

# Overview & Scrutiny Management Board 18 April 2023 Public Forum



## Public Forum Questions

Ref	Name	Topic
Q1-2	Suzanne Audrey (not attending)	Item 7: Corporate Business Plans and Performance Framework

## Public Forum Statements

Ref	Name	Topic
S1	Cllr Richard Eddy	Item 8: Scrutiny Annual Report
S2	David Redgewell (Southwest Transport Network Railfuture Severnside), Gordon Richardson (Bristol Disability Equalities Forum), Ian Beckey (Gloucestershire Catch the Bus Service Campaign), Brendon Taylor (Somerset Catch the Bus Campaign).	WECA and Bus Services

## PUBLIC FORUM - QUESTIONS

### Question 1-2 - Suzanne Audrey (Item 7)

#### Question 1

The plan includes doubling the tree canopy. At one point it seemed as if the KPI for this was going to be the number of trees planted. This is clearly not a measure of the tree canopy, as newly planted trees may die while numerous established trees are being lost to new developments. **What measures, if any, will be implemented to assess and reduce the cumulative loss of established trees (and associated tree canopy) to new developments across the city?**

#### Officer Response

Existing local plan policy DM17 *Development Involving Existing Green Infrastructure* expects new development to integrate important existing trees. Where tree loss is essential to allow for appropriate development replacement trees of an appropriate standard and number are expected in accordance with the tree replacement standard set out in the policy. The emerging local plan will include a similar policy (draft policy BG4 *Trees*). Existing and proposed local plan policies (DM15; BG1 and BG3) also expect green infrastructure, including trees, to be incorporated into development resulting in net gains for biodiversity.

Periodic assessments of the tree cover of the city will be made to assess changes which will come about from planting, growth and felling of trees on a wide range of locations, not just development sites. We have not yet set the frequency of these but likely to be at 5-10 year intervals to identify meaningful changes.

#### Question 2

The eco impact assessment concludes: Actions within the Business Plan provide for significant positive environmental improvement, in particular a reduction in citywide CO2 emissions and improvements to local air quality. (Improving air quality was a requirement imposed by central government.) By comparison, commitments to ecology and biodiversity are weak, despite Bristol declaring an ecological emergency. **Are measures to specifically to address the ecological emergency and enhance biodiversity in the city being treated as less important than air quality and City Leap activities?**

#### Officer Response

The Corporate Business Plan 2023/24 sets out our priority actions for the year ahead that will support the delivery of our Corporate Strategy (2022-2027). Some actions may relate to more than one commitment but within the Business Plan 2023/24 there are two specific measures that will support the council meet the Ecological Recovery (ENV2) ambition set out in our Strategy.

- Guided by our Ecological Emergency Action Plan (2021-2025), as part of the development of the Local Plan, we will develop new evidence-based planning policies that respond to the ecological emergency. Our Action Plan includes a list of key activities that are being planned or being explored up to 2025, as part of the One City Ecological Emergency Strategy.
- Development of ecological and green infrastructure investment plans is also a priority action in next year's Business Plan. This will help the city secure vital investment and become a nature rich, climate resilient and climate neutral city.
- Two additional performance measures included in this year's Business Plan are i) reducing the Council's use of pesticides and ii) increasing the percentage of Council's land managed for the

benefit of wildlife. Specific targets for each of these performance metrics will be published later in the year.

In the Business Plan, the ecological and the carbon neutrality priorities are afforded equal weight. The Plan only describes a few of the actions being taken by the Council, on any subject, and for more detail on our ecological action, please see the Ecological Emergency Action Plan ([Bristol's ecological emergency](#)).

## **PUBLIC FORUM - STATEMENTS**

### **Statement 1 – Cllr Richard Eddy (Item 8)**

Public forum statement to Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, 18 April 2023

Dear Chairman & Committee Members,

I refer to OSMC's Annual Scrutiny Report and, in particular, the work you have done scrutinizing Bristol's 'arms-length' Council companies.

Members will recall the controversial transfer of 200 Facilities Management staff- primarily cleaners and security officers- to Bristol Waste Company in Spring 2022. A proposed transfer of more Facilities Management staff later last year was abruptly ditched by the Administration just prior Christmas 2022.

Both 'off-loadings' of BCC employees were strongly criticised by the trades unions and by several members of the Human Resources Committee, including myself.

When the original transfer of the 200 staff was approved by Cabinet, various commitments were publicly given about BWC investing in these service areas, no diminution of employees' rights and, indeed, a legally-binding TUPE Agreement completed.

Many cross-party Members- including myself- support the grave concerns of the GMB, Unison and Unite unions that these political promises have not been adhered to:

Firstly, we have seen no evidence of the claimed-synergy of BWC taking over these services;

Secondly, there has been none of the planned new investment in these services or staff- if anything, a diminution of resourcing and stretching of rota commitments;

Thirdly, many of us have received evidence of the poor management of the BWC cleaning and security contracts;

Fourthly, there has been particular concern about the decision to cease cash transit and to fail to tender for North Somerset Council's contract in this area;

Fifthly, BWC's new Business Plan- which indicates more out-sourcing- has led to more concerns about the working interests of these transferred 200 staff.

Obviously, as the Human Resources Committee has a remit to scrutinize the working affairs of Council employees and not BWC, the HR Committee is unable to investigate these failures. Accordingly, I would respectfully request that OSMB contact the GMB, Unison and Unite unions to clarify the detailed allegations here.

Call me 'old-fashioned', but I think Bristol City Council ought to honour the promises it has freely and openly made to its employees!

## **Statement 2 – David Redgewell, Gordon Richardson, Ian Beckey, Brendon Taylor (WECA and Bus Services)**

It is with great concern that the West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority with North Somerset Council removed 33 bus services out of 42 proposed services to be cut by June 2023 due to the funding levy problems with Bristol City Council, North Somerset Council, Banes and South Gloucestershire Council.

This has resulted in difficult access to Southmead Hospital Bus Station, Bristol Parkway Station and UWE bus station at Frenchay with direct link lost to UWE bus station and Bristol Parkway Station to Aztec West, Hortham, Alverston, Thornbury.

From Avonmouth Dock, Shirehampton, Lawrence Weston, Westbury on Trym, Southmead hospital bus station, 10 and 11 service. Services to schools, college and university in the Bristol Parkway area. City of Bristol College and South Gloucestershire and Stroud College.

In South Bristol and North East Somerset, bus links from St Anne's Park, Brislington, Knowle, Hengrove hospital and Hartcliffe have been withdrawn. And from Whitchurch Estate 516 96 routes have left children without school buses to Brislington School and St Brendon College.

And to the park centre on service 96 and 91 in Knowle. 91 Bristol city centre to Knowle and Hartcliffe. The 506 Bristol city centre St Phillip, Lawrence Hill, Easton, Eastville, Horfield, Southmead hospital bus station. Leaving people without access to school, work, shopping centres and the hospital at Southmead.

Service 23 Ashton Vale, Southville, Bedminster, Redcliffe, Bristol city centre, Broadmead.  
Service 47 / 5 Bristol city centre, St Pauls, St Werburghs, Eastville Park, Fishponds Road, Oldbury Court, Downend, Emerson Green, Puckchurch, Westerleigh, Yate bus station.  
Left Stapleton, Broomhill, Fishponds, Oldbury Court, Downend without a bus service.  
St Paul's learning centre and West of England Centre for Independent Living have no or limited bus service.

New service 25 Bristol city centre, St Paul's, St Werburghs, Eastville Park, Horfield, Southmead hospital bus station Monday to Friday by Transpora buses is to be welcomed. But with parents and students trying to use Westlink Demand responsive buses where they operate to get to school college or university. The result were many people could not book 16 seater Westlinks (referred to by students as Dan's Van's after Mayor Dan Norris).

The loss of school colleges and universities bus is being felt by students with many people having to travel from south Bristol to city centre to return to Brislington and Keynsham school and colleges. Or

West Bristol to the city centre or Cribbs Causeway bus station to get to UWE bus station or Bristol Parkway Station. Colleges at Filton City of Bristol College or South Gloucestershire and Stroud college.

There were students delayed going to school, college and university by the lack of bus service by the West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority and North Somerset Council. Mayor Dan Norris who does not have the Transport levy to run the services.

There needs to be an urgent review of bus services in the West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority and North Somerset Council after the local council elections in North Somerset Council, Banes and South Gloucestershire council areas. And with the government funding for the LEP and the move for North Somerset council to join the West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority.

We are also very concerned that no bus and coach station in the West Of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority and North Somerset Council bus service improve area have bus timetable or passenger maps are no longer present on any bus or coach stop shelter or in Railway stations, bus and coach stations with limited displays in Bristol and Bath bus and coach stations. Cribbs Causeway bus station and coach station has out of date timetables and buses departing from changed stops with paper displays with out of date passenger information on bus interchanges in Bristol city centre, Broadmead, Gloucester Road, Harbourside, Brislington, Keynsham, Southmead hospital bus station, Cribbs causeway bus station, Bristol parkway station, Yate bus station, UWE bus and coach station, Bath spa bus and coach station city centre, Weston super mare bus and coach, Clevedon and Portishead, Radstock, Midsomer Norton, Paulton. All the passenger information maps need replacement.

And on Railway station especially at Bristol Temple Meads station, Bristol Parkway station, Bath spa and Weston super mare, Clifton Down.

All the bus stops have only QR codes which link to travel west but without maps and location, and an app for Westlink bus services but only a general phone number. This is very confusing to city region residents and especially tourists to the city and county of Bristol and Bath, Somerset and Gloucestershire.

The Transport Act of 2017 put a duty on local Transport Authorities to provide bus passengers information, in our case North Somerset Council and the West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority and Mayor Dan Norris. The present passenger information needs very urgent action by the West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority and North Somerset council.

As passengers are now switching back to their cars in the city region. And not on a journey to NetZero. And climate change.

Also visitors attraction like Oldbury Court Estate have no bus services.

On Westlink Demand responsive bus services. With limited coverage in Greater Bristol being just Keynsham, Brislington, Totterdown, Hengrove, Whitchurch and Knowle. Severnside and Severn Beach.

And very limited buses and drivers. Concerns are being raised about journeys from Keynsham and Brislington to Bristol Airport for £2 when their the A4.

Bus service Bath spa bus and coach interchanges Keynsham, Brislington, Bishopsworth, Bristol Airport. Or journeys Whitchurch to Bath bus and coach station when the 172 bus operators this route via Paulton, Midsomer Norton, Westfield Radstock, Peasdown St John.

Or Freshford Railway station to Yatton station via Bristol Temple Meads station. With a Westlink from Yatton to Clevedon no a Westlink ran Freshford Station to Yatton and Kingston Seymour near Clevedon. But in North Bristol Westlink cannot run south of Hortham Village to Bristol parkway station, Aztec West for metro bus or Cribbs Causeway bus station.

Uwe bus station, Patchway station or Southmead hospital bus station for interchanges with bus coach and rail services.

We need Westlink to Oldbury Court, Fishponds, Broomhill, Stapleton, Eastville, Eastgate centre to Easton, Eastville and St Phillips with no bus services. To link to main line buses and trains at Lawrence Hill and Stapleton Park. Ashton vale to the park and ride site at Long Ashton. 505 Southmead hospital bus station to Clifton Down could be extend to Ashton vale from the park and ride site so places in Bristol are not left without bus services to work, school, college, hospital, shopping centres and leisure and tourism journeys.

Westlink could fill the gaps to the poorest communities in Greater Bristol and Bath city region. Service A4 Bath spa bus interchanges could run around Keynsham estate at night to replace service 349.

On railway services Metro west. We support the Bristol Temple meads station, Clifton Down station, Avonmouth Dock, and Severn Beach railway. Funding with new station at Portway parkway station. The Bristol Temple Meads station to Bristol Parkway and Gloucester central train service every 30 mins through Filton Abbey wood and Yate. Hourly Bristol Temple Meads station to Gloucester central, Cheltenham spa, Ashchurch for Tewkesbury and Worcester Shrub Hill and Forgate Street. With stops at Filton Abbey Wood, Bristol Parkway station, Yate, cam and Dursey. Future Charfield Station and Stonehouse. Bristol Temple Meads station, Keynsham, Oldfield Park, Bath spa, Freshford Avoncliff, Bradford on Avon, Trowbridge, Westbury, Warminster, Salisbury. Half hourly to Westbury hourly to Salisbury.

But with The Bristol Temple meads station, Pill and Portishead line. New station Ashton Gate. Bristol Temple Meads station, Lawrence Hill, Stapleton Road, Ashley Down, Filton Abbey wood, Filton North and Henbury. Which still need planning permission.

The transport levy will not fund all the services for 3 years at the West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority and North Somerset Council levy.

West of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council need precepting powers and urgent transfer of transport staff from Bristol city council, Banes, South Gloucestershire council and North Somerset council to make the public transport Network work for passengers.