

Joanna Booth
Via Email

Sent by e-mail: jo.stillawake@gmail.com

21 September 2022

Dear Ms Booth

Ref No: [WECAFOI0249]

Thank you for your e-mail of requesting the following information. The Authority has answered your initial queries under legislation that covers rights of inspection of accounts. However certain parts of your enquiry cannot be covered in this way so have been responded to under the FOI/EIR:

- Please send me the public interest test that you performed in order to conclude it was appropriate to not release reports linked to £1,642,289.
- Would you also confirm how much the Jacobs Steer Feasibility study cost please and whether it was part of the £1.6m of mass transit funding?
- The information on the Emerging Options Assessment Report;

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Environmental Information Regulations.

The Jacobs Steer Feasibility study cost is not part of the £1.6m Mass Transit funding in the 2021-22 accounts.

The report was produced in March 2019 and costs would have been included in the 2018-19/2019-20 accounts. The reasons the Authority believe that it is not in the public interest to release this information is outlined below.

The Jacobs Steer Feasibility Report, produced in 2019, was submitted in draft form and not formally signed off. Therefore it is the Authority's opinion that the information is exempt under Regulation 12(4)(d) of the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) as it relates to material that is still in the course of completion, unfinished documentation or contains incomplete data. The work within the study will be superseded by the work that is currently being undertaken. The Authority believes that releasing this unapproved draft report into the public domain would not only provide out of date and inaccurate information to the public, it would have a detrimental impact on the current work being undertaken to take the project to the next stage of works (particularly when undertaking public engagement, which is imminent). The OAR is, as stated, an emerging document that is not yet signed off and again, is accompanying the current work that is being undertaken for the Mass Transit project. It is not possible to release this document until it is approved and the Strategic Outline Case is approved and submitted.

If you are not happy with the response to your request, you may ask for an internal review. You can do so by writing to the Data Protection Officer at West of England Combined Authority, 3 Rivergate, Temple Quay, Bristol BS1 6EW or emailing Democratic.Services@WestofEngland-ca.gov.uk. Your request must

be received by the Authority within 40 working days of the date of this letter.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. Details of your right to complain can be found at <https://ico.org.uk/concerns/> .

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Kind regards,

FOI Team
West of England Combined Authority