

Statement from David Redgewell – South West Transport Network

With the tourist industry reopening in Bath, Somerset and the Bristol city region - please will Banes and WECA mayoral transport authority protect bus stops especially around public houses and restaurants, especially with tables and chairs outside and take account of public transport users and those with disabilities.

I am concerned about the control of areas around the public transport interchange in Dorchester Street and Brunel Square. We welcome the social distancing measures in Bath bus and railway station and bus stops and the return of National Express Coach services and priority for disabled passengers where social distancing is very important.

This applies to Keynsham town centre, Radstock town centre, Paulton and Midsomer Norton. These areas need to be safe from people drinking on tables on pavements.

On public transport we are still concerned about the WECA mayoral transport authority, not restarting bus services on the following routes out of Banes.

These are under Covid-19 bus operators grant:

Route 18 - Bath spa Bus and coach station to Saltford, Keynsham, Odland Common, North Common, Warmley, Kingswood, Hillfields, Staple Hill, Downend, UWE bus station, Bristol Parkway and Cribbs Causeway bus station

Route 37 - Bath spa bus station and coach station Weston, RUH back entrance, Kelston, Bitton, Longwell Green, Hanham, St George, Lawrence Hill station and Bristol bus and coach station

Route 19 - Bath spa bus station to Weston, RUH back entrance, Kelston, Bitton, Cadbury Heath, Warmley, Kingswood, Hillfields, Staple Hill, Downend, UWE bus station, Bristol Parkway station and Cribbs Causeway bus station.

Evening service.

178 - Radstock, Midsomer Norton, Paulton, Clutton, Pensford, Whitchurch, Knowle, Bristol Temple Meads station, and Bristol bus station.

Still no weekend service. 96 Brislington to Hengrove Hospital in south Bristol.

Connections for buses from Bath and Keynsham at Brislington, and for buses from A37 villages at Knowle - one of the main community hospitals in North East Somerset.

We would like to understand why WECA failed to bid for rural bus service grants, especially with the need to improve public transport in rural areas in North East Somerset. and South Gloucestershire.

We are very concerned about the lack of progress in North Somerset Council joining the West of England Combined Authority. For the mayoral election in 2021 if First

cannot provide these services then why can't small bus operators under contract to the WECA mayoral transport authority or sub-contracted by First Group.

It's very disappointing that many bus services are not being restored by the WECA mayoral transport authority from 5th July 2020. Can this urgently be raised with WECA mayoral transport authority?

On railways we welcome the train service extension to Westbury via Keynsham, Oldfield Park, Bath Spa, Freshford, Avoncliffe, Bradford on Avon, Trowbridge, and Westbury.

Allowing investigation of St Anne's Park and Saltford station is welcome, Wiltshire Council are looking at Corsham and Royal Wootton Bassett. We need also to ask the Department for Transport to stop cutting up HST rolling stock which are required for social distancing.

On trunk railway services, from the South West via Bristol Temple Meads and Bristol Parkway, to Birmingham New Street, Midlands, Manchester, the North East and Scotland the needs of disabled people and blind people need to be addressed.

In social distancing measures, for outdoor table service in the street. especially in Bath we also welcome the review of public toilets in Bath and North East Somerset but would like to see public toilets at Avon Street coach station.

We need to look at any extra money for public toilets from central government.

We have no WECA mayoral transport forum on Zoom - Can we set up a forum?

Also WECA has no public transport information help line.

We are unhappy WECA did not bid for rural bus grants.

We still need to see the Transport Board meeting in public like all other combined authorities.

We support the closure of Keynsham High street for social distancing, providing that bus facilities are provided toward Bath in Ashton way with waiting shelters.

Kind regards
David Redgewell