

Western Gateway Sub-national Transport Body

Board Meeting

Paper E

Date	24th June 2026
Title of report:	Technical Programme Progress update
Purpose of report:	To provide a progress update on the ongoing work to deliver the technical work programme of the Western Gateway Sub-National Transport Body.

Recommendations:

The members of the Board are recommended to:

- To note the progress of the programme update report.

1. Introduction

1.1 This report contains an update on the progress of a number of elements of the Western Gateway Sub-National Transport Body (STB) technical work programme.

January – March 2026

- Complete work on modelling future transport scenarios
- Welcomed Department for Transport (DfT) funding settlement for 2026/27
- Hosting of Freight and Coach forums for local authorities and wider stakeholders and EV forum for local authorities
- Engagement at the Logistics UK Southwest event
- Engagement at the Bath and Wiltshire Metro workshop
- Welcomed intern from University of Gloucestershire and University of the West of England
- Board approval of Business Plan for 2026/27
- Delivering of training sessions on the Spatial Planning and Transport Tool
- Kick off of Rural Mobility pilot work for round two

April - June 2026

- Thinking freight Local authority engagement sessions
- Led the Southwest freight forum
- EV forum to be held on 30th June 2026
- Strategic Investment Plan priority proposals list produced

- First A303 Corridor Working Group meeting held
- Westbury Platform 0 and timetabling capacity work completed
- Spatial Planning Tool wins award for innovation at the Chartered Institute of Highways and Transportation Southwest 2026 awards
- Rural Mobility Pilot Prospectus for round three produced
- Engagement at Rural Bus event
- Monitoring and Evaluation reports of Rural Mobility pilot produced for round one
- Completed planning and preparation for the Rural Mobility Round 1 Lessons Learnt Webinar, with speakers, presentations and delivery arrangements confirmed.

2. Freight Strategy Implementation and freight forums

- 2.1 Progress Update: We held a freight forum at the end of March with approximately 30 attendees. There were speakers from the Department for Transport (DfT) about the Ports master planning guidance update and the National Port Statement for Ports, and from the University of the West of England (UWE) about the freight research they have been undertaking looking at the human component of the UK freight system and the net zero transition, assessing skills and demographic gaps. This was very well received and generated a good discussion.
- 2.2 In May we held two 'Thinking Freight' engagement sessions for local authorities, sharing how freight could and should be considered at all different stages of transport planning and management. We had a total attendance of 50-60 at these from across the Western gateway and Peninsula Transport local authorities. There were officers from all Western Gateway authorities at these events.
- 2.3 Next Steps/Upcoming priorities: The next freight forum is on the 18th June 2026, with speakers from Logistics UK, Maritime Transport, and Poole Harbour Commissioners, as well as a summary of discussions at the thinking freight sessions.
We are looking at ways we can provide support for local authorities to considering freight elements in Local Transport Delivery Plans.

3. Rail Strategy – Westbury Platform 0

- 3.1 Progress Update: Update on Rail work are provided on a separate paper – [paper C](#).

4. Electric Vehicle Charging

- 4.1 Progress Update: We held an EV Officer forum on the 12th March 2026 with a speaker from CoCharger- A ChargePoint sharing platform- increasing awareness of these businesses to increase EV charging accessibility. There

were approximately 25 attendees at the forum, and it provided a good platform for the Officers to share progress and learnings across the region.

- 4.2 Next steps: We are finalising the EV forum agenda for the next forum on 30th June 2026 looking to cover communication strategies around EV and have a speaker lined up from EVUK.
- 4.3 Transport for the North are in the process of sharing mapping data of the properties in the region and whether they have driveways, to help inform appropriate delivery of charge points and cross pavement charging support. We will share with local authorities when we are able, and support Officers in the use of this tool.

5. Coach Strategy

- 5.1 Progress Update: We held a forum on Friday 27th February 2026, with 32 attendees. Confederation of Public Transport gave an update on the coach sector, National Express provided an update of changes and opportunities in their services and Gloucestershire County Council outlined the Rural Mobility pilot in Bourton on the Water. Peninsula Transport also provided an update on long distance transport gap analysis they have been doing. The forum was well attended, had a good level of engagement and prompted lots of discussion.
- 5.2 Next Steps/Upcoming Priorities: We are looking to run the next coach forum in mid/late Summer (date TBC).

6. Rural Mobility

- 6.1 Progress Update: Update on Rural Mobility programme are provided on a separate paper – [paper D](#).

7. Regional Centre of Excellence

- 7.1 Progress Update: The Spatial Planning Tool (SPT) was recognised by industry, winning an award for innovation at the Chartered Institute of Highways and Transportation Southwest 2026 awards.
- 7.2 We have been working with to improve the functionality of the tool, bringing in DfT connectivity scores into the tool, and creating a technical note to support and underline the robustness of the SPT for use in creating transport strategy. Updated tool and the technical note will be circulated later this month.
- 7.3 We have been supporting DfT in the update of the Carbon Assessment Playbook, updating the baseline and improving functionality to support with the report user carbon forecasts of proposed projects and proposals in Local Transport Delivery Plans due in October.
- 7.4 Next Steps/Upcoming Priorities:
 - Continue to actively support LAs with training and use of the SPT

- We are in discussion about ongoing hosting arrangements
- Run a Carbon Assessment Playbook Training session once updated, providing an introduction to new users and a refresher for previous users to support Local Transport Delivery Plans
- Future workshops and engagement activities being scoped.

8. Resilience

8.1 Progress Update: We have worked through the allocation of scores against different hazards and mapped this across the transport network to produce mapping across the Western Gateway area to inform the Strategic Investment Plan.

8.2 Next Steps: We will revisit the resilience mapping after the SIP has been completed to assess any refinements we can make. This will include seeking and responded to feedback from Local Authorities and potentially adding additional datasets. We will then consider how we could effectively share the outputs as a tool for use by local authorities.

9. A303 corridor Improvement group

9.1 Progress update: We have started a working group with Peninsula Transport to provide coordinated oversight and strategic direction for ensuring the effectiveness, resilience and safety of the A303 corridor including the West of England Line and supporting regional and national transport objectives. Alongside Peninsula Transport, Network Rail, National Highways, Homes England, DfT, MLCHG, Southwest Railways and local authority representatives were present. The first meeting was held 6th May 2026, chaired by James White. This was a positive meeting establishing the group and setting out terms of reference. There was good engagement from National Highways. A case for change document is under preparation.

9.2 Next steps: The next meeting will be held in July 2026.

10. Consultation, communication and engagement

10.1 This update has been discussed by the Programme Management Team and approved by the Senior Officer Group.

11. Equalities Implications

11.1 No adverse impact on any protected groups.

12. Legal considerations

12.1 The Western Gateway STB remains an informal non-statutory partnership.

13. Financial considerations

- 13.1 The technical programme is produced within the allocated budget as spelt out in the business plan.

14. Conclusion

- 14.1 This paper provides a summary of the various element of the Western Gateway technical programme of work and the progress made since the last board meeting as well as the work that has taken place so far, this financial year. The Board is recommended to note these.

Contact Officers

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