

## **B&NES Full Council meeting 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2016**

### STATEMENT FROM DAVID REDGEWELL

I should like to speak on the subject of devolution of powers to the Joint Authority as I believe it is vitally important for the people of this region (and in fact the wider region) that Bath City Council supports the deal to set up a Combined Transport Authority. Whilst there are concerns about the role of a Metro Mayor for the rural South West, this area needs the £1 billion per annum with which that role is endowed and more particularly the devolved powers over local rail and bus services. Whilst I would concede that it would be more realistic if the role included Somerset, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire, enabling cross-boundary work to be properly funded - as yesterday's meeting looking at the provision of sustainable transport options to the east of Bath made clear. However, with the Metro Mayor's £1bn pa the area could work in co-operation with those counties in order to improve transport provision not only to Westbury and Corsham, but also Warminster, Frome, Radstock and Gloucester.

I am not saying that I believe the various campaign groups want a mayor, but they would certainly not thank you for turning your backs on a £1 bn per annum funding opportunity, with powers to improve bus services and contracts to create more new bus stations, hubs and infrastructure, along with powers over Network Rail to improve stations, facilities, shelters and disabled access requirements. Were we in Birmingham, West Midlands and Yorkshire, these decisions would be straightforward and commonplace - let us make them commonplace here too.

Thank you.