

West of England

Future Transport Zone

Request for Information

02 December 2020

**1. Overview**

The West of England Combined Authority (WECA) is responsible for delivering the West of England’s Future Transport Zone (FTZ) programme.

The aim of the West of England FTZ is to explore the potential of future transport solutions to enable seamless journeys on public transport informing future policy, regulation, and investment decisions. ​ Further details regarding the FTZ are provided in Section 3.

Through this Request for Information (RfI), WECA is seeking to engager suppliers and operators in the market to gather information and insights that could help inform the design and delivery of the FTZ programme. This is a learning exercise for WECA; it is not a procurement exercise.

We are providing a fair and transparent opportunity for the market to engage with us through this process. Your decision to engage or note engage at this time will not prejudice your or other providers position in subsequent procurement activity. All providers in any resulting procurement will be treated in a fair and transparent manner, there will be no preference or advantage to any provider opting to take part in this engagement.

We **are** interested to hear from suppliers who have existing solutions that are deployed in operation that align with the scope of our programme – either as Tier 1 system integrator or as suppliers of specific technologies or services that can be integrated into our wider solutions.

We **are not** interested to hear from consultancies or suppliers of complementary technologies that do not align with our core scope at this stage – our innovation programme will launch later.

We **are** interested to learn about your views about how we should deliver the FTZ programme, e.g. the potential barriers to entering the market, what features the solutions should include or could consider, and what the future trends might be.

We **are not** interested to learn specifically how your solutions could address our needs and suppliers should not invest in developing pitches for their products and services in response to this RfI.

However, we do welcome you sending to us any marketing material on your current products and services noting that anything you do send could be published in response to a Freedom of Information Request after formal procurement activities have concluded.

**2. West of England Combined Authority**

The West of England’s economy is built on strong foundations with innovative and creative businesses and a highly skilled population. The economy is worth over £38bn a year. With a population of over 1.1 million people, one of the highest levels of graduates in the UK and over 45,000 businesses, the West of England competes on a global scale. It’s a region where highly-skilled people work, where ideas flourish, and where businesses grow. It’s also a place that a diverse population of people call home.

The West of England Combined Authority (WECA) was formed in 2017, to champion the region and drive clean and inclusive economic growth. As a result, significant powers and funding have been transferred to the region through the new Combined Authority and West of England Mayor.

Our aim is to deliver economic growth for the region and address some of our challenges, such as productivity and skills, housing and transport.

WECA is made up of three of the local authorities in the region – Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol and South Gloucestershire. Building on a strong track record of partnership working in the region, the West of England Combined Authority continues to work closely with North Somerset Council. The Combined Authority also the accountable body for the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership.

**3. West of England Future Transport Zone**

The WECA FTZ programme is an innovation programme aiming to improve the integration of public transport into local communities across trial sites across our region.

The objectives of the FTZ, as defined in our proposal to Government, are to:

1. Improve connectivity, to better connect people to employment and training.
2. Make more efficient use of existing capacity in peak and off-peak periods.
3. Improve air quality and public health.
4. Unlock the potential of innovators and enterprises in the region and drive inward investment.

The FTZ programme was designed to address the following challenges:

1. Whilst the region is a net contributor to the Treasury, economic success is at risk. Growth and productivity gains will not be delivered without improved connectivity.
2. The region’s connectivity issues often result from capacity challenges. Pre-COVID, the network was at capacity in urban areas and around key employment, costing £300m per annum. Without intervention, congestion could act as a handbrake to growth.
3. Poor public transport access to key employment areas, which means local communities struggle to access employment, stifling growth.
4. Demand for 105,000 new homes and 82,500 jobs by 2036, which will place unprecedented demand on the transport system.
5. The need for clean growth, recognising our Climate Emergency declaration and poor air quality in Air Quality Management Areas, estimated to be causing over 300 premature deaths per year.
6. High single-occupancy vehicle usage in Bristol and Bath, causing congestion and air pollution.

The programme is planning to deliver:

1. A **Transport** **Data Hub** to improve transport planning, management and operations, and facilitate innovation through an open data portal.
2. **Mobility-as-a-Service (MaaS)** a mobile application and back-office platform for facilitating door-to-door connected customer journeys across multiple transport modes and operators via pay-as-you-go and subscription models.
3. **Mobility Hubs**, providing physical spaces for multi-modal transport interchange between existing, emerging, and future transport options.
4. **Dynamic Demand-Responsive Transport (DDRT)** services to extend the reach of public transport connectivity into underserved areas with dynamic schedules and virtual pickup/drop-off locations.
5. **E-cargo** **bike** trials for last-mile and ad-hoc freight journeys around urban areas.

In addition, the WECA FTZ programme has already launched an e-scooter trial in October 2020 which will run for 12 months.

WECA is currently working with partners to define the objectives and outcomes of the FTZ programme and each project. This RfI process will help inform that process.

We are interested to hear from work with suppliers who have existing solutions that are deployed in operation that align with the scope of our programme – either as Tier 1 system integrator or as suppliers of specific technologies or services that can be integrated into our wider solutions.

Further detail on the FTZ programme can be found in WECA’s funding bid to Government, here: <https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/WECA-FMZ-Bid-Submission-Redaction-V2.pdf>

**3. How to respond to this Request for Information**

Suppliers and operators in the market with an interest in the FTZ programme are invited to respond to this RfI. We invite anyone with interest in any aspect of the programme, whether that is in one or multiple projects. We are interested in learning about any products, solutions or services that could support delivery of the programme and its projects. You may have a product, solution or service of direct relevance to a project (e.g. a DDRT software platform), or something less direct but that offer added value to the programme (e.g. vehicle routing technology that could be used for DDRT).

To respond you should:

1. Complete the general questionnaire (**Appendix A**), by writing your answers directly into the documents.
2. Complete *one or more* of the project specific questionnaires, based on the product, solution or service(s) you offer:
	* Data Hub – **Appendix B.**
	* MaaS – **Appendix C.**
	* Mobility Stations/Hubs – **Appendix D.**
	* E-cargo bikes – **Appendix E**
	* DDRT – **Appendix F.**
3. Responses to this questionnaire should be submitted by email to ftz@westofengland-ca.gov.uk by12:00 midday on Wednesday 16 December. We welcome responses at any time after this date however we may not be able to consider them within our early supply chain analysis work that we are currently undertaking.

Please understand that depending on the number of emails we receive we may not be able to reply to all of them immediately and we may defer the review of some emails until an appropriate point in the programme to ensure we give them due consideration as our programme develops. We may choose to invite some suppliers to present to us and provide us with more information as we deem appropriate however no additional information will be shared with suppliers by WECA during these presentations.

Additional guidance for interested suppliers and operators:

1. Where a maximum word count is provided, please limit your response to the word count.
2. You are not required to respond to every question.
3. You may include images, tables, etc., in your response, but please do not do so excessively, noting that these may be published.
4. Putting any existing relationships or discussion you may be having with WECA aside, we ask that you do not take this RfI as an invitation to directly contact WECA Officers and/or the West of England Mayor in relation to the FTZ programme; our preference is to engage the market through the RfI at this stage in order to best manage time and resources.
5. We would like you to also share with us any existing marketing material about your current products and services that are directly applicable to the FTZ programme by attaching them to your email submission, however please do not assume WECA will read all the content – our preference is to capture information in the questionnaire as this will help our Officers to understand and distil the responses effectively.
6. Please do not share any commercially sensitive data that you would not wish to see in the public domain, as your responses may be subject to Freedom of Information Act requests.

**4. How responses will be used**

The responses will be analysed by WECA, our local authority partners, and consultancies/consultants e.g. via WECA Professional Services Frameworks, that we have engaged to work on the programme under non-disclosure agreements.

We will use the responses to learn about the current and future capabilities of the market, to help inform the design of the programme and projects.

Whether a supplier or operator responds to the RfI or not, will have no impact, prejudice or favour on any future procurement and supplier/operator selection process.

We may choose to publish summaries of supplier responses alongside future procurement activities so any answers given to RfI responses should be from a vendor-neutral perspective, i.e. about the subject-matter itself, not about your specific technologies or services.

We are working closely with other Future Transport Zone programmes in the UK who are pursuing similar solutions. To help all regions learn together, we may share anonymised supplier responses with those other city regions too for their internal use only.

We do not yet have defined sourcing strategies for each of the FTZ projects. We are intending to launch formal procurement activities in Spring/Summer 2021; the specific dates will be different for each FTZ project. Early market engagement activities on the programme are anticipated to cease by the end of March 2021 to allow formal procurement to commence.