

# Decision Pathway – Report

**PURPOSE:** Key decision

**MEETING:** Cabinet

**DATE:** 06 June 2023

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>MetroWest Phase 2 and Ashley Down Rail Station</b>		
<b>Ward(s)</b>	The MetroWest Phase 2 project has a Citywide impact. Highway works and improvements impact Bishopston & Ashley Down and Lockleaze wards		
<b>Author:</b> Melanie Bufton		<b>Job title:</b> Principal Transport Planner	
<b>Cabinet lead:</b> Cllr Donald Alexander, Cabinet Member for Transport		<b>Executive Director lead:</b> John Smith, Interim Executive Director, Growth & Regeneration	
<b>Proposal origin:</b> City Partner			
<b>Decision maker:</b> Cabinet Member <b>Decision forum:</b> Cabinet			
<b>Purpose of Report:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. To provide an update on the MetroWest Phase 2 programme and specifically Ashley Down Rail Station. To include updates on progress, governance, delivery model and costs.</li><li>2. To seek approval to increase the funding allocation to the programme from Bristol’s Economic Development Fund.</li><li>3. To request approval for delegation of authority to the Executive Director of Growth &amp; Regeneration, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport to approve the final scheme design, and the delivery of the approved scheme and associated landscaping based on the draft scheme designs set out in Appendices A1 and A2.</li><li>4. To request approval for delegation of authority to the Executive Director of Growth &amp; Regeneration, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport and The Director of Legal and Democratic Services to enter into a grant agreement to deliver the approved scheme and associated landscaping, if required.</li></ol>			
<b>Evidence Base:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. MetroWest is a programme of rail enhancements across the West of England including the reopening of former passenger rail lines, the delivery of new stations and enhancements to cross-Bristol services. The programme seeks to increase both the capacity and accessibility of the local rail network. MetroWest Phase 2 consists of a new rail station at Ashley Down and two new rail stations on a re-opened Henbury Line (North Filton for Brabazon and Henbury). The Henbury Line is currently freight-only; this project will enable passenger services to use the line. The project also includes enhanced rail frequencies between Bristol and Gloucester from hourly to half-hourly.</li><li>2. Key benefits of the MetroWest Phase 2 programme include; £2 return on every £1 spent, 1.3m passengers expected to use the new services each year, journey time savings, reduction of private car use leading to over 500 tons of CO2 saved each year, support new housing delivery.</li><li>3. Bristol City Council’s Cabinet was last updated on progress of the project in June 2019, following completion of the Outline Business Case. Since then, the project has progressed with Ashley Down station moving into construction in March 2023. In 2019, it was anticipated that the City Council would enter into a joint promotion agreement with South Gloucestershire Council and the West of England Combined Authority (the Combined Authority). Since then, a change in governance</li></ol>			

arrangements has meant that the Combined Authority is now the sole promoter of the scheme, with the City Council and South Gloucestershire Council being key project partners. This has significantly reduced the financial risk to the City Council.

4. The anticipated final cost of the programme was estimated at Outline Business Case stage to be £54.163m (as reported to Cabinet in June 2019). The current anticipated final cost of the programme is now £72.613m, an increase of £18.45m. Key reasons for this increase in costs include:
  - Market prices are greater than those previously estimated, largely due to increasing underlying inflation and material cost increases.
  - Re-design of Ashley Down Station to widen the platforms by approximately 0.5m
  - Re-design of Henbury Station car park and access to reflect emerging flood risk information shared by the Environment Agency (EA).
  - Re-design of Ashley Down and North Filton Stations footbridges to reflect feedback received during the planning consent processes.
  - An increase in biodiversity offsetting requirements for Henbury Station
  - Increased provision for risk and contingency based on an updated project quantitative cost risk assessment.
5. During the detailed design phases for the programme, the opportunity was identified to accelerate the construction of Ashley Down Station as detailed design for this station had progressed more quickly than for North Filton and Henbury stations. Accelerating the scheme allows the project to utilise a 16-day track closure planned for June 2023 which will save the project £2m+ compared with using typical closures of the railway to complete construction works.
6. The opportunity to deliver the programme in stages, as well as work undertaken during the detailed design phases, has informed a revised programme for the scheme, with Ashley Down station expected to open in 2024. North Filton and Henbury stations will be delivered as a second phase, for completion in 2026.
7. For Ashley Down, the detailed design and construction of the new station and associated rail infrastructure will be delivered by Network Rail and their supply chain. Bristol City Council are designing and constructing the station gateway area to Ashley Down Station, to integrate the station entrance to the highway with an improved public realm. The proposed scheme, which has been developed with input from public engagement and stakeholder feedback, will include an Equality Act compliant accessible path, accessible parking bays, integration to the local highway and Concorde Way path shown in Appendix A1. A draft landscape plan has been prepared showing how the station gateway area will be landscaped, including tree planting (Appendix A2).
8. Due to Ashley Down Station's proximity to the Concorde Way path, and the revised design that includes wider platforms, Concorde Way has unfortunately had to be closed during construction. A diversionary route has been provided via Boiling Wells Lane and Muller Road. Improvements were made to Boiling Wells Lane to make it suitable as a diversion route.
9. The wider platforms, required to meet industry accessibility standards, will unfortunately result in a permanent width reduction to Concorde Way alongside the length of the station platforms. This width reduction ranges from 731mm to 904mm, leaving an effective path width ranging from 2.063m to 2.273m (actual path width estimated to range between 3.063m to 3.273m). However, the actual measurement cannot be confirmed until built as there is a tolerance of 100mm.
10. Following completion of a Road Safety Audit (RSA), measures have been identified to help reduce potential conflict along this section of the path. BCC and the CA will work together to mitigate the impacts of this narrowing as identified in the RSA. The CA commits to supporting BCC in the process of requesting funding through the CA decision pathways for a feasibility study. This feasibility study

would investigate improvements to Concorde Way in the vicinity of the station in line with BCC's aspiration to improve the Concorde Way route as set out in the West of England Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan 2020-2036.

11. Officers will be progressing engagement and feasibility work along Concorde Way in 2023/24 with the aim of improving provision along this key walking and cycling corridor. This will include work to determine what improvement can be made to the Concorde Way between Muller Road and Mina Road passing the station and allotments.
12. The Combined Authority has identified a revised funding package to meet the increased programme cost of £72.613m:

<b>Funding Sources:</b>	<b>Current approved funding (£M's)</b>	<b>Proposed new funding allocation (£M's)</b>	<b>Additional funding required (£M's)</b>
Local Growth Fund (LGF)	£3.2	£3.2	£0
Local contribution – North Somerset Council	£0	£0.3	£0.3
Economic Development Fund (EDF) – South Gloucestershire Council	£27.375	£34.477	£7.102
Economic Development Fund (EDF) – Bristol City Council	£7.3	£9.194	£1.894
Economic Development Fund (EDF) – North Somerset Council	£1.825	£1.995	£0.17
Local authority public match revenue	£1.1	£1.1	£0m
Investment Fund (IF) / Transforming Cities Fund (TCF)	£11.063	£19.908	£8.845
Section 106 (Public Match Capital)	£2.3	£2.3	£0
Great Western Railways	£0	£0.139	£0.139
<b>Total</b>	<b>£54.163</b>	<b>£72.613</b>	<b>£18.45</b>

13. The above revised funding package will require the City Council to increase its Economic Development Fund contribution from £7.30m to £9.194m; an increase of £1.894m. The West of England Joint Committee approved the Full Business Case for MetroWest Phase 2 in January 2023. This approval included the award of £13.811m from the Economic Development Fund for stage 1 of the programme (Ashley Down Station) and the allocation of a further £31.855m for the remainder of the project, in line with the current anticipated final cost.
14. BCC's work to support development and delivery of Ashley Down station is agreed and funded by the CA. Construction of the access improvement works as shown in Appendix A, including landscaping, will be contracted via a Grant Funding agreement between BCC and the CA.
15. Project risks have been considered and separate risk registers have been prepared for Ashley Down, Henbury and North Filton. The risk registers in Appendix D were completed in November 2022 and have subsequently been refreshed. The updated versions will be reviewed and taken into account by officers when they are available.

#### **Cabinet Member / Officer Recommendations:**

That Cabinet:

1. Approves an increase to Bristol's Economic Development Fund allocation to MetroWest Phase 2 of £1.894m subject to a report being brought back Cabinet to provide an update on the latest EDF profile that highlights funding that has been released to enable this work to be fully funded.

2. Note the additional funding of £1.894m is to be released from the £17.5m that Cabinet previously agreed to be held in abeyance towards the Temple Island (TI) enabling project.
3. Authorises the Executive Director of Growth & Regeneration, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport to take all steps required to approve the final scheme design and deliver the approved scheme and associated landscaping based on the draft scheme designs set out in Appendices A1 and A2.
4. Authorises the Executive Director of Growth & Regeneration, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport and the Director of Legal and Democratic Services to take all steps required to agree and enter into a grant agreement and spend the funding (including procuring and awarding contracts over the key decision threshold) to deliver the approved scheme and associated landscaping as outlined in this report.
5. Notes the progress on the MetroWest Phase 2 programme including the revised costs and programme, updated design information and changes to governance as outlined in this report.

#### **Corporate Strategy alignment:**

The MetroWest Phase 2 project is proposing three new stations at Henbury, North Filton and Ashley Down and enhanced rail frequencies. This will improve rail connectivity for Bristol's residents.

This directly aligns with the key Corporate Strategy theme of 'Well Connected'; improving links between people and jobs. The scheme will also increase passenger numbers using public transport and, as part of a wider transport strategy, encourage active travel and promote wellbeing.

#### **City Benefits:**

The MetroWest Project will enhance the local rail network which will improve cross-city connectivity and also widen access to the national rail network.

New stations and services provided by MetroWest will be designed to meet all statutory accessibility standards. By providing proposed access improvements and two parking bays designated for Blue Badge holders at Ashley Down, we are ensuring rail services are inclusive and that future passengers are able to access rail services from the proposed new station.

#### **Consultation Details:**

1. Public engagement took place in 2021, where members of the public were informed of the station design and feedback was sought for the access improvements design.
2. Consultation through the planning process as part of the 2021 Prior Approval Submission for Permitted Development.
3. **MetroWest Phase 2:**  
A Stakeholder Management and Engagement Plan has been produced for MetroWest Phase 2. The purpose of the plan is to set out how the project intends to engage with stakeholders and the public during the project. The Plan is intended to be a 'live' document which will be reviewed as the scheme progresses.
4. **Highway works and improvements consultation undertaken:**
  - i) QA Stage 3 internal consultation
  - ii) Ongoing engagement with Network Rail
  - iii) TMT
  - iv) Cabinet Member for Transport

#### **Background Documents:**

1. June 2019 Bristol City Council Cabinet Approval  
<https://democracy.bristol.gov.uk/documents/g3684/Decisions%2018th-Jun-2019%2016.00%20Cabinet.pdf?T=2>
2. January 2023 West of England Joint Committee Decision  
[Decisions 27th-Jan-2023 15.00 West of England Joint Committee.pdf \(moderngov.co.uk\)](https://www.moderngov.co.uk/decisions/27th-Jan-2023/15.00%20West%20of%20England%20Joint%20Committee%20Decision)

<b>Revenue Cost</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>Source of Revenue Funding</b>	N/A
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<b>Capital Cost</b>	<b>£72.613</b>	<b>Source of Capital Funding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Growth Fund (LGF) £3.2</li> <li>Economic Development Fund (EDF) £45.666</li> <li>Local authority public match £1.1</li> <li>North Somerset Council – local authority contribution £0.3</li> <li>Investment Fund (IF) / Transforming Cities Fund (TCF) £19.908</li> <li>Section 106 (Public Match Capital) £2.3</li> <li>Great Western Railways e.g. grant/prudential borrowing etc. £0.139</li> </ul>
<b>One off cost</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Ongoing cost</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Saving Proposal</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Income generation proposal</b> <input type="checkbox"/>

**Required information to be completed by Financial/Legal/ICT/ HR partners:**

**1. Finance Advice:**

This report asks Cabinet to note the increased cost of this project. The latest estimates show that the project will now cost £72.613m, £18.45m more than the last approved estimate.

<b>COSTING</b>	<b>(£M's)</b>
Original Cost Estimate	£54.163
Revised Cost Estimate	£72.613
<b>Change</b>	<b>£18.450</b>

This increase costs are due to number of factors:

- Inflation;
- Widening the platforms by approximately 0.5m for Ashley Down Station;
- Re-design of Henbury Station car park and access;
- Re-design of Ashley Down and North Filton Stations footbridges;
- More biodiversity offsetting requirements for Henbury Station; and
- Increased provision for risk and contingency

This increase in funding is to be met by the following

<b>Additional Funding Required</b>	<b>(£M's)</b>
Local contribution – North Somerset Council	£0.300
Economic Development Fund (EDF) – South Gloucestershire Council	£7.102
Economic Development Fund (EDF) – Bristol City Council	£1.894
Economic Development Fund (EDF) – North Somerset Council	£0.170
Investment Fund (IF) / Transforming Cities Fund (TCF)	£8.845
Great Western Railways	£0.139
<b>Total</b>	<b>£18.450</b>

The report specifically seeks the approval of Cabinet for an increase of Bristol's Economic Development Fund allocation to MetroWest Phase 2 of £1.89m.

The Funding is to be released from the £17.5m that Cabinet previously agreed to be held in abeyance towards the Temple Island (TI) enabling project for which £32m is already approved. The £1.89m will become available from 28/29 onwards in line with the current EDF funding profile, however, WECA will need to cashflow projects (as

necessary) until that point or the Council will need to review and reprofile existing EDF schemes to release the £1.89m required.

Recent assessment of the progress of the TI project suggests that a proportion of this funding that was held in abeyance could be released to support the MetroWest project. Confirmation of the total amount of the £17.5m that could be released will be presented to Cabinet as part of the next Temple Quarter update that is due in September 2023, and will address the issue of profiling as necessary.

WECA has also written to provide some assurance that it will seek for opportunities to replenish the EDF pot, should such opportunities present themselves over the life of the project.

WECA are in the process of drafting an MOU that addresses how financial risk will be managed moving forward. G&R Exec Director is of the view that there will be no future liability that should fall to Bristol.

This would bring the total funding contributed by the council for this project as follows:

<b>Funding Sources:</b>	<b>Amount (£M's)</b>
Economic Development Fund (EDF)	£9.194
Local authority public match revenue	£0.250
<b>Total</b>	<b>£9.444</b>

**Finance Business Partner:** Kayode Olagundoye, Interim Finance Business Partner, Growth and Regeneration, 23 May 2023

## **2. Legal Advice:**

The procurement process must be conducted in line with the 2015 Procurement Regulations and the Councils own procurement rules. Legal services will advise and assist officers with regard to the conduct of the procurement process and the resulting contractual arrangements.

## **Legal Team Leader:**

Husinara Jones, Team Manager/Solicitor 16 May 2023

## **3. Implications on IT:**

I can see no implications on IT in regard to this activity.

**IT Team Leader:** Alex Simpson – Senior Solution Architect 31 March 2023

## **4. HR Advice:** There are no HR implications evident

**HR Partner:** Celia Williams, HR Business Partner, Growth and Regeneration 3 May 2023

<b>EDM Sign-off</b>	John Smith, Interim Executive Director Growth and Regeneration	5 April 2023
<b>Cabinet Member sign-off</b>	Cllr Donald Alexander, Cabinet Member for Transport	6 April 2023
<b>For Key Decisions - Mayor's Office sign-off</b>	Mayor's Office	5 May 2023

<b>Appendix A – Further essential background / detail on the proposal</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>Appendix B – Details of consultation carried out - internal and external</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix C – Summary of any engagement with scrutiny</b>	<b>NO</b>

<b>Appendix D – Risk assessment</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>Appendix E – Equalities screening / impact assessment of proposal</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>Appendix F – Eco-impact screening/ impact assessment of proposal</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>Appendix G – Financial Advice</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix H – Legal Advice</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix I – Exempt Information</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix J – HR advice</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix K – ICT</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix L – Procurement</b>	<b>NO</b>