FOSBR response to West of England Bus Strategy March 2020

FOSBR have the following comments on the proposals in the draft Bus Strategy.

Page 9 Current network/Future network design

"Core urban routes would reduce in number but could operate at high frequencies of every 5-6 minutes, and where possible run as cross-city services to increase the range of direct destinations. Establishing a small number of frequent orbital services would provide a better integrated network of radial and orbital routes. Well-designed neighborhood interchanges…."

The only way to achieve modal shift is to provide turn up and go services for both bus and train services (as the latter will bypass congestion). Interchanges will best support this aim. Where routes are rationalized to achieve this frequency, we support the Transport for Greater Bristol aspiration that every home should be within 400m of a bus stop/train station.

Page 10-12 Better interchange

"Most interchanges would be accommodated on existing roads by moving bus stops closer together, providing good walking routes between them and better lighting and information."

"The number of destinations available via inter-urban services will be significantly increased if interchange opportunities with other bus services and rail services are encouraged…. transfer hubs such as peripheral shopping centres, P&R sites and other major public destination points."

"Low-frequency rural services operate as feeders into longer distance inter-urban services at peripheral transfer hubs."

The document refers to rail interchange for inter-urban bus services. Urban bus services can also utilise urban rail stations as interchange hubs. The bus network needs to be integrated with the emerging MetroWest rail network by bus-rail interchange at all stations where possible.

Improved bus-rail interchange can be achieved by:

- prominent signposting of station from bus stops and vice versa, with maps if necessary
- live bus departure information on exit from station, also live train departure times visible from bus stops
- "alight here for…..." at rail stations on key bus corridors
- improvement of walking routes
- re-positioning of bus stops
- re-naming bus stops
- timetable alignment – if bus frequency is every 5-6 minutes and local train frequency is every 15-20 minutes then hub connections are attractive to users, however start and end time of daily timetables needs to align

These bus-rail interchange improvements are required at all stations including:

- Bristol Temple Meads station – lack of clarity on bus stops on exit from station. The Temple Meads masterplan aims to move terminating buses to the Friary. Metrobus M1 stops on Temple Way. Other inter-town buses and local buses stop variously at Temple Way and Temple Gate, up to 250m from the station.
- Bristol Parkway station – Metrobus M1 needs to stop here, as do the JLTP4 orbital ring-road buses
- Avonmouth – bus stops on Avonmouth Road and McLaren Road
- Bedminster station – bus stops on Dalby Avenue and East Street
- Clifton Down station – bus stops on Whiteladies Road
- Filton Abbey Wood station – bus stops should be on Filton Avenue opposite Nutfield Grove, ideally a bus gate would allow bus flow from Nutfield Grove to Emma-Chris Way
- Lawrence Hill station – bus stops on Church Road
- Montpelier station – bus stops on Gloucester Road and Cromwell Road
- Nailsea & Backwell station – bus stops on Station Road / airport shuttle bus
- Parson Street – bus stops on West Street, Hartcliffe Way and Bedminster Down Road
- Redland station – bus stops on South Road and Redland Grove
- Sea Mills – bus stops on Portway for P&R
- Severn Beach – bus stops for local services on Station Road
- Shirehampton – bus stops on Portway for P&R
- Stapleton Road station - bus stop locations and name on Stapleton Road could be improved
- Worle station – A3 bus to airport, bus interchange to Weston-super-Mare
- Ashley Down – bus stops on Muller Road and Shaldon Road
- Ashton Gate station – Metrobus stop closer to Ashton Gate station and to Ashton Gate stadium
- Henbury – bus stops on Wyck Beck Road
- Horfield/Constable Road station - hospital shuttle buses to Southmead

- North Filton – Metrobus interchange
- Pilning – bus stop for Severnside Metrobus (once a sensible rail service re-introduced) and local services
- Portway Parkway station – P&R
- Pill, Portishead and other JLTP4 stations to be delivered

Page 14 Priority infrastructure

"Bus priority measures such as bus lanes and bus-only roads will play a critical role in the successful remodeling of the network"

"Our JLTP has already highlighted that the delivery of traffic restraint mechanisms such as congestion charge and workplace parking levy would increase the number of people taking the bus or train or cycling."

FOSBR agrees that it will be necessary to re-allocate road space to public transport corridors such as bus and tram, with interchange to rail which bypasses road congestion.

Page 16 Simple, smart and convenient ticketing

"As a principle smart payments and ticketing should include…. integration with public transport modes (eg, rail, ferry) to enable seamless travel"

The smart ticketing features (contactless, pay-as-you-go) should apply to multi-operator and multi-mode journeys. This is particularly important as bus network re-design in favour of interchange will make bus-rail combination journeys more widespread.

Bus and train operators also need to provide clear guidance on reciprocal ticket acceptance at times of disruption.

Page 17 High quality, consistent and easily understood information

"Providing a single accessible place for clear, comprehensive and reliable information on travel options is essential for achieving seamless door-to-door journeys, it provides people with the confidence to travel by public transport and active travel modes"

The document refers to a "Bus Information Strategy", but this information strategy needs to incorporate passenger transport information for all travel modes.

Bus and train operators also need to provide clear information at times of disruption, where drivers/staff members need to be aware of alternative route plans.

Page 18 A safe, pleasant and comfortable customer experience

"The strategy will aim to focus on improving various aspects on the end to end passenger journey, including…. Well laid out stopping facilities with generous weather protection, lighting and information."

Bus network re-design in favour of interchange will make bus-rail combination journeys more widespread. There is inconvenience associated with utilizing more than one means of transport. Inconvenience can be mitigated by the above ticketing and information measures, and also with comfortable shelters both at bus stops and on station platforms.

Page 20 Modern, clean, accessible buses that contribute to reducing transport's harmful emissions

"New buses emit far lower tailpipe emissions than those they replace. In the West of England we have made significant progress in reducing emissions, such as through the use of biofuel for the metrobus fleet and hybrid vehicles on the Bath P&R services."

Air quality will also be impacted by non-tailpipe toxic particulate pollution through wear on tyres and brakes. Metal wheels such as on railway or tram tracks have low rolling resistance so produce less particulate pollution.

To support the climate emergency measures referred to in the introduction to the document, bus fleets should be zero carbon rather than just low emission.

The biggest measure to combat air quality would be a M32 P&R, associated with a bus or tram route into the centre. This P&R needs to be connected via orbital bus routes to Bristol Parkway station and other Park&Ride sites such as Hicks Gate, which may eventually involve a Park&Rail facility.

In conclusion, the Bus Strategy is high level and contains little detail of routes, prioritisation or funding strategy. Bristol's traffic congestion and air pollution problems need urgent resolution. The strategy contains very few mentions of rail considering the benefits to be gained by closer integration of bus and train services.