

# Public Forum

Committee Model Working Group

28th July 2023



Statements	
Number	Name
PS01	Clive Stevens
PS02	Dr Ann Kennard, Secretary, Bristol International Twinings Association
PS03	Dianne Francombe, CEO, Bristol & West of England China Bureau
PS04	Mary Page
PS05	Dan Ackroyd
PS06	David Redgewell

## Statements

### PS01 – Clive Stevens

Dear Chair and Committee Members.

It is good to read that last month you gave further thought to the future operation of the Escalation Panel. This is a necessary improvement to local democracy and if used well could ensure controversial aspects within a decision or scheme can be researched and deliberated on more thoroughly. There were times in my day when a short delay to get further or missing information or deeper consideration of more effective mitigation would have helped make a better, less expensive, decision.

Additionally, because scrutiny is built in to the committees themselves, it will add an extra incentive to get things right.

I assume escalation won't apply to the Planning Committees. They have their "cooling off" period (since 2019 I think) which enables officers and councillors to seek further information and reflect on the balance of issues and mitigations. That is a similar purpose, just triggered by a different mechanism, to the Escalation Panel.

Hopefully the Panel will be open and people can submit statements, like Call-In. All in the interests of a fairer and more democratic Bristol, which is what people voted for in the referendum.

Kind regards – Clive Stevens



**PS02 – Dr Ann Kennard, Secretary, Bristol International Twinnings Association**

**STATEMENT FROM THE BRISTOL INTERNATIONAL TWINNINGS ASSOCIATION**

Having received the information about the Public Meeting to discuss the upcoming Committee system, when the mayoral system ceases in 2024, with only 2 hours to the deadline and an appointment to keep, I can only make a small contribution to the discussion.

BITA has been an active member of the International Strategy Board from its inception, and has made a consistent contribution to its work of publicising Bristol's international role. Bristol has seven partner cities which cover a large part of the world, where we also have excellent links and personal connections. It is important to have an official forum where representatives of Bristol's international community can meet and exchange business, cultural and other activities, as well as ideas and views with each other. The link between all these bodies and the BCC International Office is vital to ensure that all necessary synergies are possible – without that link, Bristol's international work will become scattered and lose its heart and its momentum. It is essential to retain this body, and to ensure that the International Office is at the centre of the City Council's work in contact with the rest of the world.

Dr Ann Kennard

Secretary, Bristol International Twinnings Association

Chair, Bristol-Hannover Council

**PS03 - Dianne Francombe, CEO, Bristol & West of England China Bureau**

Morning

I am confirming that as CEO of the Bristol & West of England China bureau a member of BITA how important the international strategy board is to developing the international activities on behalf of the City.

A coordinated and strategic response is essential to keep Bristol focussed on international matters and ensure that the city has a voice in the wider international community as well as national policy.

The China bureau can only operate to continue to develop a harmonious relationship with its sister city Guangzhou if the City is behind it and as this relationship is a civic one (like other twinings) it is essential to have support from the City Council and for us to have committee where matters can be discussed.



I hope that within the new committee structure you continue to keep the International strategy board because if not it will be very detrimental to our activities and all the excellent work that has been undertaken over the last 10 years will quickly be lost leaving Bristol and its communities devoid of a voice across the City.

Thank you for taking my message into account.

Best wishes

Dianne

Dianne Francombe  
CEO  
Bristol & West of England China Bureau

#### **PS04 – Mary Page**

To the Committee,

Having looked through the information supplied on External Partnerships, I believe two columns have been missed from the data. For the council and the public to understand the relationships with the External Partners I believe it is essential to understand how the council representative works with that partner, i.e. whether the role is as part of the usual duties of the council representative, or whether there is an additional payment made for their services to that organisation. It also matters where any payment for services to that external partner comes from, i.e. is it a special responsibility allowance from the council or additional payment from external funds.

This financial interests information is critical to know who the representative is serving and representing when sitting at the table of any External Partnership meeting.

Organisations such as the Bristol Port where the councillor becomes part of the Board might well expect the councillor to look after and put the Port's interests first, doubly so if there is a financial payment for being part of the Board. This is exacerbated if the councillor is the local one for Avonmouth and Lawrence Weston like Councillor Alexander, as it means there's a potential conflict between the role on the board looking after the interests of the Port operations in that area and the role of the councillor looking after their residents in Avonmouth and Lawrence Weston. So as well as a column for financial recompense for the role, there needs to be a column stating 'Whose side the representative is on'.

I also note that the Avon Fire Authority is missing from the list as an External Partner but it is chaired by Councillor Massey. It would be useful to understand why, or how that body is defined and what other similar bodies might have been left out. As to the public this might look like an External Partnership.

Additionally, I believe that the financial (pecuniary interests) of these relationships would be appropriate to publish under the Dept of Local Government Transparency Code 2014/2015, especially point 5.



5. Three principles have guided the development of this Code:

- demand led – there are growing expectations that new technologies and publication of data should support transparency and accountability. It is vital that public bodies recognise the value to the public of the data they hold, understand what they hold, what their communities want and then release it in a way that allows the public, developers and the media to use it
- open – provision of public data should become integral to local authority engagement with local people so that it drives accountability to them. Its availability should be promoted and publicised so that residents know how to access it and how it can be used. Presentation should be helpful and accessible to local people and other interested persons, and
- timely – the timeliness of making public data available is often of vital importance. It should be made public as soon as possible following production even if it is not accompanied with detailed analysis.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-government-transparency-code-2015/local-government-transparency-code-2015>

Kind regards,  
Mary Page

#### **PS05 – Dan Ackroyd**

1. The setup of the One City groups is an abomination that seems deliberately chosen to boost the voice of the privileged and to exclude people.
2. Chair, I think you failed to do a good job at the last meeting to enforce the rules. There was disruption from a Councillor attending as a member of the public, and you did nothing to stop it, and so it fell to another member of the public to confront the councillor.

That is a shame for a couple of reasons.

It is not pleasant for members of the public to be forced to follow one set of rules for attending, to see an elected member feel free to break those rules.

Less obviously, not enforcing the rules prevents some useful conversations being had. Judging by their demeanour as they left the room, the Councillor clearly felt that they have useful information that should be written down and considered about urgent decision making. I hope the committee figures out a way to preserve and use that info.

3. There is a problem in Bristol with the Council keeping too much information secret by default, and apparently there just aren't great ways of finding out some information other than 'contacting a councillor'.

Councillors are already stretched for time. They shouldn't have to help Bristolians tracking down information that should have already been published.



There is also a discriminatory aspect to this lack of information, as some Councillors represent much poorer wards, where there are naturally going to be more urgent case work to be done by the councillor.

But also, that way of getting information depends on the Councillor being willing to talk to the public, which just isn't always the case.

This is going to be a problem as there seems likely to be many disagreements and confrontations over whether a particular piece of information should be published or not, particularly when the information is partially held by outside group (e.g. WECA). Some clear rules about being more open might help.

4. My understanding is that the conversation about the East Bristol Liveable Neighbourhood became a bit heated. I am sorry to hear that. As an Open Source developer I know how distressing working in public can be.

Some of the members of Cabinet who are implementing the scheme have been repeatedly trying to 'encourage' members of another party into engaging with the public more, to at least relieve the burden of that community engagement.

But they're doing that after being really quite unpleasant, for a very long period of time, to the people they are asking for help,

It's unrealistic to expect people who have been on the receiving end of unpleasantness to come to the aid of those who have been abusive of them.

If any group of Councillors wants to expect that another group would aid them in communicating with the public, they need to have a period of time where they have spoken only with respect with the fellow Councillors, have been open with information instead of hoarding it, and aren't playing silly games with the levers of power.

I hope the Councillors who aren't currently behaving adequately do not wait until the Committee system actually arrives, before attempting to change their behaviour.

cheers

Dan Ackroyd

#### **PS06 David Redgewell**

We are concerned about the approach of the city council in setting up new committees' system. and its effects on the setting up of the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council and working in partnership with metro mayor Dan Norris.

On the Region public transport Network policy Network

The west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council are in charge of the bus service improvement plan.



With a £105 million pounds from the Department for transport

The metro mayor is funding west link Demand responsive bus services.

Carry out a review of the support bus service in Greater Bristol Bath South Gloucestershire county council

North east Somerset and North Somerset council area.

Which will allow bus service to be returned to some area where bus service have been lost in Greater Bristol Banes and North east Somerset council North Somerset council and south Gloucestershire county council.

Running interchanges facilities and bus stations.

Ferry service in Bristol Harbour and Temple quay with new service planned to st Anne's. Netham Ferry service in Bath.

Metro west railway service Network

Bristol Temple meads station to Filton Abbey wood, Bristol parkway, yate charfield new station cam and Dursey stonehouse Bristol road new station Gloucester central and Cheltenham spa Ashchurch for Tewkesbury Worchester shrub hill Worchester Forgate.

Bristol Temple meads to keynsham oidfiled park Bath spa Freshford Avoncliff Bradford on Avon, Trowbridge Westbury, Dilton marsh, warminster and Salisbury.

Taunton, Bridgwater Highbridge and Burnham on sea, Weston super mare,

Worle parkway yatton for clevedon Nalisea and Backwell parson street Bedminster Bristol Temple meads

Bristol Lawrence hill, Bristol Stapleton road Montpellier Redland Clifton Down sea mill shirehampton Portway parkway Avonmouth Dock st Andrew road and Severn Beach

These railway services are part funded by the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council.

Under metro west railways

The Authority has plans to reopen the Bristol Temple meads Bedminster parson street pill and Portishead line

With a new station at Ashton Gate.

And to reopen the

The Bristol Temple meads to Henbury loop line via Bristol Temple meads station Bristol Lawrence hill, Bristol Stapleton Road ,Ashley Down Filton Abbey wood Filton North, Arena Henbury for cribs causeway and Bristol zoo. and in future extend the service to Avonmouth Dock.

With new station being looked at St Anne's park, saltford, and corsham.

Light rail links to Bristol Airport via South Bristol and a link from Bristol city centre Bristol Temple meads to Brislington keynsham Salford Newbridge Weston and Bath transport hub.

The west of England mayoral combined transport Authority.

Is also the strategic Highways authority

Housing and planning Authority.

The west of England mayoral combined transport Authority working with North Somerset council.

Are looking at taking control of the bus shelters interchanges facilities

With the transfer of functions and staff from Bristol city council.

The city and county of Bristol is not the Transport Authority.

Only a Highway Authority and port Authority.

This power was transferred to the west of England mayoral combined transport.

We need a Devolution deal before the May 2025 mayoral elections when North Somerset council can then join fully



That will be the situation when the levelling up bill is passed for the secretary of state for transport to bring in North Somerset council and the local Enterprise partnership is abolished.

The Conservative government liberal Democrat party labour party and the green party support strong city region government.

The city and county of Bristol is far too small to be a Transport and planning Authority.

That was the reason for setting up the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority with North Somerset council always being part of the area

If the committee system Transport committee undermine the role of the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and mayor Dan Norris.

Then the city region risk funding.

the present delay due union action at Bristol city council over the Transfer of Transport staff is causing more consultants to be used at the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority.

Bristol city council is not a public transport Authority along with Bath and North east Somerset and South Gloucestershire county council

The powers are now with the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority to use powers over the support bus Network.

This is biggest community and political issue in the city region with 40 communities without bus services in the Greater Bristol and Bath city region with North Somerset council.

Funding the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority working with North Somerset council. as joint Transport Authorities.

The metro mayor Dan Norris has no Regional transport Authority precepting powers.

Like the major of Andy Burnham mayor of Greater Manchester combined transport Authority Andy street mayor of the west Midlands combined Authority.

and Steve Rotherham mayor of the Liverpool city region.

These powers are required in the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority by the metro mayor Dan Norris with North Somerset council as a full member.

We need to make progress on the west of England mayoral combined Authority

With governance and a committee of leaders of South Gloucestershire county council Bristol city council and Bath and North east Somerset and the metro mayor

With a joint committee with North Somerset council Bath and North east Somerset council, South Gloucestershire county council and Bristol city council.

But we also need a well a scrutiny and Audit commission's

A public accountable Transport Board

And Housing and planning Boards

These boards need to meet in public.

Like the other combined Authority's

The west of England mayoral combined t Authority also has powers on Tourism economy Department and higher education and silks.

Bristol city council committee system and Transport committee must not undermine the City region combined transport Authority.

Western gateway transport Board

Which cover west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council.

Bristol city council Banes council South Gloucestershire county council Wiltshire council

Gloucestershire county council

Bournemouth Poole and Christchurch council and Dorset council.





It works very closely with Peninsula transport Board covering Devon and Cornwall Plymouth and Torbay plus Swindon on Regional Transport policy and joint studies and Railway freight studies  
Mobility hubs Transport interchanges.

Regional bus and coach services

The City region also has the western gateway transport Board

Covering Regional transport issues

With the Department for transport

Network rail western and Wessex route planning and Investment programmes

Working on strategic road Network

With National highways

Regional bus and coach services.

Having study carried out a Regional transport study of coach service

National Express coaches megabus Falcon coaches Scottish city link.

Flixbus Berry coaches.

Looking at coach stations stops and interchange facilities.

Looking at routes through Cheltenham spa to Stroud Swindon towards Bournemouth and poole

Bristol role as a Regional public transport hub for coach services and passengers.

Mobility hubs Transport interchanges for bus coach rail and ferry services.

Western gateway transport Board is responsible for the Transport planning with South west Peninsula transport Board across the south west Region

The western gateway partnership

Covers economy Development planning and Transport and dealing with uk

Government and is a partnership of business and local and Regional government in the west of England

Swindon and Wiltshire Gloucestershire west of England mayoral combined Authority mayor Dan Norris.

Bristol city council, Bath and North east Somerset council South Gloucestershire county council and North Somerset council.

The Welsh government and transport for Wales

And Welsh councils in south Wales.

Regional Heath Authorities.

The others City region bodies

Are the integrated care Board

With the NHS for North Somerset council South Gloucestershire county council and the city and county of Bristol council.

Covering Hospital in Bristol at Southmead North Bristol.

Bristol Royal infirmary and Weston super mare clevedon and corsham kingswood.

Planned unit at Thornbury and Frenchay

The other integrated care Board in the city region is

Is Wiltshire Swindon and Bath and North east Somerset. Covering Bath RUH hospital at Bath and Peasdown st john.

Paulton hospital Swindon Salisbury Chippenham Trowbridge warminster and marborough.

South west councils

Covering the 7 counties of South west England based in Taunton.

Avon and Somerset police covering the city and county of Bristol, Banes North Somerset council and South Gloucestershire county council and Somerset council.

British Transport police covering the south west Railway Network.





With Regional centre in Bristol at Temple meads station and station at Bath spa Gloucester Weston super mare Taunton and Swindon.  
Bristol port police covering the port of Bristol and part of the Bristol channel.  
As the government and the labour party and liberal Democrat party and Green party are at National level supporting  
Strong region government bodies and city Regions.  
Take back control paper from the labour party.  
New combined Authority from the conservative government  
Regional government from the liberal Democrats party  
We wish to see Bristol city council new leader and Deputy leader system support and lead Regional government.  
Work on Region level in the west of England mayoral combined Authority with North Somerset council.  
And western gateway partnership and Transport Boards.  
Remember South west transport Network  
Friends of Bristol suburban railways  
Railfuture Severnside  
Transport for Greater Bristol  
Somerset catch the bus campaign  
Gloucestershire catch the campaign.  
Bristol disabled equalities forum  
South Gloucestershire disability Network.  
The Transport trade union  
All support a strong Region West of England mayoral combined transport Authority and city Region with North Somerset council.

David Redgewell South west transport Network Railfuture Severnside and  
Bristol disability equalities forum Trustee

