

David Redgewell (South West Transport Network and Bus Users South West) – Cabinet 10 July 2019

There are areas which need further work especially as we have no coach strategy whereas coaches are an important part of the local tourism economy (Bristol is the Gateway to the South West and Bath its major tourism destination). More needs to be done on integrating buses, coaches, taxis, ferries and trains – there need to be well designed interchanges that are properly funded, accessible to all and provided with essential passenger facilities such as public toilets – a view shared by the transport Trade Unions. We also support more taxi ranks in Bath City Centre and want them to be accessible for the benefit of all but particularly the disabled.

On ticketing we are very pleased with the Freedom Ticket – it is valid on all operators and all bus and train services across the Greater Bristol travel to work area.

On Transport security there is still much more to be done and the WECA authorities, the Police and British Transport Police should ensure that we have a safe and secure public transport system where anti-social behaviour is quickly dealt with.

On rail we have already raised issues on Temple Meads station in particular but there is more to be done especially with disruptive drunken passengers passing through major stations including Temple Meads and Bath Spa. We need high quality public transport interchanges like at Bristol Parkway as it is a gateway for people travelling around North Bristol, going to Cheltenham Racecourse, Cardiff Millenium Stadium and eventually the Bristol Filton Arena.

The MetroWest schemes are now funded and we look forward to seeing progress on the suburban rail network. Work must be completed on Stapleton Road, Lawrence Hill and Parson Street stations to make them fully accessible and we ask Network Rail to engage and deliver on these projects together with a reopened Saltford station. We also believe that all suburban Rail stations should have CCTV to add an extra layer of security and safety. Finally we must see the completion of the electrification of the suburban rail network to allow more faster, better and cleaner trains all helping to improve air quality and attracting more people out of their cars.

The 14 HST sets stored at Long Marston should be reinstated for use on the GWR network to reduce overcrowding on both the Bristol - Weymouth and Cardiff Central - Portsmouth Harbour services in particular but also for sporting and other major events around the region including the Bridgwater Carnival and Bristol Harbour Festival.

Looking ahead we want to see the development of the light rail rapid transit corridors to Bristol Airport, Cribbs Causeway, the Midland Railway line to Bath via Mangotsfield and tram-trains on the rail line from Frome to Radstock and Shepton Mallet.

We would also welcome North Somerset Council joining WECA so there is a strong region wide voice – in fact the whole South West Region needs one body at a sub national level to make the case to government.