Western Gateway Sub-national Transport Body

Board Meeting

Paper E

Date	**30th September 2026**
Title of report:	**Financial Update Report**
Purpose of report:	**To provide an update on finance of Western Gateway Sub-National Transport Body.**

Recommendations:

The members of the Partnership Board are recommended to:

I. To note the revised budget and the current financial position as set out in this report.

1. Introduction

1.1 This report contains an update on finances. The paper provides an update on the budget to date for the current Financial Year for Western Gateway (WG). The Board is asked to note this, as summarised below.

2. Budget Update 2026/27

2.1 In December 2025, the Partnership Board approved the budget for the 2026/27 Work Plan. In January 2026, the budget was revised based on the Department for Transport (DfT) funding allocation of £450k and the local authority contributions of £188k, which was agreed by the Board.

2.2 In September 2026, Bath & North East Somerset Council advised WG that, owing to significant financial pressures across its services, it is unable to provide its agreed contribution of £24k in 2026/27. The local authority contribution has therefore been revised from £188k to £164k. The technical work programme has been reforecast to reflect the reduction in total available funding.

2.3 Table 1 provides a summary of the revised 2026/27 budget. This includes the local authority contribution of £164k, DfT funding of £450k and the contingency budget of £78k carried forward from prior years to ensure that the WG is in a position to meet its liabilities and for general contingency for staff/technical programme risks.

3. Staffing Budget

3.1 Staffing costs are broadly in line with expectations. An adjustment will be reflected in the next reporting period following the end of a staff secondment. Our forecast expenditure for staffing and engagement to the end of the year is £360k, including overhead charges. Any underspend arising from staff departures within the staffing budget line will be automatically reflected in the overall underspend for the financial year.

4. Technical Programme Budget

4.1 Table 2 sets the summary of the spend position to end of August 2026 against the revised agreed budget 2026/27. The main areas of expenditure to date are staffing costs and delivery of the technical programme funded by the ringfenced carry-forward from 2025/26. This includes development and delivery of rail work, Rural Mobility Pilot projects, and the delivery of the Regional Centre of Excellence work package and progressing all other aspects of the business operational running of the Western Gateway.

4.2 Actual expenditure to date is just above £176k which is split between staffing costs incorporating events/logistics and the technical programme. The forecasted spend on staffing and the technical programme (excluding accruals) is approximately £668k with a contingency pot of about £24k.

4.3 Spend for the technical programme does not track equitably across the Financial Year, as invoices are paid on completion of key milestones. The forecast will be reviewed regularly and if we forecast an underspend against any budget line and needs reprofiling to cover other budget lines, we will bring a recommendation to the Senior Officers Group (in between quarterly Board meetings) or Programme Management Group (in between Senior Officers Group meeting) for approval of reallocation. This will be reported to the Board members at the next Board meeting.

4.4 The budget also makes provision for engagement activities including events and annual website maintenance subscription as part of the operational costs. Committed spend to date on this budget line is approximately £20k.

4.5 The budget will continue to be reviewed and updated with any changes as the year progresses to reflect changes such as reallocations of funds between projects and cost increases. Changes will be reported to the Board.

Table 1 – Summary of revised budget 2026/27

The budget report is summarised as follows:

Local Authority contribution	£164,000
DfT Grant Funding	£450,000

Contingency	£78,000
Total Funding	**£692,000**

Table 2 – Summary of the spend position to date

The budget report is summarised as follows:

Expenditure 2026/27 (including forecasted spend)	
Staffing costs + technical programme (actuals)	£176,060.14
Staffing costs + technical programme (forecasted)	£492,072.38
Total Forecast Outturn	**£668,132.52**
Remaining contingency	£23,867.48
Total Budget	**£692,000.00**

5 Consultation, communication and engagement

5.1 This update has been discussed by the Programme Management Team.

6 Equalities Implications

6.1 No adverse impact on any protected groups.

7 Financial considerations

7.1 The budget considerations are set out in this report. Following the decision by Bath & North East Somerset Council (B&NES) not to make its £24,000 annual contribution to the Western Gateway for 2026/27, the available budget for the year has reduced accordingly. The financial position and options for managing this reduction, including the potential use of available contingency, are reflected in this report.

8 Conclusion

8.1 The Board is recommended to note the revised budget and the financial position at the end of August 2026.

Contact Officer

Mena Abidakun, Project Manager, Western Gateway Sub-National Transport Body

Email - mena.abidakun@Westofengland-CA.gov.uk