
From: McLaughlin AC (Ainslie)
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David

I have been reflecting on how we respond to JS if he wants us to intervene.

The danger is we take over and get nowhere with negotiations and end up where CEC and TIE are now only several more weeks or months down the line.

If we are to believe BB's line that what is needed is for us to take over then maybe there is a window of opportunity for a small team to sit down with BB over the next 2 or 3 weeks to see if a deal could be hammered out for a fixed price to get some sort of service running to the city centre. Essentially a pre-condition to us taking over is BB to agree to terms otherwise we stay out.

Don't think we would need TIE's agreement but difficult to do without CEC. TIE couldn't know of course and would continue to pursue the current strategy to terminate.

Whatever deal agreed would almost certainly top £600m so the question is who pays and is it affordable given the other pressures over the next year or so.

Ainslie