

Board Meeting Draft Minutes

Wednesday 6th Dec 2023, 14:00 to 16:00.

Location: County Hall, Trowbridge and online

Attendees (in person)	
Name	Organisation
<i>Cllr David Gray</i>	<i>Gloucestershire County Council</i>
<i>Cllr Don Alexander</i>	<i>Bristol City Council</i>
<i>Cllr Chris Wilmore</i>	<i>South Gloucestershire Council</i>
<i>Cllr Caroline Thomas</i>	<i>Wiltshire Council</i>
<i>Cllr Vikki Slade</i>	<i>Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP)</i>
<i>Allan Creedy</i>	<i>Wiltshire Council</i>
<i>Andrew Whitehead</i>	<i>South Gloucestershire Council</i>
<i>Ewan Wilson</i>	<i>Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP)</i>
<i>James White</i>	<i>West of England Combined Authority</i>
<i>Arina Salhotra</i>	<i>Sphere Marketing</i>
<i>Alice Darley</i>	<i>National Highways</i>
<i>Ola Hussien</i>	<i>West of England Combined Authority</i>
<i>Julian McLaughlin</i>	<i>Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP)</i>
<i>Jack Wiltshire</i>	<i>Dorset Council</i>
<i>Mena Abidakun</i>	<i>West of England Combined Authority</i>
<i>Hannah Fountain</i>	<i>West of England Combined Authority</i>
Attendees (online)	
<i>Orlagh Stoner</i>	<i>Gloucestershire County Council</i>
<i>Michaela Bushell</i>	<i>Sphere Marketing</i>
<i>Cllr Ray Bryan</i>	<i>Dorset Council</i>
<i>David Glinos</i>	<i>Department for Transport</i>
<i>Cllr Manda Rigby</i>	<i>Bath and North East Somerset</i>
<i>Louise McBride</i>	<i>West of England Combined Authority</i>
Apologies were received from:	
<i>Mayor Dan Norris</i>	<i>West of England Combined Authority</i>
<i>Mike O’Dowd Jones</i>	<i>Somerset Council</i>
<i>Sam Howell</i>	<i>Wiltshire Council</i>
<i>Cllr Sarah Warren</i>	<i>Bath and North East Somerset Council</i>
<i>Julian McLaughlin</i>	<i>Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole</i>

<i>Bill Davies</i>	<i>West of England CA</i>
<i>Cllr Steve Pearce</i>	<i>Bristol City Council</i>
<i>Cllr Hannah Young</i>	<i>North Somerset Council</i>
<i>Matt Haywood</i>	<i>Network Rail</i>
<i>Colin Chick</i>	<i>Gloucestershire County Council</i>
<i>Pam Turton</i>	<i>Bath and North East Somerset Council</i>
<i>Nigel Riglar</i>	<i>South Gloucestershire Council</i>
<i>Steve Thorne</i>	<i>North Somerset Council</i>

Actions & Decisions	Allocated to	Target Date:
Amend minutes of previous meeting	HF	07/12
Responses requested from DfT: 1) Confirm whether Plan for Drivers would have any impact on plans in the pipeline for LAs to enforce moving traffic offences via ANPR 2) Whether Westerleigh Junction will feature in future rail improvement plans 3) Background evidence and rationale for Level 4 devolution framework	DG	
Rail report to be circulated, questions to Matt Haywood	HF/All	
Circulate RIS3 consultation data when available	AD	
Invite Jamie Rockhill (Network Rail, Wessex) to future meetings	WG	
Confirm date of next Board meeting	WG	
Set up supplementary meetings for STP Project Board	WG	
Draft outline Business Plan (DfT template). DA and CT to approve	WG, DA, CT	31/12

Item No	Notes / Actions
1	Welcome, apologies and introductions – Allan Creedy
2	<p>Minutes and actions from the previous meeting - Chair</p> <p>Minutes accepted. Cllr Steve Pearce to be added as representative of WECA mayor. ACTION HF.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <p>(JW) Centre of Excellence work has had to be deferred due to pressures with priority workload</p> <p>(HF) Similar situation with Cycling Strategy. Work profile will be determined when approach to STP has been agreed</p> <p>(JW) Cheltenham Spa – ditto</p> <p>(JW) EV Study will be presented today</p> <p>Actions relating to impacts of A417 were completed by Alice Darley (NH) shortly after the Sept meeting</p>

3	<p>Public Participation - Chair</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions or Representations from members of the public in line with the Board's Public Participation Scheme. None received for this meeting.
4	<p>Updates from Associate Members – in addition to written updates, verbal updates from those attending where relevant.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department for Transport (DfT) – David Glinos • Network Rail – Matt Haywood • National Highways – Alice Darley <p>DfT (DG): Circulated update note from DfT yesterday. Main announcements since Sept Meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Changes at DfT – SoS remains as previous. New ministers include Guy Opperman, Anthony Browne and Lord Davies of Gower. Guy Opperman leads on local transport, buses, active travel and highways maintenance. Huw Merriman leads on regions, devolution and rail. - Network North. £36Bn saved from cancellation of northern leg of HS2 will be re-invested into a portfolio of schemes across the country - Plan for Drivers. Measures aimed at ensuring LAs use their powers fairly and proportionately. Details will be worked up over coming weeks, in discussion with local authorities. <p>Network North announcement included potential uplifts in funding for proposals in the programme that have not yet reached final business case stage, to help relieve impacts of inflation. Includes £140M notional allocation for south and south west.</p> <p>MRN announcement – second round of MRN2 programme in the Spring for south of country inc south west. Further details forthcoming.</p> <p>Highways Maintenance – all English LAs outside Midlands and North will benefit from £2.8Bn over 10 years for re-surfacing. Confirmation letters sent out to LA last week re uplifts on 23/24 and 24/25 allowance.</p> <p>Rail investments announced to fund development of schemes up to construction. Cullompton and Wellington stations, plus line from Tavistock -Plymouth.</p> <p>£2 bus fare extended to Dec '24. BSIP pot will extend beyond 2025 subject to Spending Review.</p> <p>ZEBRA2 – 56 expressions of interest received, LAs now working intensely on final submissions by 15th Dec. £129M available.</p> <p>New guidance and calculator launched for concessionary fares.</p> <p>ATE have informed LAs of revenue and capital allocations for active travel.</p> <p>Indicative allocation for CRSTS2 funding £752M to WECA for 5 years from 2027. Cllr Thomas – with regard to Plan for Drivers. Is there any impact on pipeline plans for ANPR enforcement of moving traffic offences? DG – had no indication that this would be affected but will confirm. ACTION DG</p> <p>Cllr Wilmore – thanked DG. 1) Asked about Westerleigh Junction, as of regional and national rail significance. 2) In last meeting, advised LAs to progress with LTPs in absence of guidance – assume no movement on this? 3) MRN – to what extent will the Spring allocation be affected by possible incoming government and Spending Review? 4) Would be good to understand the evidence work behind the Level 4 devolution framework. DG – No further news on LTP guidance or indication of when it will be released. MRN – can't answer that as would be a decision for incoming government. MRN affected in the same way as any other policy or spending decision.</p>

Westerleigh Junction – take that away for response from rail team **ACTION DG.**
Devolution Framework – need to take away for response from DLUHC team. **ACTION DG.**

Cllr Alexander – any advice on the timing of production of our STP?

DG – we are keen. It's a no. 1 priority for Ministers for STBs to have a plan in place. Peninsula have agreed today to go out to consultation with their plan in the next few days. Would be advantageous to have an STP in place before any incoming government, though appreciate that may not be possible from this position. "Sooner rather than later" is the message.

Network Rail (MH via JW):

Matt Haywood from Network Rail not present but sent written update, read by JW:

Cancellation of HS2 has meant that funding will instead be going to Midlands Rail Hub with benefits for WG in the form of improved links from Birmingham to Cheltenham and Bristol.

Notes WG funded project are progressing well, with potential to continue into 2024/24 e.g. Cheltenham bay platform, Heart of Wessex line.

Rail studies progressing in Salisbury and Wilts identifying future investment needs for both infrastructure and service improvement needs. And have started work on discussing opportunities to resolve the "major regional bottleneck" at Westerleigh Junction

Productive ongoing work with WG, and with others e.g. GWR, EEH etc on Bristol – Oxford services.

ACTION: WG circulate report. Questions welcomed to MH to follow.

National Highways (AD):

Update on RIS 3 (*Slides*)

NH have worked with STB officers in partnership on development of RIS3. Commonality in themes raised = consistent message to ministers:

- Decarbonisation
- Mode shift and separation of traffic
- Transport integration and end-to-end journeys
- Lorry parking, driver facilities and freight routes
- Maintenance, but not at the expense of small schemes and enhancements
- Analytical approach to business cases and performance

Broad support on many areas of RIS3 and direction of travel. Some areas of challenge and others where the challenge is to go further/faster.

RIS3 consultation showed that STBs placed the greatest importance on Growing the Economy (ranked 1 out of 6), whereas this was the second least important to the full range of respondents (ranked 5 out of 6).

STBs showed much stronger support for the RIS2 priorities around safety and making the most of the network than other respondents (who expressed more muted support).

All respondents (inc STBs) felt the government was not going far and fast enough towards decarbonisation, so support for NH's descriptions of these priorities was lower.

ACTION: AD to circulate this data and any supporting/additional

Disappointment there is not a focus on traffic reduction – all scenarios prepare for vehicle growth.

Organisations tended to focus more on decarbonisation, less on freight.

Individuals focused on issues affecting the customer – safety, customer experience, information.

	<p>Work ongoing to determine how the Level of Service needs to be adapted in light of customer responses, data being refreshed and feedback considered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identification of customer needs in each part of the country <p>Route Strategies being refreshed with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stronger thread between Connecting the Country and Route Strategies - Greater focus on community severance - Greater consideration of alternative modes and integration - Additional locations proposed <p>RIS3 timeline: Next public milestone is publication of draft RIS. Going through last round of ministerial review, so hopefully just after Christmas. That is when statement of funds will be confirmed. Likely to be constrained by financial situation. Detailed report on RIS with background data should come out soon (next month or so).</p> <p>Other updates: Call for landowners to help with tree planting – 600,000 a year from next Autumn.</p> <p>Had visit from SoS looking at earthworks and planting at Crickley Hill. Scheme won award for responding to stakeholder views.</p> <p>M49 link road at Avonmouth has received PP from South Glos council.</p> <p>(EW) – added additional info re rail on the southern half of WG rail network. Suggested we invite Jamie Rockhill to provide updates on Wessex route in future. ACTION: WG</p> <p>Dorset Connectivity Study published in 2021. Since then, NR have completed strategic station plans for Wareham and Yeovil Junction to assess works required in response to the findings of that study. Strategic station plan for Bournemouth starting – timetabling and understanding infrastructure that would be required for Dorset Metro.</p>
5	<p>Electric Vehicle Charging Study – George Godfrey, WSP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - presentation from WSP - approval of EV Charging Study <u>Paper B</u> <p>OH introduced George Godfrey from WSP, who presented update slides.</p> <p>Overall aim of study: forecast charging requirements up to 2050, but with additional short-term focus up to 2030.</p> <p>Key Qs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How quickly will EV uptake happen? - Where will this occur? - How many chargers are required? <p>WSP product draws all the background evidence together into a simple tool that enables LAs to determine the answers to these questions. Identifies chargepoint location requirements down to 400 sq m level.</p> <p>Demand assessment is based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity to shift modes - Baseline data - Demographics - Availability of chargepoints and off-street parking

- Sales data – EVs and other vehicles

Barriers to uptake including land availability and grid connections are also assessed, as are potential future scenarios with respect to policy and consumer behaviour.

Data is assessed through bespoke model to predict pattern of future demand (origin, destination and en route charging).

Also enables LAs to identify where gaps in chargepoint provision will be left by commercial providers, so a filling strategy can be developed. Forecast that approx. 8,000 chargers will be required by 2030 (though a significant range of uncertainty).

Tool allows LAs to take an evidence-based approach to chargepoint and capacity provision in the future.

Provides graphs and spatial visualisation of EV uptake and chargepoint demand (residential and strategic) via a simple dashboard.

Can be used to:

- Inform EV Strategy
- Populate procurement tenders
- Identify chargepoint sites
- Plan long term roll out
- Calculate size of population benefit
- Develop interactive local chargepoint plans (Podaris)

Data has been produced and distributed to LAs. Next step will be to create an easy-to-use interactive dashboard.

Phase 2:

- Set up LA survey
- Set up officer working group
- Set up SW EV Forum
- Develop regional Western Gateway/South West EV strategy.

Cllr Slade – DNOs and grid capacity a key issue. How is this being resolved? Otherwise plans could be undeliverable for years.

GG – This is a barrier. DNOs working on solutions. Report identifies areas where power provision is a current constraint and where it is not. Need to be clear on roles and responsibilities - the grid issue is a national problem.

Cllr Thomas brought forward an example from her area where a charging site could not be approved due to grid capacity.

Cllr Wilmore – hoped we would have moved further on by now and some of these next steps might have been taken. Also wanted to check new ICE phase-out date had been incorporated into model. (Confirmed).

Cllr Alexander – Felt that the study provides the evidence and clear requirements ready to discuss meaningfully with DNOs. JW confirmed this is intended in the New Year.

Cllr Slade – is this entirely about domestic vehicles, or also about e.g. fleet cars and vans.
GG – this study focused on light vehicles = cars and vans. Not HGVs as the EV demand for these is only just emerging.

	<p>Cllr Gray – looking at ZapMap, the number of public chargers has increased by 53%. Concerned that the private investors are leaping ahead and make overtake our plans before they get off the page. How far has this been considered in the plans? GG – this is at the core of what we are doing. Talk to 10-15 providers regularly to see how the market is evolving. Industry considers that there will always be a role for LAs due to land ownership, access and responsibilities.</p> <p>Cllr Thomas – this has to be seen fundamentally as a planning issue, to ensure all new developments provide suitable.</p> <p>Cllr Alexander – now a divergence in LA policies regarding trailing cables on pavements. GG – recommends making a decision on this asap before people’s practise effectively determines policy through practise.</p>
6	<p>Strategic Transport Plan Update – James White <u>Paper A</u> (JW) shared slides. DG provided a description of the DfT background to STPs earlier.</p> <p>We have been holding a number of preparatory workshops with many different participants over the last 2 months. Had been developing a programme roughly lasting 12months, with a draft plan completed in June and then a final Plan in Dec.</p> <p>Since then, two things have happened:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Firmer encouragement from DfT to deliver a Plan as quickly as possible 2) Sight of Peninsula’s emerging STP, which is very focused and high level, coming in at little more than half a dozen pages. This has been accepted by DfT so provides an alternative to the current approach. <p>In this Board, we are therefore presenting two possible options:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The complete Plan as previously discussed with the Board, to include public consultation and a strategic investment plan, over a 12 month timeframe 2) A short version of a plan, which will not receive public consultation at this stage, but would do at a later stage, when the Strategic Investment Plan has been developed, the modelling produced and a sustainability appraisal underway. An initial Plan could be produced by Spring. <p>Cllr Gray – thinks the short version would be a good idea. Has high impact and meets DfT requirements. In favour of this option.</p> <p>Cllr Slade – in favour, though concerned about the timing of public consultation as current formulation “later in the year” is too woolly and may easily be endlessly deferred due to local and national elections. JW – have previously been advised by WECA’s Legal officer that this is business as usual, so not affected by pre-election periods. In an ideal world we would avoid consulting in pre-election period but if timescales are too tight we believe it would be acceptable to proceed.</p> <p>Cllr Bryan – agrees it should not be affected by pre-election period. Supportive of short version.</p> <p>Cllr Rigby – supporting Option 2, though suggests we take every opportunity for engagement during the process.</p>

	<p>Cllr Thomas – in favour. We can also properly use the outcomes of the Making the Right Choices consultation to inform next stages and prepare for future consultation on more detailed document.</p> <p>DG – Providing a bit of context. Peninsula agreed today to commence consultation. Still expecting to deliver a plan by March, but including consultation. Is there any scope to include an element of consultation but still have a plan by June/July?</p> <p>Cllr Alexander – united in support for shorter approach. Need to now set up meetings and next stages, being mindful of officer resource. ACTION: WG JW – it will be a challenging timeframe.</p>
7	<p>Programme Financial Update and Forward Decision plan – James White and Mena Abidakun</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme Financial Update, <u>Paper C</u> • Forward Decision Plan, <u>Paper D</u> <p><i>Note: papers are listed in the wrong order</i></p> <p>Table in report provides overview. Specific items</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rail schemes progressing as described earlier: Cheltenham, West of England between Salisbury - Yeovil, Bristol - Oxford - These look forward to potential workstreams for 2024/25 which also include aspirations for Dorset Metro, wider electrification and Westerleigh junction to follow imminently - Rural mobility – were hoping to have a stakeholder event next week but has been postponed to January, prob 11 or 12th - Alternative fuels has been given an Amber rating. We are expecting delivery of a tool to shortlist potential locations for alternative fuelling provision. Some delays with this at Midlands Connect (lead STB) - Coach study phase 2 commissioned - EV study has been completed and presented <p>Lots of work ongoing, all feeding into the strategic transport plan and wider STB objectives.</p> <p>Financial update – two tables at the end of the report set out expenditure so far. The spend for the current year appears to be a bit behind track, but there is also a lot of committed and pipeline work that is yet to be captured in the tables. Confident of spending full budget this year.</p> <p>Forward decision plan: Unfortunately some items expected at today’s Board have had to be pushed back to March Board or later due to need to focus efforts on STP.</p>
9	<p>AoB (to be previously advised to Allan Creedy, please (westerngateway_stb@westofengland-ca.gov.uk))</p> <p>New Business Plan guidance released yesterday requires us to submit a business plan for 2024/25 by the end of Dec. Cllr Alexander asked if Members would be in agreement with this being signed off as a delegated decision by Chair and vice-Chair?</p> <p>Cllr Slade asked if this would be circulated to Members before approval?</p> <p>Cllr Alexander confirmed he would be happy to do so.</p> <p>DG explained only a high level indicative plan is required at this stage. (Template has been provided). An indicative amount of funding has been published and guidance says this amount should be used as the basis for business planning. ACTION: WG, DA, CT</p> <p>Cllr Alexander highlighted that good work planned at Western Gateway could be facilitated by increased funding for officers.</p>

	<p>Members agreed that approval for the business plan could be delegated to Chair and Vice Chair.</p> <p>STB National conference on 28th Feb. Cllr Thomas stated an intention to attend.</p> <p>Cllr Alexander reminded everyone to contribute to sharing WG news on social media.</p> <p>The team gave their thanks and best wishes to Ola Hussien, who would be leaving Western Gateway to move to America this week.</p>
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Date of next meeting: Weds 13th March, 14:00 – 16:00, online.

Appendix – Minutes of previous meeting, 27th Sept 2023

Item No	Notes / Actions
1	<p>Welcome, apologies and introductions – Allan Creedy</p> <p>Introductions shared by all</p>
2	<p>Governance and election of Chair and Vice Chair – Allan Creedy</p> <p>Cllr Young nominated Cllr Alexander as interim Chair for the next 3 meetings. All in favour.</p> <p>Cllr Alexander thanked everyone and took over nominations for Vice Chair.</p> <p>Cllr Young nominated Cllr Thomas. Cllr Pearce seconded. No other nominations received, Cllr Thomas duly elected.</p> <p>No public representations received.</p> <p>Cllr Willmore requested that the Board recognise the absence of David Redgewell who is a tireless campaigner for better access to public transport and often submits representations to this group. Board wished David well for a quick recovery and return to full action.</p>
3	<p>Minutes and actions from the previous meeting - Chair</p> <p>(See Appendix 1 below)</p> <p>Two actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Request for clarification on interactions between route strategies in RIS3 for Richard Leonard. Alice Darley responded on behalf of National Highways (NH). Route designations are somewhat artificial to enable focus but identified in a consistent national manner. In the South West, a single team managed the development of the three route strategies in the South West and brought a geographical focus to the analysis for all three. Interaction between overlapping routes and consistency between individual strategies was ensured. 2) Upload of decarbonisation information to website: complete. <p>Minutes agreed: Cllr Thomas proposed, Cllr Gray seconded.</p>
4	<p>Public Participation - Chair</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions or Representations from members of the public in line with the Board's Public Participation Scheme. None received for this meeting.
5	<p>Updates from Associate Members – in addition to written updates, verbal updates from those attending where relevant.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department for Transport (DfT) – David Glinos • Network Rail – Matt Haywood • National Highways – Alice Darley <p>David Glinos (DfT) Written report submitted. Brief details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prime Minister re-committed UK to Net Zero by 2050 but ban on sale of petrol/diesel cars delayed to 2035. - Rail (South West) - National contract awarded to Arriva. - Roads – consultation on RIS3 now closed. Outputs feeding into draft strategy to be published later this year. - Bus – earlier this month, Secretary of State announced second round of ZEBRA funding. £129M, with £25M ring fenced for rural. Applications now open. - LEVI – Jeremy Hunt announced first round of LEVI funding for Tranche 1 now open. Local authorities (LA) have been informed of tranches and indicative funding allocations. - Active Travel – ATE wrote to LAs last month re allocation of capital and revenue funding for active travel for current year. <p>Cllr Thomas: We were expecting Local Transport Plan guidance by now – please can you provide update? DG: Apologies for delay. Unable to provide certainty on when it will be released, but officers still aiming for delivery by end 2023.</p> <p>Cllr Wilmore: 1) What do you think DfT/Treasury view is on future of STBs and the resources we are likely to receive? 2) Within Bus Service Improvement Plans (BSIP), how would you see rural need for bus services being addressed given the Value for Money (VFM) thresholds in the guidance? DG: 1) Since last meeting we have confirmed STB funds for current year. Settlement was lower than expected, but confirmation of funding in such a challenging environment is testimony to support for STBs. General election may change things, but for now no need to worry. 2) BSIP – Joint WECA and North Somerset BSIP was one of the biggest allocations in the country. Up to authorities to determine how that allocation is spent. DfT will oversee it ensures VFM in the round, but ultimately it is a devolved issue for local decision. Acknowledged long discussions between many parties and how difficult it is.</p> <p>Cllr Young: Thanked DG for his candour re LTP guidance. Asked for additional thoughts on how LTAs should be approaching development of LTPs in absence of that guidance. DG: Some LTAs are updating LTPs at the moment and want to be supportive of that. Ultimately it is a decision for each LTA how to progress. May be possible to do updates as an addendum to LTPs as and when guidance emerges.</p> <p>Cllr Alexander thanked DG.</p> <p>Matt Haywood, National Rail: Written report circulated. Acknowledged financial constraints nationally. Future funding allocations much less certain. Important now to cooperatively build business cases for strategic rail improvements. Now 3 years into successful investment programme with Western Gateway (WG). Taking forward improvements on Heart of Wessex mainline, between Salisbury and Weymouth and at Cheltenham Spa station. Timetable changes in May delivered additional hourly services to Gloucester.</p>

Will be keen to build on and take forward this partnership working model to capture granular local benefits alongside strategic benefits. Need to continue working beyond rail industry to develop investment cases. Each case judged on individual merits, benefits and costs.

Industrial dispute ongoing so will continue to have an impact on journeys, including routes in WG.

Cllr Alexander thanked MH.

Cllr Slade – References in report to disability improvements specifically at Bournemouth – can you confirm if you are referring to Boscombe or Bournemouth? Would be local discontent if access improvements being progressed at Bournemouth before issues resolved at Boscombe.

MH: Will refer to colleagues on Wessex route for clear answer.

EW: Believe this may be an error, as Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole (BCP) have not submitted a bid for Bournemouth, but have for Pokesdown, near Boscombe. Have submitted bids for other measures in the Bournemouth area but not access/lift improvements.

Cllr Slade: Might be worth revising in document for public clarity.

Action: MH to review written submission

Cllr Willmore – Some users would be happy if some of the current facilities for disabled users were maintained, rather than new ones introduced. One facility at major interchange locally (lift at Bristol Parkway) has been out of access for more than a month, which is unacceptable. Also rail providers needing to spend a fortune on taxis.

MH – hears point, but as this is an immediate operational issue it is outside scope of his strategic area of focus.

Alice Darley (National Highway):

RiS3: Route strategies and masterplan proposals sent out in May. Consultation underway over summer. Welcomed STB responses. Work ongoing to assimilate responses and ongoing work with STBs on overarching Masterplan themes.

Approximately 18 months still to go on RiS3 development. Next milestone is publication of draft RiS (high level + confirmation of funds) later this year. Challenges around affordability. DfT have seen a flatline settlement from Treasury and NH not expecting substantial settlement for RiS3 but will be looking for ways to make it work.

Scheme updates.

Poor weather has hampered some builds. A303 Sparkford – Ilchester site was entirely flooded in May but has now progressed and improvement starting to be visible to road users. Completion expected late Spring.

A417 Gloucestershire – prelim works nearing completion (environmental and archaeological).

Construction due to start autumn.

A303 Stonehenge - decision to grant has received another legal challenge so waiting to hear next steps from courts. If all goes well, prelim work starts in Spring 24.

Cllr Thomas – A417 work will improve vehicle flows from M4, but also makes the North – South route south of Swindon to Amesbury (A346/A338), which goes through local villages, more attractive rather than using recommended routes on A350 or A34. How will that be managed and discouraged?

AD – will take that away and ask colleagues.

Action: AD to respond

Cllr Palmer – given precarious position on “concrete cancer” plus 50 year lifespan of some infrastructure, have NH identified where this may be an issue in the near future for e.g. remedial roads on bridges etc?

AD – Operations Team having ongoing visibility on this. Investment decisions depending on funding settlement. AD can provide doc identifying critical points.

Action: AD to respond

6	<p>Proposed revised Programme for 23/24 following DfT funding settlement – <u>Paper A</u></p> <p>JW: We approved a Business Plan earlier this year on the expectation of an uplift in funding of £211k. This has not come through, so revisions now required to programme to accommodate work within reduced budget.</p> <p>Paper A proposes revised programme. Seeks to maintain funding for key works areas – Strategic Transport Plan (STP), Rail, Freight, EV Charging, Coach and Rural Mobility. Reductions are proposed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) In areas that have not progressed as fast as hoped during the current year, e.g. Alternative Fuels for Freight and work around Regional Centre of Excellence and business case support, so have been deferred to next year. 2) In some cases, some workstreams have been scaled down. 3) Staffing savings due to inability to recruit a Lead Officer (LO) earlier this year. Will be exploring ways to take forward that LO role in other ways. <p>Rural Mobility work may come in under budget, so maybe some saved funding to distribute to other areas where required.</p> <p>Also expecting new business plan guidance for STBs from DfT imminently, which may raise new considerations for funding direction.</p> <p>So, while funding cut is a disappointment, we are still managing to maintain key workstreams.</p> <p>Cllr Young: Agreed that funding cut is a disappointment and feels is short sighted on part of DfT to cut funding to important long-term strategies. Important that we continue to press for more long-term strategic leadership of this group. Would be good to ensure this is secured by the appointment of a permanent Chair (not withstanding excellent interim Chairmanship of Cllr Alexander).</p> <p>Cllr Gray: Echoed Cllr Young’s thoughts. Important not to let funding reductions cramp our enthusiasm for our important workstreams and remain fully committed to carrying forward work. While regrettable that things need to be deferred or scaled back, remain committed to the work.</p> <p>Cllr Willmore: Centre of Excellence. Would be interested to see a plan for how, within the funding available, we are going to be able to achieve the scale of networking and integration that this requires. Particularly important as this is an area of work and collaboration that will allow us to minimise costs in the longer term.</p> <p>JW: CoE is one of the functions that DfT require of STBs. Will seek to draw from other STBs and share expertise between us so that value can be maximised within resources available. Budget was £50k so relatively modest and it is possible for money saved on the rural mobility work to be reallocated to this area if desired. Still ambition to continue to develop the regional CoE role but has been paused due to current constraints.</p> <p>Cllr Willmore: Rather than shuffling this work area to one side, would be good to understand better what we can do within the current constraints, as ultimately this can help save long term costs.</p> <p>Action: JW proposed to bring outline proposal to next Board meeting. Welcomed.</p>
7	<p>Work Programme Update – James White</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carbon tool – Ola Hussein

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cycling Strategy – Hannah Fountain • Rail – Cheltenham Spa – James White • EV Strategy Paper B – Owen Clark <p>Carbon tool: OH presented slides outlining the development of the WG Carbon Tool and the Decarbonisation Policy Playbook.</p> <p>Cllr Thomas: Wanted clarity that tool would be available for use by individual local authority levels. (Yes). Wondered if it could additionally be used at a more granular level e.g. parishes or conurbations? OH: current carbon tool cannot do this, but the decarbonisation playbook is based on MSOA level data so can be split down further.</p> <p>Cycling: HF presented brief summary of progress on reviewing cycling strategy (see slides) Cllr Alexander requested an update on progress at next Board if possible. Action HF</p> <p>Rail Cheltenham Spa. JW reported that there is more investigative work to do on the Bay platform at Cheltenham Spa. Hoped to report back at next Board. Action JW</p> <p>EV Strategy. Kelly Flynn and Owen Clark presented recent work by WSP/Dorset Council on the EV charging strategy. (See slides.)</p> <p>Cllr Willmore: Questioned what the recommendation in the written report (Option B) is requesting, as it refers to “information below” which seems to be missing. [To note this was an error and should have read “see above.”] What is the role for us working collectively to ensure provision, versus what is going to be an area for local focus? In a small number of locations, a top-down/collective approach may be more appropriate than a bottom-up one.</p> <p>KF – at present the next steps outlined on the slide are mostly focused at officer level.</p> <p>Cllr Alexander suggested this may work well as a case study within the Centre of Excellence proposal. What can the STB provide that is of benefit to supplement what is being done at a local level? Cllr Willmore: Balance of action and talking about action maybe reaching its limit, but OK.</p> <p>Cllr Thomas: Thought that the focus for EV charging at a regional level should be mostly around routes. Does not seem compatible with a bottom-up approach. This looks to be a really useful tool at a local authority level, but how can it be used as a focus for regional strategy? What does it actually mean to leverage private investment and skills?</p> <p>JW: suggested that given time constraints officers take this back and come back with clear answers to these questions. Action JW, KF, OC</p>
8	<p>Strategic Transport Plan Update – James White</p> <p><u>Paper C</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised Timeframe, Direction Statement and Comms Strategy <p>Had hoped to be able to bring forward a draft for approval to go to consultation over autumn. Unfortunately hasn't been possible so paper proposes a revised programme. Also sets out thinking on how we will be approaching the plan, direction and areas of focus. Also sets out some indicative funding requirements. Comments very welcome.</p>

	<p>Action: All to read and respond.</p> <p>In terms of programme, the revised plan is to bring a draft plan to Board in Dec prior to consultation in New Year. Focus of consultation will be on key stakeholders but will be open to wider public to comment too. Will be using social media and online events to run consultation, but due to resource constraints will not be holding in-person events.</p> <p>Cllr Thomas: Has too many questions and red lines over proposed directions of travel to properly discuss or ratify in the current meeting. Would need to discuss with local officers and other members before this can be done.</p> <p>Cllr Alexander: Asked JW how this need for discussion would feed into the timeline? JW: Today's paper is intended as a prompt to discussion and reflection. Offline discussion and contributions very welcomed at any time.</p> <p>Cllr Thomas: Doesn't feel the timeline is realistic. To deliver a draft plan which all LAs are comfortable with, in the absence of LTP guidance, by Dec is overly optimistic.</p>
9	<p>Programme Financial Update and Forward Decision plan – James White</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme Financial Update, <u>Paper D</u> • Forward Decision Plan, <u>Paper E</u> <p>Due to time constraints, JW focused on a couple of key areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Budget cut £211k in 2023/24 - Committed spend £785k in 2023/24 - Looks like we have only spent around £54k this year, but this excludes August and September as well as committed expenditure of around £210k imminent. <p>We are expecting to spend full funding allocation by end of current financial year.</p> <p>We will bring delayed elements to Board in December for decision.</p> <p>Cllr Alexander: Agenda for the December meeting is getting very full and we will need to have a very clear focus on items.</p> <p>Cllr Gray: Feels December meeting needs to be longer as two hours is regularly too constrained. Cllr Alexander welcomed that suggestion – to be considered. Action.</p>
10	<p>AoB (to be previously advised to Allan Creedy, please (westerngateway_stb@westofengland-ca.gov.uk))</p> <p>Cllr Thomas proposed relaunching the Corridor Alliance of Bath & North East Somerset, Wiltshire, Dorset and BCP as the north-south corridor study goes before DfT and seeks to be included in the RIS3 strategy. Seeks blessing from group.</p> <p>Cllr Alexander invited any concerns or counter-comments, but there were none.</p> <p>Cllr Alexander thanked WG Comms for good work promoting work and encouraged members to also share amongst their contacts.</p>

