

West Midlands Combined Authority Transport Delivery Overview and Scrutiny

30th October 2023

<https://governance.wmca.org.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=240&MId=948>

Question and Answer session with Cllr Mike Bird Portfolio lead for Transport

Councillor Bird was open and honest that he is not a fan of EV's or electric scooters. The policy is to expand the EV charging infrastructure in the west midlands, but Cllr Bird said he foresees a shift. His aim instead is to increase public transport and active travel. He recognises that 40-50% of the bus routes in the WM are not viable without intervention. Cllr Bird mentioned that the CA needs to be better at advertising what they are doing in transport and need to educate people on the transport options available.

Cllr Bird spoke of his interest in hydrogen powered vehicles which he believes will be cheaper eventually. A hydrogen bus station is going to be built in Walsall. The plan is for 100 hydrogen and 12 electric buses. Hydrogen buses have a better range. The business case is still ongoing working with National Express.

The website Climate Emergency UK shows the WMCA as the best out of all of the combines authorities with a 65% score. Redditch currently has a 20% score and therefore Redditch should be looking to the WMCA and learning from what they have done.

Transport for West Midlands has spent £40 m on securing bus services. Another good news story is that 95% of trains are on time. Cllr Bird believes we need more bus providers to prevent a monopoly.

They also want to invest in better live data for buses, working with bus operators to be able to give users real time information on when a bus is delayed or broken down. The operators should also invest in this technology which makes bus travel more reliable.

Demand Responsive Transport was discussed and WMCA should liaise with WCC.

I asked that security on the trains is made a priority after the abhorrent murder of Ian Kerwell in Redditch in March 2022.

TDOS Meeting after Cllr Bird left

The group wanted to know if the land where HS3 was to go is going to be protected in case the plans are re-opened in the future.

Currently I am the only non-constituent member attending these meetings. The group are hoping that the other non-constituent member will be sending a member for the next meeting.

Many Councillors are receiving complaints about Diamond Buses. I suggested a meeting with diamond could be helpful as we experience similar in Redditch.

Councillor Emma Marshall

Redditch Borough Council's Representative on the West Midlands Combined Authority
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