

STATEMENT FROM DAVID REDGEWELL – PUBLIC TRANSPORT ISSUES

Bus services provided by the West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority and BANES Council.

Whilst we welcome the mayor's renewal of the Bath Park and Ride services contract, we hope that the contractor can provide sufficient staff i.e. drivers, mechanics, engineers, inspectors and cleaners to maintain the service. Currently, both First Group West of England buses and Stagecoach West buses are struggling to maintain their bus fleets.

One of the proposals by the West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority's Mayor Dan Norris and Bath and North East Council is to run Sunday and evening services to the Odd Down Park and Ride site which is an expensive way to do it. The evening and Sunday services could be provided by using buses from the 171,172,173 routes to Bath Spa Bus and Coach Station to serve Odd Down Park and Ride services via Wellsway. These services should call at local bus stops like the Lansdown Park and Ride services do. The Bath City Centre to Newbridge Park and Ride services could also call at local stops.

Services like the A4 Bristol Airport shuttle and X39 also operate to Bath Spa Bus and Coach Station and could service the Park and Ride site.

The Bristol City Centre Arnos Vale - Brislington Park and Ride service via Bristol Temple Meads station could be merged with the following services :-

route 349 Bus and Coach Station - Bristol Temple Meads - Arnos Vale - Brislington - Keynsham.

route 178 Bristol Bus and Coach Station - Bristol Temple Meads station - Arnos Vale - Brislington - Keynsham - Marksbury - Timsbury - Paulton - Midsomer Norton - Westfield and Radstock.

route X39 Bristol Bus and Coach Station - Bristol Temple Meads station - Arnos Vale - Brislington - Keynsham - Saltford - Newbridge - Bath Spa Bus and Coach Station.

All of these services pass Brislington Park and Ride site and could stop there along with service 36 Bristol City Centre to Brislington village via St Annes and service A4 Bath Spa Bus and Coach Station via Saltford - Keynsham - Brislington - Hengrove - Bishopsworth and Bristol Airport.

Oxford, Salisbury, Taunton and Exeter all use local bus services to serve their Park and Ride sites. This is the way to save money. We have a shortfall in funding for tendered services from September 2022.

For service 8 Bath City Centre to Kingsway, service 79 Bath Spa Bus and Coach Station to Marshfield via the village in Swineford, services 6, 7 Larkhall and Fairfield to Bath Guildhall need to run into the Bath Spa Bus and Coach Station itself.

There are a number of rural bus services on the Mayor Dan Norris's tendered list which are important to maintain and cutting local bus services linking communities to schools colleges university campuses, work, shopping, health care facilities, hospitals, leisure and tourism sites is unacceptable. Therefore, we must be careful not to use up all of our precious levelling-up funding on Bath and Bristol Park and Ride services.

We need to have a full recovery plan from First Group West of England buses over the May Day weekend. We could see service 349 failure on services from Bristol Bus and Coach Station - Bristol Temple Meads - Arnos Vale - Brislington - Keynsham.

service X39/39 Bristol Bus and Coach Station, Arnos Vale - Brislington - Keynsham - Saltford - Newbridge - Weston - Bath Spa Bus and Coach Station.

services 3 Bath City Centre - Bathford evening services.

Saturday night services 2/ 2a Stockwood - Hengrove - Knowle - Bristol Temple Meads - City Centre - Clifton Down station - Southmead Hospital Bus Station - Henbury and Cribbs Causeway Bus and Coach Station.

service 376 Bristol Bus and Coach Station - Bristol Temple Meads station - Hengrove - Whitchurch - Pensford - Clutton - Farrington Gurney - Chewton Mendip - Wells Bus Station - Glastonbury and Street.

We need a recovery plan on First Group West of England buses using agency drivers, increase driver recruitment and retention, bringing in bus drivers to Bath and Bristol depots at weekends from First Group South West depots in Bridgwater, Taunton, Minehead and Yeovil and other First Group depots with more engineering staff, inspectors and cleaners.

BANES Council must talk to the Metro Mayor who is in charge of Transport and Don Davies leader of North Somerset Council because of the joint bus service improvement plan. On the 2nd of July 2022 West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority Mayor Dan Norris and North Somerset Council have to produce a services improvement plan ready for October 2022 covering commercial and tendered services.

Rail service issues

With limited services on our railway network from Bristol Temple Meads, Keynsham, Oldfield Park, Bath Spa, Freshford, Bradford on Avon, Trowbridge, Westbury, Warminster and Frome we have railway cuts on the Great Malvern, Malvern Links, Worcester Foregate Street, Worcester Shrub Hill, Tewkesbury for Ashchurch, Cheltenham Spa, Gloucester Central, Cam and Dursley, Yate, Bristol Parkway, Filton Abbey Wood, Bristol Temple Meads, Keynsham, Oldfield Park, Bath Spa, Freshford, Avoncliff, Bradford on Avon, Trowbridge, Westbury, Warminster, Salisbury, Romsey, Southampton Central, Fareham, Portsmouth Harbour, Chichester, Worthing and Brighton.

This local service operated by First Group Great western railway was withdrawn in May 2022 by the Department of Transport which reduces train services across the Greater Bristol and Bath city region.

We support the journey to Net Zero between the West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority and BANES Council for introducing a mass transit system between Bath Spa Bus and Coach Station, Weston, Newbridge, Saltford, Keynsham, Brislington, Arnos Vale, Bristol Temple Meads and Bristol Bus and Coach station.

Transport hubs and interchanges.

These are needed in Peasedown St John, Radstock, Westfield, Midsomer Norton, Paulton, Keynsham, Whitchurch, Brislington/Hicks Gate, Odd Down/ Newbridge/Lansdown Park and Ride sites, Cherry Gardens Bitton, Pensford and Farrington Gurney for the Chew Valley, at Bristol Airport and Weston Super Mare.

Bus priority measures and cycling facilities are required between Bath Spa Bus and Coach Station to Peasedown St John, Radstock, Westfield, Midsomer Norton Paulton, Chilcompton, Wells bus station, Street, Glastonbury, Wells Bus and Coach Station, Chewton Mendip, Farrington Gurney, Clutton, Pensford, Whitchurch, Hengrove, Knowle, Bristol Temple Meads station and Bristol Bus and Coach Station. Cycle hubs should be available at Park and Ride sites and interchanges with waiting rooms cycle hire, scooter hire, coach parking with a bus depot at Odd Down Park and Ride site.

A mass transit system for the Bristol - Bath City Region

this should run between Bath Spa Bus and Coach Station, Weston, Newbridge, Saltford, Keynsham, Brislington, along the North Somerset Railway corridor, Bristol Temple Meads station, Cabot Circus and Bristol Bus and Coach Station. Also from Bath Bus and Coach Station to Peasedown St John, Radstock, Westfield, Midsomer Norton and Paulton/Shepton Mallet.

We still need a replacement coach station in Avon Street with toilets and cafe.

Bath Spa Bus and Coach Station needs regeneration with more seats and railway/coach arrival/departure screens. It should also show bus departures in Dorchester Street/Malvern Street and it needs a travel centre/ tourist information centre.

Linear bus gates are required to the bus/coach and rail station. The West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority officers are currently redesigning the bus and coach station in Bath.

There is also the issue as to whether the West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority should take over control of Bristol and Bath Spa bus stations like other combined authorities including Greater Manchester and West Midlands run by mayors Andy Burnham and Andy Street.

The Government levelling up white paper from Michael Gove and Grant Shapps Secretary of State for Transport is welcomed.

The transfer of transport and Planning to the region's mayor Dan Norris including the LEP Committee and North Somerset Council joining is also welcomed. The joint committee need to remain part of the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority and North Somerset Council With responsibility for Metro West, bus service improvement plans with North Somerset Council, the strategic transport network, mass transit light rail, Metro Bus, regional planning and the Western Gateway Transport Board jointly with the South west transport Board.

We support the RPZ around Oldfield Park and Westmoreland and support joint working between Dan Norris Metro Mayor in charge of Transport and BANES councillor Sarah Warren Transport Executive.

David Redgewell South West Transport Network and Railfuture (Severnside).

Ian Beckey Somerset Catch the Bus Campaign & Gloucestershire Catch the Bus Campaign.

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