

**West of England Joint Transport Board
13th March 2015**

Views of Joint Scrutiny Committee on Matters Related to the Joint Transport Board

Purpose

1. To inform members of the views of the West of England Joint Scrutiny Committee (JSC) following a meeting held on Monday 9th March 2015.

Joint Scrutiny Committee Views

2. The following members were present at the meeting:

Bath & North East Somerset Council
Cllr Lisa Brett
Cllr Martin Veal

Bristol City Council
Cllr Gary Hopkins
Cllr Helen Holland (Vice-Chair)

North Somerset Council
Cllr Tony Moulin
Cllr David Pasley

South Gloucestershire Council
Cllr Pat Hockey (Chair)
Cllr Bill Bowrey
Cllr Colin Hunt

3. The JSC received representations during the public forum on the following transport issues:

- Rail and bus services, Bristol Port and police services
- The need for a transport interchange at Temple Meads
- Phases 1 and 2 of the MetroWest project and access to the Port
- The need for a station at Ashton Gate

4. Members responded with the following points in relation to the statement regarding Temple Meads:

- There seemed to be no proper allowance for connectivity in the proposed plans for the wider re-development of the Temple Quarter area, noting that the Bus Rapid Transit Stops would be located too far from the train station. This meant that access could be reduced rather than improved. As such other alternatives should be considered.
- Accessibility was an issue further impacted by the plans for the arena and there was a lack of information regarding its transport impact.
- It was suggested that the statement regarding Temple Meads be sent to Cllr Mark Bradshaw, Bristol City council.
- The station is iconic for the city and wider area and not being given true priority. Furthermore, the plans for the station were lacking a sense of place. The plan appeared piecemeal and not well integrated.
- Concern was expressed about the consultation process
- There was disappointment that the highway proposals subject to recent consultation had not been discussed with the Joint Scrutiny Committee. Members felt that there was a role for the committee to play in terms of addressing the issues raised in the statement
- The arena master plan should undergo scrutiny prior to being considered by Bristol City Council
- The Committee write an open letter expressing concerns that the plans are not taking a strategic view for the whole sub-region.

- It was suggested and agreed that a press release be drafted on behalf of the Committee to be taken to the Joint Transport Board and the Strategic Leaders Board.
 - Members then engaged in a discussion about the role of JSC in relation to the LEP
 - It was agreed that a press release be drafted and circulated to the Joint Transport Board and the Strategic Leaders Board (Appendix 1)
5. Members responded with the following points in relation to the statement regarding MetroWest:
- Noted that the Ashton Gate Stadium revamp was not included in the timetable. A station was needed at Ashton Gate and coordination with BRT.
 - The Passenger Shed would be out of action after electrification of the railway lines at Temple Meads station, hence, Ashton Gate would play an important part in providing conference and banqueting facilities noting that it already has a calendar of events for when it is opened
- Officers responded:
- The study had used traditional railway passenger demand assessment methodology to identify locations suitable for a station. A key requirement is that a location has a large enough residential catchment area. Ashton Gate is not supported by a large population density. It was also noted that there is a requirement for the Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) to be 2.0 or above, the BCR at Ashton Gate of 0.98 is too low to justify a station.
 - Queried if there was potential to further develop the BCR for further future funding opportunities to service a station at Ashton Gate.
 - Officers explained that this is dependent on funding being available and business cases being developed. MetroWest Phase 1 makes passive provision but does not include financial provision for a station at Ashton Gate.
6. The meeting became inquorate after Agenda Item 5 as members from Bath & North East Somerset Council left proceeding continued as informal meeting.
7. Members received a presentation on the Joint Strategic Planning Strategy and Future Transport Study.

Members made the following points in response:

- Expressed concern that the housing numbers from the SHMA were not yet available to inform the transport strategy
 - JSC input in developing the strategic spatial scenarios was important
 - Expressed concern about suggested timescales for public engagement and consultation
 - The need to involve JSC members in stakeholder engagement
 - The importance of rural areas
 - Consider the increasing numbers of people working from home and technological opportunities
 - Consider the possible impact of rail electrification on commuting to London
 - Requested a Joint Planning and Transport strategy workshop
8. No other direct transport business was conducted during the meeting.

Recommendation

9. That members note the views of the West of England Joint Scrutiny Committee

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Appendix 1

West of England Joint Scrutiny Committee statement on Bristol Temple Meads redevelopment

We the Members of the West of England's Joint Scrutiny Committee wish to express our strong concern over proposals for the redevelopment of Bristol Temple Meads station and new access arrangements. Our chief concerns are:

- Strategic importance of Bristol Temple Meads is not being recognised
- Disjointed approach and the lack of an overall vision.
- A transport plan should have been produced in advance of the arena planning application
- The vision for the transport system should go further in terms of promoting sustainable modes of travel connectivity and innovation
- Lack of consultation on what's happening at Bristol Temple Meads regarding Network Rail's Master Plan and Bristol City Council's Temple Gate proposals.
- Temple Gate access proposals are inadequate with poorly sited bus stops some distance from the station.
- Station Approach could be used for a new bus/rail interchange if Plot 6 cannot be utilised.
- Proposals need to join up with and share parking and access with the Arena.
- What's happening with Plot 6? Is this area and the adjacent Friary going to be used for retail development thereby losing the opportunity for a bus/rail interchange?

The fear that unless these issues are addressed in a more open and transparent way, the opportunity to enhance this iconic gateway to Bristol and the West of England will be lost.

Signed
Members of Joint Scrutiny