



Campaigning for rail at the core of an integrated transport network for Bristol, Bath and the West of England

Portishead Branch Line – MetroWest Phase 1 Statement to West of England Combined Authority Committee - Friday, 1st July

FoSBR were pleased to see a diverse cross-section of local groups and individuals attend our recent event at Pill in support of the Portishead Railway reopening. All were united by a desire to see the MetroWest Portishead project completed. Local councillors, residents and transport campaigners were there. We also received messages of support from MPs whose constituencies the line will serve. There can be no doubt that project is widely supported.

We now call on the West of England Combined Authority, North Somerset Council and the DfT to ensure that this scheme is funded. This is a generational opportunity to transform travel in the region, which must not be lost.

Here are a few of the comments we received:

Reintroducing passenger services on the Portishead line is part of establishing a modern transport network for our area, similar to those being developed in other city regions in the UK. If we are to take the environment and climate change seriously then modal shift to connected trains, trams and buses is essential. Re-opening the Portishead line to passengers is one of the easiest ways to start this vital process.

Martin Garrett, Transport for Greater Bristol

I'm supporting FoSBR in reopening Portishead Rail line.

Cllr David Wilcox, Lockleaze

Local residents and indeed rail travellers from the Bristol region as a whole have been kept waiting long enough for this new embodiment of an old line. It is now vital from many viewpoints, from ease and convenience for local commuters to feeding into the wider West Country and indeed nation-wide response to the current and worsening state of Climate Emergency. Thank you Central Government for what you can do to facilitate this, as locally it has (mainly for funding reasons) come to an impasse! -

Anna G, local resident

Railfuture welcome the proposed reopening of the Bristol Temple Meads to Bedminster, Parson Street, Pill and Portishead railway and call on Grant Shapps to fund the missing £15.5 million to allow the line to open as part of MetroWest .

David Redgewell, Rail Future Severnside

Climate change is most serious and needs cars off the road soonest. This vital MetroWest project will support employment opportunities. It is ready to go and has been delayed twice without good reason. It would be utterly shameful to lose it now. Delivering Portishead is key to unlocking MetroWest. This is a major opportunity to deliver a significant change in rail provision in the West of England.

Roger English, Portishead Railway Group

This is important environmentally as it will enable a shift of commuter traffic into Bristol from cars to rail, giving 50,000 people access to low-carbon transport.

Simon Baughen

The Clean Air Zone is coming and we need more positive options to get people out of their cars. This is vital for our economy - as well as keeping Bristol a comfortable place to live. The Portishead line is a key, much-awaited-for next step in our transport revolution - please just get on with it!

Nikki Jones, local resident

In addition, we received these messages of support from people who were unable to attend. The line passes through Bristol South as well as North Somerset. Both local MPs strongly support this investment:

“As you know, for over 20 years I have campaigned tirelessly to see Portishead’s railway restored. I believe we are within touching distance now as I set out in the Commons last week. For a relatively small sum of money from the Dept of Transport we can bring environmental, transport and economic gains not only to the people of Portishead but to our wider area. It can and should be a real win-win. Thank you to all of you who have kept faith and given your support.

Dr Liam Fox, North Somerset MP

Local rail is crucial to provide low carbon travel options. The re-opening of the passenger line to Portishead would transform travel for those living near Parson Street and Bedminster stations, including for the hundreds of new residents who will be occupying the homes already under construction in BS3. I thank Friends of Suburban Bristol Railways for highlighting this important issue. This week I pressed government to do more to get the line open, and I welcomed the Minister’s commitment to reconnecting communities to the railway.

Karin Smith, Bristol South MP

"The Portishead line is an essential element in Bristol’s plans to tackle congestion, pollution and carbon emissions. We hope it will go ahead as soon as possible." -

Cllr Don Alexander, Cabinet Member for Transport, Bristol

Thanks FoSBR for another reminder about how important delivering the Portishead Line remains and how govt funding critical to resolving engineering/ecology/service etc issues.

Cllr Mark Bradshaw, Bedminster

Tim Weekes
FoSBR