

I am Duncan Hounsell of the Salford Station Campaign.

**“The Salford Station Campaign is an active, well organised and popular group”** Who says? Answer: The newly formed West of England Local Transport Body in its assessment of the “New Rail Stations Package” which includes Ashton Gate, Corsham and Salford.

The West of England Local Transport Body (LTB) (comprising B&NES Council, Bristol City Council, North Somerset Council, South Gloucestershire Council and the Local Enterprise Partnership) formed in March as a prerequisite to receiving devolved major transport funding from the Department for Transport. One of the functions of the new body is to prioritise local major transport schemes within the available budget.

At its meeting on 13 March 2013, it prioritised schemes against criteria of affordability, minimum cost threshold, and deliverability. The top two priorities agreed were the Greater Bristol Metro phases 1 and 2. **The “new stations package” (including Salford station) has also reached the agreed project shortlist.** Construction at Salford is estimated by the LTB to take place in the period 2018/19 to 2023/24 but earlier should other funding opportunities become available and subject to business case. The new stations will form part of the Greater Bristol Metro or “Metro West” project as it is to be called.

The Metro West rail project which includes Salford Station (subject to business case) is included in Network Rail’s Business Plan for Control Period 5 (2014-2019) and Network Rail Specifications (Western). **This is the first time that a station at Salford has appeared in public rail industry documents and marks a major turning point in gaining recognition for the proposal. A station at Salford also appears in the “refresh” or update of the West of England Partnership’s Joint Local Transport Plan (JLTP3).**

It was in June last year that **B&NES Cabinet agreed a budget of £100,000 to undertake a High Level Output Assessment for Salford Station to develop the business case and take Salford to GRIP level 2 of Network Rail’s 8-stage process for railway development.**

There has been a short delay in commissioning this work because of uncertainties around the awarding of the GW Rail Franchise, and changes to the Core Strategy. We know now that FGW is running the service until July 2016 and the **Station Campaign Group is delighted to hear from your Transport Department that it is commissioning the work on Salford** and we wish to be kept informed of progress. Cllr Paul Crossley responded to the call from the **Salford Environment**

**Group** last November for an informed **public consultation** among Saltford residents and Saltford businesses to follow the consultant's work. **Saltford Station can be seen as a "stand-alone" project** as well as part of Metro West and we want the project taken through the GRIP stages as quickly as possible so that any new Government funding can be accessed as the Government seeks to promote economic growth with capital spending. **We are delighted that you are set to approve, this evening, expenditure of £124,000 as B&NES contribution to the development of Phase 1 of the Metro West project** which includes half-hourly rail services for Keynsham, Oldfield Park and Bath Spa and which will also be a **pre-cursor for these same services for the residents of Saltford within walking distance of their homes. Metro West, including a Saltford Station, is the most exciting public transport project for decades.** Your objectives to produce a modal shift from car to rail, to support economic growth, and to provide future sustainable transport are commendable. You are on-track, on time, and with green lights showing. Thank-you for your support for Metro West and Saltford Station.