

TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the Transport Committee held in the Floral Pavilion Theatre, New Brighton, Marine Promenade, New Brighton, Wirral, CH45 2JS on Thursday, 15th July, 2021 the following Members were

P r e s e n t:

Councillors

J Banks, J Burke, C Cooke, S Foulkes, G Friel, S Halsall, P Hayes, N Killen, A Lavelle, K McGlashan, L Melia, N Nicholas, L Robinson, T Rowe, G Stockton, J Stockton and J Williams.

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRPERSON

Jill Coule, the Chief Legal and Monitoring Officer opened the meeting and invited nominations for the appointment of Chairperson of the Transport Committee for the 2021/22 municipal year.

Councillor Gordon Friel nominated Councillor Liam Robinson as the Chair of the Transport Committee for 2021/22 and this was seconded by Councillor Anthony Lavelle.

RESOLVED - That Councillor Liam Robinson be appointed Chairperson of the Transport Committee for 2021/22.

Councillor Liam Robinson
Chairperson of the Transport Committee
(in the chair)

2. CHAIRPERSON'S OPENING REMARKS

Councillor Liam Robinson expressed his gratitude at being re-elected as Chair and noted how exciting the year ahead was going to be following the re-election of the Metro Mayor, Steve Rotherham and the strong manifesto which included a vision for a London style network at its heart.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair thanked Wirral Council and the Floral Pavilion for hosting the meeting. He highlighted the ongoing impact of the pandemic and thanked frontline workers for keeping the network running. The Chair urged the public to continue wearing face coverings whilst travelling on the public transport.

The Chair welcomed nine new members to the Transport Committee and looked forward to the new ideas and perspectives they would bring over the next year. The Chair also thanked those members who were no longer on the Committee, namely: Councillors M O'Mara, F Wynn, H Thompson, P Cleary, J Wiseman, M Uddin, S Murphy, P McKinley and J Dodd.

The Chair paid particular tribute to Councillor John Dodd as he served on the Committee since 2001 and made a valuable contribution over the last two decades.

The Chair undertook to personally write to the retiring members expressing thanks on behalf of the Committee.

3. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRPERSON

The Chair, Councillor Liam Robinson invited nominations for the appointment of Deputy Chairperson of the Transport Committee for the 2021/22 municipal year.

Councillor Liam Robinson nominated Councillor Gordon Friel as the Deputy Chairperson of the Transport Committee for 2021/22 and this was seconded by Councillor John Stockton.

RESOLVED - That Councillor Gordon Friel be appointed Deputy Chairperson of the Transport Committee for 2021/22.

4. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors T Brough, J Donnelly, H Howard, A Jones, D O'Connor, J Pearson and G Philbin.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Lindsay Melia declared a personal interest in Item 9 on the agenda 'Future of Britain's Railways: Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail'. Councillor Melia's partner is an employee of Transpennine Express and a member of the RMT Union.

6. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the last meeting of the Transport Committee held on 4 March 2021, be approved as a correct record.

7. LIVERPOOL CITY REGION COMBINED AUTHORITY CONSTITUTION, COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE AND MEMBERSHIP 2021/22

Jill Coule, Chief Legal and Monitoring Officer presented the Combined Authority Constitution, Committee Terms of Reference and Membership for 2021/22 as appointed by the constituent Local Authorities and approved by the Combined Authority at its Annual Meeting in June 2021.

The Committee heard that the report highlighted a number of changes, including:-

- Constitutional amendments to reflect that public meetings must now be held in person, rather than remotely;
- That Members of the Transport Committee were bound by the Code of Conduct within their own Local Authority's Constitution; and
- Slight changes to some of the Lead Member Profiles to correctly reflect the scope of the work within those profiles.

Jill Coule, Chief Legal and Monitoring Officer discussed the recommendations within the report and in noting the appendices to the report, requested that new members be particularly mindful to that information.

The Chair reported that the nominations for Lead Members for 2021/22 were as follows:-

Area of Focus	Lead Member
Bus	Councillor John Stockton
Rail and Freight	Councillor Gordon Friel
Ferries	Councillor Ken McGlashan
Transport Finance	Councillor Steve Foulkes
Active Travel, Tunnels and KRN	Councillor Natalie Nicholas
Customer and Smart Ticketing	Councillor Nina Killen

RESOLVED That:-

- (i) the membership of the Transport Committee for 2021/22, be noted;
- (ii) the Committee welcomes the following Councillors be appointed to the Committee:-

Local Authority	Councillors
Knowsley MBC	John Donnelly Tommy Rowe Joanne Burke
Liverpool CC	Lindsay Melia
Sefton MBC	Tony Brough Sean Halsall
St Helens MBC	Jeanette Banks Damien O'Connor
Wirral MBC	Chris Cooke

- (iii) the committee places on record its thanks to the following former members, for their work on behalf of the Committee and their contribution to taking forward the transport agenda of the City Region:-

Local Authority	Councillors
Knowsley MBC	Margi O'Mara Linda Mooney Frances Wynn
Liverpool CC	Helen Thompson
Sefton MBC	John Dodd Patrick McKinley
St Helens MBC	John Wiseman Mancyia Uddin
Wirral MBC	Pat Cleary

- (iv) the responsibility for functions as set out in Part 3 of the Combined Authority Constitution and in particular those responsibilities referred to and delegated to the Transport Committee in Section F, detailed in Appendix One to the report, be noted;

- (v) the Meetings Standing Orders set out in Section A of Part 4 of the Constitution of the Combined Authority detailed in Appendix Two to the report, in particular the requirement for meetings of the Committee to be held in person, be noted;
- (vi) Members of the Transport Committee note that they are bound by the Member Code of Conduct detailed in their own Local Authority's Constitution; and
- (vii) the following the Lead member roles, as outlined in paragraph 3.3 be appointed as follows:-

Area of Focus	Lead Member
Bus	Councillor John Stockton
Rail and Freight	Councillor Gordon Friel
Ferries	Councillor Ken McGlashan
Transport Finance	Councillor Steve Foulkes
Active Travel, Tunnels and KRN	Councillor Natalie Nicholas
Customer and Smart Ticketing	Councillor Nina Killen

8. CYCLE OF MEETINGS, SPOKESPERSONS AND APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES 2021/22

The Committee considered the report of the Monitoring Officer which provided:-

- (a) details of the Cycle of meetings for 2021/22; and
- (b) sought the appointment of representatives on the relevant outside bodies and spokespersons for each Local Authority.

Jill Coule, Chief Legal and Monitoring Officer advised Members that the report outlined the dates for Transport Committee for the forthcoming year and detailed the current representative to outside bodies. The report also asked Members to note that the Chair of the Transport Committee would continue to be co-opted to the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority as the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Air Quality.

The nominations for appointments to outside bodies were as follows:

	Appointment
TravelSafe Board	Councillor Joe Pearson (Chair) Councillor Anthony Lavelle (Vice-Chair) Opposition Appointment TBC
West Coast 250	Councillor Gordon Friel
Rail North Committee	Councillor Gordon Friel (Substitute)
TfN Scrutiny	Councillor Lindsey Melia Councillor Halsall (Substitute)

The Chairperson advised that the nominations for Local Authority Spokespersons was yet to be determined and this would be provided in writing to the Monitoring Officer separately.

RESOLVED That:-

- (i) the dates and times of the Transport Committee meetings for the forthcoming Municipal Year, as detailed in Appendix One to the report be noted and that attendance at the briefing sessions on transport related matters be agreed as an approved duty;
- (ii) the following members be appointed to serve on Outside Bodies for the forthcoming year be as follows and that it be noted these could be subject to change throughout the Municipal Year and the change would be deemed to be appointed as the Combined Authority's representative on notification being submitted to the Monitoring Officer:-

Outside Body	Appointment
TravelSafe Board	Councillor Joe Pearson (Chair) Councillor Anthony Lavelle (Vice-Chair) Opposition Appointment TBC
West Coast 250	Councillor Gordon Friel
Rail North Committee	Councillor Gordon Friel (Substitute)
TfN Scrutiny	Councillor Lindsey Melia Councillor Halsall (Substitute)

- (iii) details of the Spokespersons for each of the Constituent Local Authorities to answer questions at Council Meetings for the forthcoming year be submitted to Monitoring Officer who on notification will be deemed to have been appointed;
- (iv) the continuing appointment by the Combined Authority of the Chair of the Transport Committee, in respect of the Transport for the North (TfN) Partnership Board (Substitute Member), the Rail North Committee Member, as well as, as a member of the European Structural and Investment Fund Committee, be noted; and
- (v) the appointment of the Chair of the Transport Committee as a co-opted member of the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, holding the Transport and Air Quality portfolio on behalf of the City Region, be noted.

9. INDEPENDENTLY POWERED ELECTRIC MULTIPLE UNIT (BATTERY POWERED TRAIN) TRIAL - PRESENTATION

The Committee considered a presentation from David Powell, Rolling Stock Programme Director which provided information on battery powered trains and a proposed trial noting the environmental, safety and financial benefits of fitting trains with this technology.

Members were advised that there was space under the rolling stock units to fit batteries and the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority had decided to trial the technology to identify if it was a viable technical option. The trial had been made possible through 'Transforming Cities' funding (TCF) and a set of success criteria had been set which included identifying the duration of a train battery and the performance of the battery unit.

It was also highlighted that the 'Headbolt Lane' scheme was also funded by TCF and it was hoped that a battery trial could be implemented within this scheme and the expected timeframe.

David Powell outlined the results of testing the technology and highlighted that the final battery charge was better than was expected. In terms of braking and energy recovery it was advised that the independently powered electric multiple unit (IPEMU) was consuming considerably less energy than comparable models and it was expected that the trains battery could run for 20 miles.

Member's attention was drawn to the proposed routes for a trail of the technology and the benefits of each option, noting that the longer routes provided better infrastructure savings. A business case for each of the routes had been developed and there were considerable future expansion possibilities for the technology.

Members were informed that in terms of next steps, a formal decision had been made by Merseytravel to trial the technology at Headbolt Lane and the process to convert seven of the Class 777 trains to IPEMU technology was underway.

The Chair welcomed the presentation noting that way the city region was leading the rail industry in this country and the potential to expand the Mersey Rail Network as a key part of the Metro Mayor's vision.

The Committee were invited to ask questions/make comments on the presentation.

Councillor Gordon Friel sought clarity on the Office for Road and Rail Safety's objection to third rail and it was explained that due to infrequent accidents the technology was being heavily scrutinised, and that the proposed battery technology in this trial was not subject to the same concerns.

The Committee welcomed the presentation which they felt helped to deliver affordable and reliable transport to the public in the city region.

Councillor Nathalie Nicholas noted a similar retrofit project in Essex on class 379 trains and asked what shared learning there had been in relation to that scheme. The Committee were assured that there had been discussions with the Essex Project Manager and that project had formed the genesis for the trial being proposed today. The Committee discussed the budget for the Rolling Stock Programme and were advised that all of the direct commissioning by the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority was on target but there were challenges relating to the services provided by Network Rail.

In response to a question from Councillor Tommy Rowe, David Powell explained that the project was not dependent on an extension being agreed for Skelmersdale.

Councillor Lindsay Melia asked if technology used green energy to recharge the battery units and it was advised that although this was not the case currently it could be explored in the future.

With regards to the recharging time, Councillor Anthony Lavelle asked what the impact was to passenger's journey times if the train needed to recharge along the route. David Powell advised that typical dwell time at a station for Merseyrail was 30

seconds and it was envisaged that an intermediary charge would take approximately one minute. It was noted that the overall journey time would be reduced due to the trains ability to accelerate and brake faster.

Councillor Chris Cooke welcomed the presentation and asked if there was any scope to extend the current Merseyrail Network and what the reduction in journey time was likely to be. Members were informed that the Metro Mayo's new manifesto made plans to extend the network and it was expected that there would be a 10% reduction in journey time for passengers.

The Chair thanked David Powell and his team for their work and commended the Liverpool City Region on being an industry lead in this field. The project was heralded as an example of the benefits of devolution and it was suggested that the Committee be invited to view a new train, subject to appropriate covid-safe measures.

RESOLVED That:-

- (i) David Powell, Rolling Stock Programme Director be thanked for his attendance and informative presentation;
- (ii) the possibility of a visit by Transport Committee Members to view one of the new trains be looked into, subject to the appropriate covid-safe measures; and
- (iii) the Committee receive a further update on the 'Rolling Stock' programme at a future meeting.

10. FUTURE OF BRITAIN'S RAILWAYS: WILLIAMS-SHAPPS PLAN FOR RAIL

The Committee considered the report of the Assistant Director for Rail which provided information on the recent publication of the Government White Paper – Williams Shapps Plan for Rail and the impacts of the proposals on the local rail network.

In this respect, Tony Killen, Rail Development Advisor, presented the report which advised that the Williams Shapps Plan for Rail sought to put the passenger first and focus on the structure and accountability of the rail industry. Publication had been delayed in order to consider the impact of covid on the future of railways.

He provided a summary of the Williams-Shapps plan for rail which sought to put the passenger first and focus on the structure and accountability of the rail industry.

Member's attention was drawn to the key findings which were detailed at section 4 of the report and the risks detailed at section 6.

He highlighted that the plan proposed the development a new organisation, 'Great British Railways' (GBR) which would combine Network Rail and train operators and develop the concept of "One controlling mind" for the rail industry.

He added that there was the potential for Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) to work closer with Network Rail and set up a pilot programme for local control of the network.

Further reports and updates would be provided as the new GBR structure and plans were developed to ensure that opportunities were maximised for LCRCA to input and influence the proposed new structures.

Members of the Committee were given the opportunity to ask questions/make comments on the report.

Councillor Lindsay Melia expressed concern that the new 'GBR' organisation would be tasked with driving down costs, including operational which was a real risk of cuts to jobs in the industry and impact on pensions. She was also concerned that decisions were being made on short term thinking. Passenger numbers were low due to the pandemic and it wouldn't be fair for anyone to lose their job because of that.

The Chair affirmed how important railways careers were for City Region residents and children's futures. He was proud of the fact that we had a fully staffed rail network and stations. He wanted that to continue and not be threatened by a Government reorganisation, particularly where there were other areas to legitimately squeeze out costs but not operation areas.

Councillor Nathalie Nicholas referred to section 4.17 of the report welcomed the recognition of freight because kept lorries off the road, helping to reduce carbon. She hoped that they would build on it and allocate funding for it. She also expressed concern paying an operator to manage and the potential of having no control over a failing operator. Councillor Nicholas also referred to section 4.20 of the report and the ticketing app. Again she expressed concern that it could exclude people who were not digitally engaged. In relation to alignment with Transport for London (TfL), she didn't want a 'London centric' system where we didn't have an input.

The Chair agreed and stated that a car led recovery post pandemic needed to be avoided as well as pricing people off the railway and making it more difficult to access tickets.

Tony Killen also responded and stressed the importance of responding in relation to the impact on the City Region and the North. The fares would be set nationally by GBR and the intention was to make fares more flexible and affordable.

Councillor John Stockton commented that he could see the attractions of bringing together two or more disparate organisations into one but wondered if it was just cost cutting exercise rather than root and branch look at improving the service and customer experience.

Councillor Jeanette Banks asked if Liverpool branch would be centrally run but with input from regions. There was currently a great disparity in what trains run on what services and what the delivery was like. She added that this wasn't because of Merseyrail, but other operators on those lines. She asked if that would be looked at or was it just cost cutting again and the City Region would be at the end of the line again.

Tony Killen responded and stated there would be pressures but the role of the Combined Authority was to protect services as much as possible. It was an opportunity to influence services. Being in control on the Merseyrail side had enabled the setting of fares and timetables, in partnership with Merseyrail and it would be beneficial if that could be rolled out across the region.

Councillor Gordon Friel referred to recommendation (d) at section 2 of the report. He felt that it was early days in the organisation to make any great assumptions about where it was going. Cost cutting was already occurring in the rail industry and £1 billion of infrastructure cuts was being brought in but the exact details were unknown. He appreciated it was going to be a complex affair and we could express concern for employees. Councillor Friel moved the recommendations in the report.

Councillor Chris Cooke referred to section 4.1.4 of the report, 'Access for All' station improvements, in particular cycling and train use and how that improved in the last few decades. He reported that the secure cycle store in Conway Park had been out of order for months. He wondered if this issue was a barrier to multi-modal transport. It wasn't costly to repair so why wasn't it being picked up sooner.

The Chair asked Tony Killen to look into the issue raised regarding Conway Park and respond direct to Councillor Cooke. In recognition of the importance of cycle-rail, David Powell, Rolling Stock Programme Director engaged local cyclists as part of design team for the new trains.

The Chair concluded the discussion and stated that a national guiding mind had long been absent and needed, however he had a number of concerns. A long period of time had been spent time looking at best way of buying new trains and the main reason they will be publicly owned as the cost is a third cheaper than if they were purchased through the ROSCO private leasing way. This was the Rolling Stock Leasing Companies and he was concerned if that part of the industry remained untouched, it was a missed goal to use the money more efficiently to make a more effective railway. He was also concerned at the potential for this to be a 'London centric' operation. It would be based on the existing network rail regions and we were in London North Western. In that existing structure there was a greater focus at the Southern end than here in the North West. He argued that GBR's headquarters should not be based in London, but in the City Region. He stated that whilst it was pleasing that it acknowledged the devolved settlement with Merseyrail, there was an opportunity to go further with devolution as shown in the Metro Mayor's manifesto. Similar to Scotland the City Region wanted to have local control of the infrastructure which would be a more efficient and cost-effective way of doing things. Equally for the eastern half of the City Region where Northern Rail, he believed that a lot of those stopping services should have the ability to come into Merseyrail and enable an integrated network. He concluded by stating that the City Region would continue lobby Government really hard to make sure it was at forefront of getting the right devolved settlement. He looked forward to further reports on how that agenda could be shaped.

RESOLVED That:-

- (i) the contents of the report, be noted;
- (ii) the creation of a new organisation, Great British Railways (GBR) to take on the responsibility for rail services and infrastructure in England, be noted;
- (iii) the potential for LCRCA to work closer with Network Rail/GBR to be a pilot location for the trial of a locally integrated team looking at both infrastructure and train operations, be noted; and

- (vi) updates be provided to the Committee on the implementation of the Plan for Rail as the new GBR structure and plans are developed.

11. MERSEYTRAVEL OUTTURN 2020-21

The Committee considered the report of Merseytravel which detailed the revenue and capital outturn for Merseytravel for the financial year ending 31 March 2021, and the reserves as a consequence.

Sarah Johnston, Assistant Director for Finance advised that attention needed to be paid to the outturn and explanations of the variances particularly at paragraphs 3.6 3.7 and Appendix 2 of the report.

Given the impact of covid, the capital programme had been revised as detailed at section 3.8 as there had been considerable slippage.

Rolling stock was not contained in the revised budget as there was a detailed review being undertaken of the rolling stock position which would be incorporated into a revised budget and reported back to members in due course.

She concluded and stated that whilst the overall position of reserves looked healthy there were still some significant financial risks faced by the organisation, details of which were contained in section 3.14 of the report.

Councillor Steve Foulkes advised that hopefully the format used was understandable for new members. Budget issues were faced by all Local Authorities and whilst this looked like a robust outcome it was set against a rejigged, 'best guess budget. There was still uncertainty and we must remain cautious. There had been a year-on-year loss of 2% in the rail support grant which was worth £0.25 million per year. He commended officers for getting as close to balance as possible. He added that the levy freeze in relation to Wirral was a saving in the region of £460,000.

Councillor John Stockton reflected on the state of the finances of the organisation going forward and asked how robust they were over the next 5-10 years. He also asked about the impact of covid on the finances. Lastly, he if there had been an impact on the climate change agenda and how much money could be allocated towards it.

John Fogarty, Executive Director of Corporate Services advised that the organisation was a going concern and external Auditors were not questioning its viability. He acknowledged that there were some risks but adequate provision had been made for those risks. It was difficult to quantify the impact of covid financially, especially in relation to the effects on the public transport environment. Funding had been received from Government last year in order to continue paying Bus Operators at pre-covid levels to avoid risks of de-stabilisation. Funding had been announced in the form of a Bus recovery package. In relation to the impact on climate change and the net zero carbon target, there were a lot of political decisions to be taken. His team had been assisting the Metro Mayor with a post-covid medium-term budget strategy and looking at funding for Mayoral priorities.

The Chair thanked John Fogarty for his response and agreed that we were not out of woods yet. A keen eye would be kept on finances and he looked forward to further update reports to future meetings.

RESOLVED – That the content of the report be noted.

12. QUARTERLY BUS UPDATE

The Committee considered the report of Merseytravel which provided an update on key bus issues relating to the first quarter of 2021/22.

Tony McDonough, Bus Network Performance Manager highlighted that the report:-

- (a) provided an update on the milestones of the Bus Alliance;
- (b) detailed report progress on the assessment into Bus Reform, Hybus Trial Project and Green Bus Routes Programme; and
- (c) provided an overview of how the Bus Team continued to work with bus operators to support the maintenance of a safe and reliable bus network whilst dealing with the challenges of the global COVID-19 pandemic.

Tony McDonough in dealing with the covid response, there had been close collaborative working both with large and small bus operators.

He referenced the Bus Service Improvement Plan which was an ambitious document seeking to secure £3 billion pounds of funding. The Plan was due to be finalised by the end of October 2021.

Tony McDonough referred to the new City Centre bus maps examples of which were on display at the meeting.

He advised that in relation to the Travelsafe Partnership, a report on the impact of sexual harassment on the bus network had been commissioned. The impact assessment was due on this by the end of May 2022.

Councillor Gordon Friel referenced the resource implications section in section 4 of the report, in particular, there were no IT implications. He asked if any thought had been given to ransomware or a cyber-attack.

Tony McDonough advised that a piece of work was being conducted internally by Ian Hawkins, Head of IT.

Councillor John Stockton, thanked Tony McDonough, Matt Goggins and colleagues, advising they were moving a lot of work forward.

Councillor Nathalie Nicholas requested that talking buses be added to the 'wish list'. In London, buses were able to tell you which stop you were approaching.

Councillor Liam Robinson indicated it was clear in the Metro Mayor's manifesto his aspiration for a 'London style' transport system and that all new buses should be 'talking' buses, similar to trams and trains.

RESOLVED – That the content of the report be noted.

13. EAST COAST MAINLINE CONSULTATION

The Committee considered the report of the Assistant Director for Rail which provided information on the recent publication of a consultation on proposed changes

to the rail timetable on the East Coast Mainline and the effect of these changes in particular on the current Liverpool to Edinburgh service.

In this respect, Tony Killen, Rail Development Advisor highlighted:-

- The consultation timetable;
- the East Coast Main Line had a limited capacity and not all services that were currently in the timetable as well as the additional planned services could be operated on the line; and
- the proposed new timetable would see additional services on the East Coast but at the expense of some services that connected across Northern Cities;

He advised that the initial consideration was that existing northern services should be retained ahead of additional services to London. Further consideration of all the proposed changes would be given in order to prepare a comprehensive response to the consultation by the deadline of 5 August 2021.

The Chair indicated that due to the short timescale, delegated authority was sought, for him in consultation with the Interim Executive Director for Integrated Transport to approve of the final version of the response. The draft response would be circulated to all members of the Committee a few days prior to the deadline to provide an opportunity for comments.

The Chair explained the reason for commenting on this consultation was because these proposed changes would end the direct service from Liverpool Lime Street to Edinburgh and be curtailed at Newcastle. This was unacceptable. Colleagues in the North East were also in agreement and preferred prioritisation of east-west services. He felt that this was levelling down rather than up and he would ensure that all concerns were reflected in the consultation response.

RESOLVED That:-

- (i) the contents of the report, be noted; and
- (ii) due to the timescales, delegated authority be granted to the Interim Executive Director of Integrated Transport in consultation with the Chairperson of the Transport Committee to approve the final version of the consultation response, prior to its submission by 5 August 2021.

14. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions received.

15. PETITIONS AND STATEMENTS

There were no petitions or statements received.

16. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY THE CHAIRPERSON

There were no items of urgent business.

17. CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

The Chair referred to the impending retirement of Frank Rogers, the Chief Executive of the Combined Authority. Unfortunately, Frank couldn't attend the meeting but the Chair took the opportunity to send his best wishes to Frank and his family.

He provided a potted history of Frank's career. He acknowledged Frank's role in building up the Combined Authority as an organisation following the election of the Metro Mayor in 2017 and mentioned a number of the major projects that he had been part of.

The Chair paid tribute to Frank's achievements during his time with the organisation. He also thanked Frank on a personal level for the help and support he had given him over the years. Frank was a great example and role model for young people in the City Region

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair extended his heartfelt thanks, congratulations and best wishes for a long and happy retirement.

Minutes 1 to 17 received as a correct record on the 16 day of September 2021.

Chairperson of the Committee

(The meeting closed at 16.14pm)

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