

Statement to BANES Council Major Projects Committee meeting 14 May and Full Council meeting 16 May 2013 as well as Bristol City Council Full Council meeting 21 May 2013

Putting Passengers and Stations at the heart of the Four-Tracking of Filton Bank

Greater Bristol and South West Transport Groups welcome Network Rail's proposals for four tracks between Lawrence Hill and Filton Abbey Wood which will double capacity on both the InterCity lines to the North and West of Bristol as well as the Greater Bristol Metro routes to Clifton Down, Avonmouth and Severn Beach, Henbury, Yate/Gloucester/Cheltenham, Newport/Cardiff to Weston/Taunton and Portishead and perhaps eventually to Thornbury.

Whilst the Department for Transport is funding the InterCity Express Program of high-speed electric trains between London, Swindon and South Wales via Bath and Temple Meads and Bristol Parkway. Funding is not currently confirmed for the Greater Bristol regional services which are proposed as part of the Greater Bristol Metro. These local services include a reopened passenger service from Bristol Temple Meads to Henbury and Avonmouth via Filton Abbey Wood, as well as extending the Severn Beach services to Bath and Wesbury (Wilts) via Clifton Down, Stapleton Road, Lawrence Hill, Temple Meads and Keynsham.

The Four-Tracking project is a vital element in facilitating a major Metro scheme for Greater Bristol as well as allowing significant service improvements to the regional rail network. It is essential to put pressure on the Office of Rail Regulation to ensure that funding for the project is approved with the Secretary of State for Transport (Patrick McLoughlin MP), but that funding should also be approved for necessary improvements to existing stations between Temple Meads and Pilning, as well as Oldfield Park and Keynsham.

Statement to BANES Council Major Projects Committee meeting 14 May and Full Council meeting 16 May 2013 as well as Bristol City Council Full Council meeting 21 May 2013

At Temple Meads, additional bay platforms must be built in the renovated Brunel Train Shed and Midland Train Shed. At Lawrence Hill disabled access needs to be provided in place of the recently renewed steps from road bridge level to both platforms which will help passengers with luggage and mothers with push-chairs.

At Stapleton Road the replacement footbridge has not been designed to accommodate the four-tracked layout which is proposed for the station, nor does it afford access to the two planned new platforms which will be required for the Bristol Metro and the InterCity Express programme. As it was in the past, Stapleton Road could again become a real transport interchange, providing a hub for local Metro trains and buses to East Bristol.

At both Lawrence Hill and Stapleton Road (along with other stations on the Bristol Metro) CCTV, passenger waiting facilities and better information screens will be needed. Patchway and Pilning will also require suitable facilities if they are to play their part in generating passengers for the Metro and wider network Neither of these stations is wheelchair accessible. As the coalition government has ring-fenced money under the Access for All station improvement programme, it is imperative that the West of England Partnership should bid for money from this fund so that the upgrading of these stations dovetails with the Department for Transport's funding of the Filton Bank four-tracking. In the case of Keynsham station, BANES Council have dovetailed the DfT's Access for All programme with the InterCity electrification project.

We sincerely hope that newly elected councillors as well as existing representatives from the West of England Partnership authorities, the Mayor, MEPs, MPs and all others who speak for the Bristol and Bath City Region

Statement to BANES Council Major Projects Committee meeting 14 May and Full Council meeting 16 May 2013 as well as Bristol City Council Full Council meeting 21 May 2013

will put aside party politics to unite behind this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to give Bristol the transport network it desperately needs. We encourage everyone to support The Bristol Post's Campaign to secure funding for this project which will bring real improvement to the quality of life throughout the city and region.

As a footnote, we are very shocked to see that there are NO infrastructure proposals whatever by Network Rail for ANY development in the Greater Bristol Region other than the already agreed IEP project for four-tracking Filton Bank. This leaves the whole of the Metro project in serious jeopardy unless it is submitted to Network Rail, the Office of Rail Regulation and the DfT, and these bodies are persuaded to include provision for the Metro in infrastructure planning (as is the case with South Wales and most of the urban centres in the north of England).

David Redgewell

South West Transport Network – Tel 07814 794953

Norman Brown

Save Our Trains – Tel 01935 479129

The Filton four-tracking campaign is supported by:

Friends of Bristol Suburban Railway

Greater Bristol Transport Alliance

Rail Futures (Severnside)

The Portishead Rail Group.