

**West of England
Joint Scrutiny Committee
31st January 2014**

Member & Public Forum

Notice has been given for the following representations:

Statements

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**John Malyckyj
Place & Infrastructure Support Officer**

*Statement from South West Transport Network for
Bristol Cabinet on 4 February,
South Gloucestershire PTSE on 29 Jan,
West of England Partnership Joint Scrutiny on 31 Jan*

Greater Bristol Supported Bus Network and its role within the Strategic Economic Plan

We are extremely concerned about proposals to take £700K out of the Greater Bristol Bus Network funding. This 33% cut is a very serious threat to the survival of the network as a coherent set of routes. We would also insist that the Bristol Mayor and Council acknowledge the cross-boundary nature of the network and accept that cuts in Bristol will inevitably entail severe disruption to services in South Gloucestershire, BANES and North Somerset. In particular there will be knock-on service-reduction (potentially large-scale withdrawal) of services through Filton, Patchway, Cribbs Causeway, Bradley Stoke, Emerson's Green, Staple Hill, Kingswood, Longwell Green, Keynsham, Bath, Nailsea, Clevedon and Portishead. This will also likely kill off the Mayor's and BANES newly established and very well received 6-days-a-week Night Bus Network. This project was originally funded by central government to the tune of £70m from the DfT and £20m from First Group to improve the bus network including investment in new vehicles which is ongoing.

Whilst we understand that cuts have to fall somewhere, it seems extremely short-sighted to jeopardise one of the most successful and high-profile developments in local public transport in recent years (including the investment in new vehicles by First and Wessex, the dropping of fares by both companies and the campaign by the WEP to get more people onto the bus and rail network).

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The proposed network reductions, especially in the South Gloucestershire/Kingswood area, would make a mockery of the current government funded projects through the Better Bus Area and the Local Sustainable Transport Fund in the city region. Having plans to invest in bus routes 6 and 7 as well as a new bus interchange in Kingswood whilst First is replacing out-of-date vehicles on Kingswood Town services means that we may be left with lots of shiny new infrastructure which has no worthwhile bus service to justify it. That is a guaranteed way of losing public confidence in transport delivery.

It might be possible to look for significant savings in renegotiating or commercialising the Park and Ride network, especially as MetroWest Buses are supposed to run subsidy-free (including the Park and Ride services). We remain somewhat sceptical of the subsidy-free plans as no other city in Europe manages this feat at the moment. It must also be said that there is a strange lack of coherence in making the currently proposed cuts whilst pushing ahead with plans for the Metro Bus Network across the city region which is likely to leave the public with a confused and unconvincing feeling about the region's transport planning.

We are also concerned at the proposals to slash £470K from the Community Transport budget, particularly as there are still more than twenty buses providing services across the city which are non-low-floor and disability-unfriendly, thus making the Community Transport service all the more necessary.

It is essential that we have a clear policy on access for all to public transport in the Greater Bristol area and this will necessitate the commitment of WEP to a clear date and planned program for the

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removal of the remaining non-low-floor vehicles from the network in Bristol, Bath, Wells and Weston-super-Mare. The Bristol and Bath city region is lagging well behind comparable urban centres across the UK and Europe in modernising its bus and rail fleets to achieve proper access for all. This issue also has clear implications for the modernisation of the region's rail stations, many of which have limited, partial or absolutely no disabled access. With the forthcoming Intercity Electrification Program, this is the perfect opportunity for WEP to bid with FGW for Access for All grants from the DfT.

The proposals for wholesale closure of public (and disabled) toilet facilities across the region should be approached quite differently by "translating" standalone facilities into shared units within cafes, shopping centres and transport interchanges. This requires a coherent policy and a structured plan (similar to the Bath model) to ensure that these facilities do not simply disappear to the detriment of the travelling public. (Notwithstanding the fact that the Bath Bus Station toilets and café are presently closed due to a flood!)

The recent discovery of large amounts of drug paraphernalia at the toilets at Bristol Bus station led to the temporary closure of the facilities whilst they were cleaned and made safe, pending extensive repairs. In the meantime, bus passengers have had to use the toilets in the "Bear Pit" and disabled passengers have been redirected to the Subway café. It should be remembered that the facilities are owned by Avon and Somerset Support Services (a PFI company consisting of the four greater Bristol authorities and Somerset County Council) with an operating lease to First Group and National Express. At the moment the problem is being managed by First Group but they feel that the origins of the drugs issue

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at the toilets are related to the closure of other facilities across the city and that responsibility for staff and passenger safety and comfort needs to be a joint agency approach with Bristol City Council, the West of England Partnership, the PCC, Avon and Somerset Chief Constable and Safer Bristol. Ideally this should be set up as a working group under Safer Bristol.

The following remedial precautions should be considered:

- CCTV fitted to the washroom area
- more PCSO/police officer coverage
- painting out graffiti on exterior of and approaches to bus station
- missing and expired timetables should be replaced with up-to-date information.

Within the bus policy there is a very urgent need to upgrade the interchanges and bus stations. At the moment this seems to represent a very serious omission in the city region's transport strategy. A corresponding lack of policy in Wiltshire has allowed the closure of the bus stations in Salisbury and Amesbury with no adequate replacement facilities. In the Bristol and Bath city region the sites most in need of upgrading and development are Bristol Parkway, Filton Abbey Wood, Kingswood Town Centre (partially completed), Locking Road and Weston-super-Mare station, Bristol Temple Meads (the Friary), Portishead and the proposed Ashton Gate station, Nailsea and Backwell, Keynsham Ashton Way, the City Centre and Broadmead, Cribbs Causeway and Radstock town centre.

These interchanges need to be upgraded with waiting shelters, CCTV, good quality timetable displays and real-time information and (where possible) toilets and catering. An interchange audit for the city region

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needs to be carried out and government funding sought for the implementation of these improvements as part of Metro Bus and Metro Rail.

As a result of decisions taken by Somerset Council a number of Cross-boundary bus routes into Bath and Weston-super-Mare are under threat: 184 Bath to Frome via Mells, 267 Bath to Frome via Hinton Charterhouse, 768 Farrington Gurney to Bath, 102 Weston to Bridgwater, 668 Lower Langford to Street (connection with 121 Bristol to Weston service), 670 Burnham to Wells, 19 Bridgwater to Street, 376 and 377 Bristol to Yeovil and Bridgwater via Pensford, Glastonbury and Street. Amongst weekly (shopping) services under threat are 754, 636, 683, 757, 752, 185 and 640 which provide in some cases the only public transport access for smaller population centres around Bath. Rather than considering withdrawal of service, the 636 route should be upgraded to provide hospital access from Keynsham.

BaNES needs to raise with Wiltshire Council the implications for passengers to and from Bath which follow from the closure of Salisbury and Amesbury bus stations.

In summing up we would like to emphasise the importance of coherent public transport policy and planning within the WEP/LEP's Economic and Strategic Plan. Linking communities, access to services and facilities, jobs, education and employment are all tightly bound up with the provision of adequate and locally appropriate public transport. These issues are fundamental to the prosperity of the city region and should not be compromised.

*Statement from South West Transport Network for
Bristol Cabinet on 4 February,
South Gloucestershire PTSE on 29 Jan,
West of England Partnership Joint Scrutiny on 31 Jan*

David Redgewell

South West Transport Network – Tel 07814 794953

Development on Former GWR Railway Line, Frome Road, Radstock

We wish to make urgent representation to the committee to reconsider the proposals for development of former railway land at Radstock. As things stand, agreeing the current plans to go ahead will mean the end of the future reinstatement of the railway link to Frome and Westbury.

As part of the plans the committee needs to ensure that the railway track and trackbed is retained and that the developer is obliged to provide under Section 106 a single platform railway station on land between Fortescue Road and Frome Road with runaround loop and stop block. This would provide the end station for a rail link via Frome (with the provision of a station at the Cheese and Grain Building) to Westbury and on to Melksham and Swindon. At Westbury the line would link into the frequent services to Trowbridge, Bath, Bristol, Warminster and Southampton as well as regular services to London, Reading, Newbury and Weymouth, Exeter, Plymouth and Cornwall.

Both Trowbridge and Westbury represent regional employment hotspots thereby bringing access to jobs to the people of Radstock and the town itself could reap enormous future employment and investment benefits from the inward travel-to-work opportunities that a rail link would provide.

There is also the option to develop (or at least encourage the development of) a heritage rail service to share the line and rail facilities, and bring increased tourism to the area. To this end, land should be

*Statement from South West Transport Network for
BaNES Special Development Control Committee at Radstock
29 January 2014
WEP Scrutiny Board 31 January 2014 (Bath)*

reserved for a second platform at Radstock for heritage use at a later date.

As well as the rail station, provision should be made for a proper bus interchange with good connectivity to shops and housing development.

It would be enormously short-sighted to let this opportunity be lost forever. Radstock is in the fortunate position of having a rail station site available in the town centre (a situation which many other rail-deprived towns would envy). It should also be noted that the route is protected in the Mendip Core Strategy, the Somerset Local Transport Plan and (albeit as a freight route) in the National Infrastructure Framework.

It is also somewhat dispiriting to see that the current plans provide for only 25% affordable housing. Surely, given the nature of Radstock and the need for local people to get a foot on the housing ladder, this should be reconsidered. This (and the preservation of rail options) could be achieved by higher density housing within the existing site.

David Redgewell
and Martin Cinnamond

South West Transport Network – Tel 07814 794953

Statement to the West of England Scrutiny Committee, 20th January 2014

Transport for Greater Bristol note with pleasure comments in the Strategic Economic Plan that the Partnership want Metro West to be fully electrified and that they will continue to champion the case to government. However in the immediate term we urge the partnership to consider the following:

1) There is a need for passive provision for local rail in the intercity programme/Filton Bank

TFGB note that the deadline for the partnership to complete preparatory planning on local rail in order to fit with Intercity plans is towards the end of this year. The partnership need to work quickly and put pressure on government. The Intercity project is the ideal time to do simultaneous construction on local rail.

2) Campaigners note that funding for local rail is coming from the City Deal after the election, not from DfT and is not guaranteed, unlike the intercity project. Campaigners call on the partnership to stress to government that intercity must not be at the expense of local rail, and that funding is needed sooner rather than later. Local people cannot wait five or ten years for services that are needed now.

3) Campaigners are greatly concerned that the partnership appear to be accepting rather than challenging rail industry recommendations, such as in relation to the gradient and curvature of Filton Bank. It appears that these issues are being used as an excuse to renege on the commitment to reopening new stations at Ashley Hill and Horfield/Lockleaze. We note that authorities elsewhere have identified ways to overcome these issues in order to obtain a derogation from gradient and curvature standards.

4) It is also worth pointing out that the BCR ratio of 2 is not *required* for infrastructure, as James White told the Scrutiny committee's last meeting - it can be over 1 if there is regeneration involved. The positive impact of rail proposals on the local economy should be borne in mind and used to support arguments to government when examining the business case for local rail.

5) While campaigners welcome South Gloucestershire's agreement with developers who have agreed to fund stations, the infrastructure needs to be in place before the houses, not several years later (by which time everyone is already in the habit of driving). Campaigners urge the Partnership to ensure that planning work on the Henbury Loop is completed at the earliest opportunity, and pressure exerted on the government to bring forward funding that should be provided centrally as this is an important diversionary route.

6) With an eye to passive provision for future improvements, we are concerned that there is insufficient vision being brought to the future expansion of Metro West. Like our competitor cities we should aim for an ultimate future frequency of service better than 30 minutes and new types of rolling stock. Since this would release latent demand for more stations and more depot facilities, railway land must be protected for this eventuality. The alignments of former lines to Thornbury, Mangotsfield/ Yate and Whitchurch should be protected. Planning documents should anticipate, allow and even encourage higher density development around Metro West stations. WEP should commission a study of future conversion to tram-train systems, with on-street sections, as in other comparable cities.

Gavin Smith
TFGB

**FOSBR (Friends of Suburban Bristol Railways)
Statement to WEP Scrutiny Friday 31 Jan 2014, 10am, Bath**

Preamble: FOSBR, as a supporting member of the Transport for Greater Bristol Alliance (TfGB), fully support the statement from TfGB for this meeting and would like to add the following evidence to support this TfGB statement:

1. FOSBR have at their AGM on Friday 17 January 2014 unanimously passed the following resolution:

This AGM of FOSBR (Friends of Suburban Bristol Railways) notes with concern the apparent reluctance of our local authorities to question gradient and curvature issues in relation to the construction of stations at Horfield/Lockleaze and Ashley Hill. FOSBR calls on the West of England Joint Transport Executive Committee to follow the lead of other local authorities who have identified ways to overcome these issues in order to obtain a derogation from gradient and curvature standards and successfully build stations.

2. FOSBR notes that a recent email from the Rail Standards and Safety Board (in Appendix 1) and a website entry for the West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (Appendix 2) indicate that the deviation from rail standards on track curvature and gradient need not be a bar to opening two new stations on Filton Bank;

3. FOSBR would like to point out that the benefit of four-tracking on Filton Bank is not just for IEP services but also to enhance local rail as set out in the Metro West plans and that the proposed station sites at Constable Rd and Ashley Hill do not coincide with the proposed IEP crossover;

4. FOSBR would also like to point out that Filton Bank already has a series of signals for which all trains including heavy freight are required to stop regularly despite the 1:75 gradient;

5. FOSBR therefore call on WEP to do the following actions as regards reopening stations on Filton Bank:

- a) Will WEP establish direct from RSSB whether the rail standards in gradient of 1:500 and radius of curvature 1000m still apply for the Metro West region?

and if the rail standards are still in force –

- b) Will WEP work with Network Rail and First Great Western to apply for derogation from rail standards in the case of the two stations on Filton Bank of Ashley Down (at the base of Station Road, off Ashley Down Rd) and of Horfield&Lockleaze at Constable Rd?

- c) Will WEP stand by the MetroWest plans drafted by Halcrow and democratically voted in by the constituent councils to reopen both Horfield and Ashley Hill stations?
- d) Will WEP resist offers for a compromise site between the two proposed sites as these would have neither the present close, lit at night and safe vehicle access to City of Bristol College of the Ashley Hill site nor the straight mile on a direct bus route of Constable Road to the new Southmead Hospital, but would involve travel on Muller Road which is highly congested at rush hour?
- e) Will WEP seek to demonstrate the business case (as well as technical case) for stations for both Horfield&Lockleaze at Constable Road and Ashley Hill (at the base of Station Road off Ashley Down Road)?

Appendix 1 Evidence for relaxing of rail standards on gradient (email from Rail Standards and Safety Board, RSSB, to Bristol City CC Councillor Sean Emmett (*permission has been obtained from Cllr Emmett for publication of this email*))

From: Enquiry Desk [enquirydesk@rssb.co.uk]
Sent: 26 November 2013 13:08
To: Sean Emmett
Subject: RE: Filton Bank (Case 3416)

Dear Councillor Emmett,

Firstly my apologies for the delay in replying; the person to whom I forwarded your enquiry was tied up in CEN meetings in Europe for a few days. I now have a reply to your enquiry from one of our infrastructure team which is:

GI/RT7016 Interface between Station Platforms, Track and Trains Issue 4 sets out requirements for the design and maintenance of station platforms for their safe interface with trains.

Section 2.1 requires that where reasonably practicable platforms are located on straight track and if this is not achievable they are located on curves with a radius not tighter than 1000 m. If it is an existing railway line and there are constraints to where the station platform can be located then a deviation from this requirement might be a possibility.

The mandatory requirement for vertical track alignment or gradient through station platforms has been withdrawn in issue four of GI/RT7016, based on work carried out to support deviations against issue two of GI/RT7016 for specific stations and the findings of RSSB Research Report T815 entitled 'Limits of vertical track alignment through station platforms'.

GI/GN7616 Guidance on Station Platform Geometry sets out guidance on platform curvature and vertical alignment through station platforms. Here are links to both GI/RT7016 and GI/GN7616:

http://www.rgsonline.co.uk/Railway_Group_Standards/Infrastructure/Railway%20Group%20Standards/GIRT7016%20Iss%204.pdf

http://www.rgsonline.co.uk/Railway_Group_Standards/Infrastructure/Guidance%20Notes/GIGN7616%20Iss%201.pdf

If you have any further queries please contact Paul Gray
(paul.gray@rssb.co.uk)
Best regards,

Ant Davey, Senior Technical Communicator, Rail Standards and Safety Board
020 3142 5407
Block 2, Angel Square, 1 Torrens Street, London, EC1V 1NY

Appendix 2 Evidence for recent successful derogation from rail standards

In December 2013 The West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (another name for an ITA) have, together with Network Rail and Northern Rail (the equivalent of FGW) reported news on their proposed station at Low Moor, that they have now obtained permission to deviate from the rail standard relating to curvature having to be less than a radius of 1000m:

<http://www.wymetro.com/news/projects/projectdetails/lowmoor/>

The paragraph below is the penultimate one on the page on the website and shows the need for unity of purpose with Network Rail, the local council transport board and the track operative:

“Development work has recently taken a major step forward. Metro, working with Network Rail and Northern Rail, had to demonstrate that trains could stop safely on the curve of the track where the station would be located, which is tighter than the minimum mandated by modern rail industry safety standards. In early September 2013, Metro and Network Rail presented the case to the Rail Safety and Standard board (RSSB) and after further discussions with Metro, the RSSB has now issued a Certificate of Deviation, removing the major technical obstacle to delivery of the scheme.”

If it turns out that the 1:500 gradient and 1000m radius of curvature rail standards are still in force in the MetroWest area, presumably one could use the same derogation process to get round the gradient problem at both Constable Road and Ashley Hill where I understand the gradient at both station sites is 1:75 instead of the statutory 1:500?

Christina Biggs (FOSBR Secretary)
Julie Boston (FOSBR campaigns organiser)
27/01/13

Statement from BS10 PARKS AND PLANNING GROUP for WEP Scrutiny Committee meeting on Friday 31 January 2014.

BS10 Group call on the WEP Scrutiny Committee to support local transport campaigners, in calling for the re opening of the Henbury Loop line in Metro West Phase 1.

Four tracking on Filton Bank during the electrification and stations at Charlton Holt and Filton North, Ashley Hill and Horfield are essential. We urge WEP Scrutiny to ensure that WEP JTEC apply for these rail improvements in the £2bn Strategic Economic Plan.

The BS10 Group and FOSBR were unaware of £2bn and missed the deadline of 24 January 2014. Please tell us if Charlotte Leslie MP and local councillors, who are very supportive of rail, applied for this funding.

The BS10 Group urge the Mayor regarding Cribbs/Patchway New Neighbourhood to become fully involved, and speak up in support for the residents of Bristol. We have asked for our Mayor previously to become proactive in this pending environmental catastrophe.

BS10 Group is not against house building; in fact we need new homes. However, this scale should be managed differently. It's extremely sad that the city has lost Filton Airfield which was a real asset and one that could not be recreated without tearing up a village just as this happened with Charlton Village to accommodate the MOD.

- Stage One should be - New homes should be built on the brown field sites (the airfield) first and foremost, not on the agricultural land until we know the South Gloucester CC aspirations of people using bus, cycle, walking are a reality. The new employment land could be put to use on the old Rolls Royce site in Filton that has stood empty for more years than I can remember. Leave the agricultural land until last.
- Mayor of Bristol to organise Bristol's own Traffic Assessments, this should be carried out at each trigger point of build and paid for out of SG CIL money (S106).
- **Bus is not** the answer as the city does not have enough or cannot accommodate bus only lanes, these lanes meet general traffic and the chaos continues.
- **Railway is the key to the success of 8,000 homes.** Re open the Henbury Loop, Charlton Holt and Filton North etc. This is the way forward Trains do not have to compete with other road users like buses. SGCC should put a big share of CIL(developers) and bonus house fund from government towards this new neighbourhood. This needs to be done as a matter of urgency. Bristol City and SGCC and other councils who are part of the West of England Partnership work towards putting a good case to central government for immediate funding for the railway and not put this on the back burner. We don't want another Portishead scenario (house then no rail).
- We urgently need the people of Bristol City to support the Railway.

Alison Devonshire Secretary to BS10 PARKS AND PLANNING GROUP



BRISTOL AND BATH TRAVEL TO WORK AREA
35, Frome Road,
Bradford on Avon
Ba15 2EA

Statement to Joint Scrutiny Committee

Re: West of England Strategic Economic Plan 2013-2030

We understand that the Government expects adjacent LEPs to work cross border on transport issues. Our concern is that the draft *Transport Vision 2025 for the Swindon and Wiltshire LEP* (SWLEP) fails to properly acknowledge the existence of Bath and Bristol, this in the sense that the SWLEP Vision does not address the commuter links that the West and North Wiltshire towns have with the West of England Area, nor fully understand the role of Bath in terms of retail, services and leisure.

The problem is that the SWLEP are pinning everything on a 'corridor approach' along the A350 and therefore concentrating on the Trans Wilts Line when it comes to public transport. Although the Trans Wilts line is very useful and Wiltshire Council commended in achieving more services along it, there are large commuter flows from West Wiltshire into Bath and Bristol, which are not properly pin-pointed in the SWLEP strategy.

As the West of England area expands and more jobs are created, the house price differential between places like Trowbridge, Westbury, Melksham and more affluent Bath, will dictate commuter flows. West Wilts is already becoming a big growth area in terms of housing supply, for example more than 6,000 new homes are to be built in Trowbridge alone 2006-2026, with several thousand more in the Chippenham/Corsham/Calne area, not to mention new housing estates in Melksham and Westbury.

All in all commuters will want increasingly want to come in to Bath and Bristol from West and North Wiltshire by train, and indeed, by bus. This needs to be anticipated and a clear strategy put in place.

What we would suggest is that the WoE negotiate urgently more emphasis on public transport links between Bath and West Wiltshire in the SWLEP 2025 Transport Vision. Equally it is important that maps of the Bristol Metro in the WoE Strategy go beyond BANES border to show West and North Wiltshire, including stations which could be opened in the future.

The worry is that the two adjacent LEPs will otherwise end up without a joined up public transport strategy, which would be deleterious to both bodies.

Jenny Raggett

LEP TRANSPORT SCRUTINY 31st January 2014

Re: Radstock Rail

This is largely a summary of the document presented to B&NES Development Committee on Wednesday 29th January.

Rail Transport in B&NES has not been developed: no Rail Officer appointed, no progress on any significant rail schemes and not even any consultations.

Currently, there is still some space on the former Railway Land in Radstock. It is imperative that this is protected for future rail use and permit residents of Radstock access to the outside world via a link to Frome. The trackbed in Mendip just the other side of the border is already protected for rail use so it makes no sense to have an incomplete railway. This would reduce (or at least halt the growth) of the number of private cars clogging the roads towards Bath as well as providing new opportunities.

It is imperative that at the very least, space for a standard gauge railway through to a platform as near to the car-park as possible with a run-round loop and head-shunt must be made a formal planning condition in the future.

G J Bailey, Radstock Public Transport Group