

Whilst we welcome the Devolution deal the issues about transport powers are a concern on how it will be possible to operate and franchise a bus network that does not cover the four unitary authorities in terms of a franchise or a quality partnership where buses operate between UWE - Portishead and Clevedon would be outside the agreement. Similarly bus services through Hotwells, Clevedon and Weston would have to operate under the permit system under the Buses Bill or would require a separate quality partnership covering North Somerset by the new combined authority to cover North Somerset either as an advanced quality partnership or an enhanced quality partnership. It would also require a different agreement for a multi-journey, multi-operator and multi-modal ticketing scheme and North Somerset would still require referral to the Traffic Commissioner for services whereas the Metro-Mayor would have full control over the bus services through contracts or partnerships. Of course this would also apply to a Planning or Transport Commissioner.

On rail it would be very difficult to arrange improvements to services without the full Portishead line being in the deal and the line from Gloucester to Weston-Super-Mare. This would make station improvements very difficult or to seek rail powers for MetroWest with the franchise and Network Rail.

Of course the Bristol Port and airport remain outside of the combined authority.

With regards to bus powers under the Buses Bill whilst the First depots in Lawrence Hill, Hengrove, Muller Road, Bath Weston Island and the Wessex depots at Avonmouth and Keynsham and HCT's depot at Parson Street would be in the combined authority area, Weston and Wells depots would remain outside the area in North Somerset and Mendip making bus operations very difficult without North Somerset being in the transport authority area.

Arrangements would have to be made with Wiltshire, Gloucestershire and Somerset to procure bus services which needs further consultation with those councils.

With the EU proposed exit we are concerned with the infrastructure money for MetroWest and the electrification money which is EU funded under the TENS programme.

David Redgewell SWTN/TSSA