



# MetroWest+

## Portishead Branch Line (MetroWest Phase 1)

TR040011

Applicant: North Somerset District Council

1.6 Letter of support from Tim Bowles, West of England Mayor dated 24 October 2019

The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009, regulation 5(2)(q)  
Planning Act 2008

Author: West of England Combined Authority

Date: November 2019





James Willcock  
MetroWest Phase 1  
North Somerset Council  
Town Hall  
Walliscote Grove Road  
Weston-super-Mare  
BS23 1UJ

Date:  
24 October 2019

Dear James

**Re: MetroWest Phase 1 – Development Consent Order**

As joint promoter of MetroWest Phase 1 with North Somerset Council (NSC), the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) offers its wholehearted support for the Portishead Branch Line Development Consent Order (DCO) application. The DCO application is a significant milestone in our MetroWest programme which promises to transform travel in the West of England.

Our vision, as set out in our Joint Local Transport Plan 4, is 'Connecting people and places for a vibrant and inclusive West of England'. Re-opening the Portishead Branch Line is the latest step in making that vision a reality. It builds on our significant investment programme in the West of England's transport network that is aimed at cutting congestion, improving air quality provide network resilience and ultimately helping us meet our ambition of a net zero carbon transport network.

Improving connectivity is key to maintaining our region's economic competitiveness, and the West of England has seen investments in recent years that have benefited the region and further afield. From Network Rail's route modernisation programme and electrification works on the Great Western mainline to London, to GWR's investment in Turbo Trains and the new InterCity Express services. All of this demonstrates the future confidence that partners and investors have in the region and is something we are keen to build on.

Our own investment plans, including MetroWest, complement this work and will take it further. Over the next few years we're supporting projects such as Bristol Temple Meads Eastern Entrance, MetroWest Phase 2, and a regional Mass Transit Study. Our work on MetroWest Phase 2 is progressing well and will see services re-introduced on the freight line to Henbury. As with Phase 1, this will increase access to rail services for significant numbers of people, enabling more journeys to be taken sustainably.

WECA is proud to be joint promoter of MetroWest Phase 1 with NSC. We will continue to work closely together as the DCO application progresses, and with Network Rail, to make the scheme a reality.

Yours sincerely



**Tim Bowles**  
West of England Mayor