroWest, the proposed light rail network, Metrobus, the regeneration of Bristol Temple Meads and Temple Quarter as well as improvements to bus services in the way it has for Sheffield city region and the new West Yorkshire Combined Authority with its new mayor.

So that the parliamentary orders can be laid in the House of Commons and House of Lords to allow North Somerset Council to join WECA, there should be public consultation on the proposals with the tax payers within the 4 unitary authorities so that we can build back better in the Greater Bristol and Bath city region.

We can look towards bringing in the Western Gateway partnership councils of Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, Swindon and Somerset to a WECA mayoral transport authority in the future.

S2: David Redgwell, South West Transport Network and Railfuture Severnside

We wish to see further progress on the on North Somerset Council joining the WECA mayoral combined authority as per the motion passed at Bristol City Council on the 25th November 2020 and urgent discussion with the secretary of state Robert Jenrick MP and Luke Hall MP local government minister so an order can be placed in the House of Commons and House of Lords so North Somerset Council can join in May 2021.

If the election goes ahead with the Somerset region council reorganisation delaying Somerset election to 2022.

On Covid-19 Tier 3, Bristol South Gloucestershire and North Somerset councils; we share WECA mayoral transport authority concerns and Mayor Bowles about people travelling to Bath Keynsham and Whitchurch to visit public houses and restaurants and leisure complex and facilities. The worry is this will spread the virus into B&NES at a very high level.

What regulations and policing plans are in place with the Avon and Somerset Police, British Transport Police and Covid Marshals in Bristol, B&NES and South Gloucestershire to prevent this happening on the public transport network. In Conjunction with First Group bus and train service and other public transport companies. And for signs and regulations at Bristol Bus stations key bus stops and interchanges Bristol Temple Meads and Bristol Parkway stations and local railway stations.