Nexus Corporate Business Plan: 2026/27 – 2030/31

Executive Summary

Our Corporate Business Plan sets out the framework for what we will deliver from 2026/27 to 2030/31. The Plan draws from the Mayor's Local Transport Plan and the North East Combined Authority's Local Growth Plan, and Nexus' corporate strategies. It is supported by data, evidence, and best practice.

We are committed to delivering transformational change in the North East. We recognise the importance of developing an integrated, sustainable, and accessible public transport network for the people and communities of the North East and delivering for our colleagues. Our Corporate Business Plan will set out the steps we will take to achieve these, and other, key strategic priorities.

Introduction

We have established a long-term Corporate Business Plan which will deliver on the regional objectives set out in the Mayor's Local Transport Plan (LTP) and the North East Combined Authority's (North East CA's) Local Growth Plan.

The North East Local Growth Plan sets out over-arching regional objectives, within which good public transport plays an enabling role. The five key themes outlined by the North East CA within the North East Local Growth Plan are:

1. The home of real opportunity
2. A North East we are proud to call home
3. Home to a growing and vibrant economy
4. Home of the green energy revolution
5. A welcoming home to global trade

The Mayor's LTP sets out her priorities for transport across the region and our role is to deliver those policies as they relate to public transport in Tyne and Wear. The LTP's areas of focus are:

- Planning journeys/ informing users/ supporting customers
- Ticketing and fares
- Reach and resilience of infrastructure
- Safety, especially of women and girls, and other improvements in service quality
- Connections between different transport types

There is an accompanying LTP Delivery Plan which contains a pipeline of schemes that deliver on these focus areas, many of which represent actions for us to improve public transport in the region and shape our Corporate Business Plan's commitments.

The relevant manifesto commitments made by the Mayor will be delivered by us on her behalf. Our Corporate Business Plan sets out the steps that we will take to deliver those pledges relevant to Nexus.

Our Corporate Business Plan will enable us to deliver on behalf of the Combined Authority and is supported by five core themes, which will provide the structure for our Plan. As we evolve as an organisation, we will ensure our objectives continue to support those of the North East CA.

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Our Corporate Business Plan will also be supported by seven Critical Capabilities, which are strategically important, cross-functional workstreams that help us deliver the items set out in this Plan. These capabilities allow us to become more aligned, agile, and strategically focused, encourage evolution rather than revolution, and define our approach. Our Critical Capabilities are:

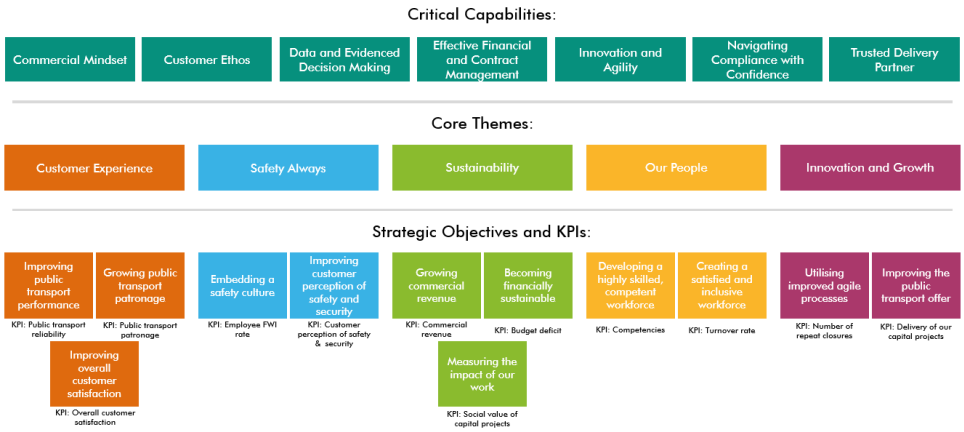
- Commercial mindset
- Customer ethos
- Data and evidenced decision making
- Effective financial and contract management
- Innovation and agility
- Navigating compliance with confidence
- Trusted delivery partner

Our performance will be measured by twelve key performance indicators, aligning to each of our five core themes. This will be measured by our balanced scorecard, which is a strategic planning and management system used to align business activities to our strategy.

Our ability to deliver our Corporate Business Plan as set out, is contingent upon the availability of both revenue and capital funding, including projects earmarked for transport funding available through the North East CA. Our annual budget setting process will refine and influence our plans in subsequent years.

Our Corporate Business Plan commits to delivering transformational change in the North East, on behalf of the Mayor and North East CA. This includes completing the delivery of 46 bespoke new Metro trains in the £362m fleet replacement programme, progressing the design of an extension to Metro through Metro to Washington, designing the replacement for our safety critical signalling system through the Metro Go project, increasing Metro service frequency to up to six trains per hour across the network, continuing with the delivery of our Metro Asset Renewal Programme, delivering the Smart Ticketing Evolution Programme, and working closely with colleagues at the North East CA to investigate the potential of bus reform, a key pledge in the Mayor's manifesto to bring buses back under public control.

Our Corporate Business Plan is designed to deliver for our customers and colleagues. We recognise the role of an integrated, accessible, and sustainable transport network in supporting a growing and vibrant economy, social inclusion, sustainability, and better health and education outcomes; to help create a thriving and prosperous North East region we are proud to call home. We also recognise the vital role that our colleagues play in enabling us to become more agile and innovative, to improve the experience for our customers, and delivering for the Mayor and the North East CA.



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Safety always

Objective 1 – Embedding a safety culture

We will encourage continuous training and development to enhance our colleagues' safety, as well as simplifying our processes, to make it easier to report incidents and analyse trends, communicating our close calls reporting processes to our colleagues to create a safer environment. We will ensure our rules are balanced and risk-based, whilst developing understandable and accurate safety and security data to make informed decisions, both proactive and reactive.

We will prioritise psychological safety, to encourage colleagues to speak up, share ideas, and identify improvements. We will use outcomes to learn rather than blame and ensure our colleagues feel valued and heard. We will display positive examples of lessons learned and build trust by demonstrating how we investigate incidents. We will encourage respectful conversations and healthy tension, including holding colleagues accountable when acting unsafely, and rolling out our learning review process.

Objective 2 – Improving customer perception of safety and security

We recognise the importance of making public transport safer and more secure for all, especially for women and girls. We will work closely with the Mayor, the North East Combined Authority, and other key partners, to improve safety for all, especially women and girls, and communicate our actions. To enhance the safety and security of our transport, we will continue to work collaboratively with key stakeholders to tackle anti-social behaviour and crime, through co-ordinated strategies.

We will communicate the role of our customer-facing colleagues to customers, to increase their visibility and create a connection between our customers and colleagues. We will also communicate the actions we have taken, including through our Report It to Sort It scheme. More broadly, we will also seek to gain accreditation for our safety and security interventions, to reassure our customers, and implement the requirements of the Department for Transport's Light Rail Security Programme.

We will continue to tackle anti-social behaviour with a proactive approach. This includes exploring opportunities to use new technologies to support the development of a safer network, including improving and using the outputs of enhanced CCTV coverage across all modes to make evidence-based decisions, subject to funding.

We will also improve the use of our data. Using our service quality regime data, identifying locations that customers feel unsafe in, and proactively working with our security contractors will all help us to make data and evidenced decisions that help customers feel safer and more secure.

Safety Always – Long term goals

By 2030, we will have fully embedded our Nexus safety culture, establishing a risk management approach to decision making, using our data to make evidence-based decisions, and proactively reporting and monitoring safety and security. We will be leading with data analysis to

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create safe and secure environments across our transport. Our colleagues will be working in an environment where psychological safety is prioritised across all our workstreams.

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Customer experience

Objective 3 – Growing public transport patronage

We are committed to improving customer perception of our services and, to do this, we will consider customer needs and communicate effectively. Customers will start to see physical improvements to our network too. Using funding from the North East Combined Authority (North East CA), we will be refurbishing the Metro station at Regent Centre and the new North Shields Ferry Landing will be in design phase – both will help improve public transport connectivity. Interim works to the existing Shields Ferry landings will ensure continuity of service until the move to the new landing. We will continue to develop our pipeline of transport improvement schemes to be funded by the North East CA, including funding for our Capital Programme, which supports the provision of a reliable and punctual service.

We want to encourage modal shift, so we will work in collaboration with key stakeholders to make public transport more attractive to customers, including by improving transport connections. We will be ready to capitalise on residential and economic developments in the region through our work in development planning, to ensure public transport can get people to opportunity across the region. We are working closely with colleagues at the North East CA to investigate the potential of bus reform, a key pledge within the Mayor's manifesto. This scheme will investigate the potential of bringing buses back into public control, and a range of options are currently being assessed. To enhance the bus network, we will undertake a review of bus infrastructure and we will also continue with a significant project to upgrade bus shelters across Tyne and Wear, funded by the North East CA. This will enhance the public transport offer and help to create safer and more accessible waiting environments for bus customers. More broadly, we will continue to deliver on behalf of the North East CA and local authorities.

To encourage public transport use, we realise improving connections is essential. Using funding from the North East CA, we will enhance our park and ride facilities at Callerton Parkway and explore opportunities for other similar upgrades in future funding streams. We will continue with our Smart Ticketing Evolution Programme, with the aim to achieve higher levels of customer satisfaction, utilise the latest technology, make efficiencies, and simplify the offer for customers. This project includes the ongoing development of integrated payments with contactless ticketing, multimodal price capping, an enhanced mobile solution, and fare simplification. We'll also continue with our Kids go free offer on Metro and Ferry, and seasonally on local bus services, to maintain the affordability of public transport. Finally, we will enhance information provision, including the provision of new real time passenger information at key points of the network to encourage onward, integrated journeys.

Objective 4 – Improving customer satisfaction

We will make sure we understand the expectations of our customers and make improvements based on their needs, including understanding perceptions of non-users. We will continue to work with commercial and local authority stakeholders to create more attractive and safer environments in and around stations, to encourage public transport use and enable active travel for first and last mile journeys, improving connections.

We want to communicate effectively with our customers, focusing on the positive improvements we are making. We will continue to review the channels we use, the frequency of

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information, and the language and tone of voice we use to ensure our communication is accessible and easy to understand. We will empower our customers to self-serve using the Pop App and get information more tailored to their journeys. We will work with our partners in the scheduling and supporting of large events in the region, to ensure integrated public transport is the mode of choice, and work with attractions around the region to promote public transport and support the region's visitor economy.

We will deliver on our customer expectations, realising the basics of a reliable, punctual service are essential, but we will also drive developments by making data and evidenced decisions using customer insights to improve aspects of service most important to our customers. As part of our data use, we will also enhance the quality of our Shields Ferry data, to enhance reliability and punctuality, and support future planning.

Objective 5 – Improving public transport performance

The introduction of our new Metro fleet is the biggest and most complex project in the history of the Tyne and Wear Metro. The £362m programme will see 46 bespoke new trains delivered by the Swiss train manufacturer, Stadler. Our aim is to have all 46 trains running in customer service by the end of 2026, in a phased introduction. We recognise it is important that the transition to the new fleet is smooth, so we will work with our train manufacturer Stadler to embed the new fleet. Once the new fleet is fully operational, we will increase service frequency across the network to up to six trains per hour, from five trains per hour at present, to ensure we have a consistent, high performing transport network, that enhances customer experience.

We will ensure we are prepared with the correct support to deliver a high performing service. We will explore funding opportunities, embrace new technologies and innovation, and use our Test to Invest workstream to invest to save. In order to respond quickly to infrastructure issues on Metro, we'll ensure we have the correct resources available to support.

We recognise that the reach and resilience of our infrastructure and network are essential to support a high quality, high performing public transport network. We will ensure we get people to opportunities, including through the development of plans to extend the Metro to Washington. This is part of the Mayor's vision to transform local transport and create an integrated network. To achieve this, the project will ensure that it also considers the integration opportunities presented through bus reform. We recognise disruption is frustrating for our customers, so we will aim to improve our response to major infrastructure issues and deliver value for money through our works. We will also work with partners to maintain the stability of the bus network until the region is ready for bus reform.

Customer Experience – Long term goals

By 2030, we will be delivering a high performing timetable and making the most of our new fleet of trains to encourage patronage and revenue growth. We will also support the region's bus network through bus reform, a key pledge in the Mayor's manifesto. We will support the developed of a revised bus market that works for customers, stakeholders, and operators. We will be delivering transport improvement schemes funded by the North East CA. Our network will be simple to use, including via tapping in and out with contactless ticketing, and multi-modal price capping to encourage onward, integrated journeys and enhance affordability.

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Our people

Objective 6 – Creating a satisfied and inclusive workforce

We recognise it is important to create alignment across our organisation, so we will clearly set out our employer brand which aligns with our organisational aims. We are united as one team, ensuring a consistent experience for all colleagues, and fostering a unified team culture. We will use and promote our values throughout our work and ensure our colleagues' key work objectives reflect our strategic aims. We will continue with our pay transformation project, reviewing our current arrangements to make sure they are transparent, fair, and fit for purpose. We will also continue to deliver the Nexus Places project, to improve our workspaces for all colleagues and create inclusive, modern working environments that support agile, collaborative, and productive work.

We recognise that by continuously improving and embracing change, we will create better ways of working and a better experience for our customers. We will be adaptive, whilst also planning ahead and encouraging agile working practices. To enable this, we will ensure our colleagues are ready for the future, enabling continuous learning and development of expertise. Succession planning and skills mapping will take place to allow us to prepare for the future and be ready and positioned to deliver for our region.

We will highlight positive examples of continuous improvement and innovation and embed training around embracing change and skills development. We will grow our talent – including a continued commitment to apprenticeships and early career paths to attract and develop the best talent and deliver opportunities for young people in the region.

We will create a people-centric environment, including partnering with our Trades Union colleagues and developing positive, proactive relationships, both internally and externally. We will enhance our approach to equality, diversity, and inclusion, by ensuring differences are valued, wellness is encouraged, and a sense of belonging is fostered.

Objective 7 – Developing a highly skilled, competent workforce

Through a focus on skills and capabilities, we will be future ready, creating opportunities for our people, aligned to business needs. We will plan ahead, taking a strategic approach to managing and developing skills and capabilities to achieve a competence-driven, strengths-led organisation. We will encourage ownership of personal development and enhance our talent management, with an open process, cross-directorate planning, and utilising development roles where possible to grow our talent.

We will undertake a full review of our competencies, making sure they are future proof, fit for purpose, and appropriate to each role. We will ensure we have the capacity to better analyse supporting data, and we will review our training standards with a risk-based approach.

We will continue to forecast and plan for organisational-wide training, developing robust training plans, ensuring we have data available to measure quality of training and learning success, and tie our training closely to the development needs of our colleagues. We will maximise attendance, challenging non-attendance, exploring causes, and undertaking deeper analysis. We will embed learning reviews to continually feedback and improve our learning and development methods and outcomes.

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Our state-of-the-art Learning Centre will help us to ensure continuous learning is at the core of everything we do. It will support our on-the-job training, develop technical and non-technical skills and competencies, and facilitate leadership development. We will embed a learning culture, promote lifelong learning, and support continuing professional development, to create real opportunity for our colleagues.

Our People – Long term goals

We will ensure our colleagues can help us to build as an organisation together. We will focus on long term planning to enable sustained growth and organisational resilience. Continuous improvement and development will be the norm for all colleagues, benefitting the whole of Nexus. We will be seen as a business that embraces change, data, and insights, and be attractive for top talent. We will have fully delivered Nexus Places, and all colleagues will be working in more welcoming, modern, and more inclusive environments. An inclusive, agile culture will be prevalent, and collaboration and partnership will be at the core of how we deliver.

DRAFT

Innovation and growth

Objective 8 – Utilising improved agile processes

To minimise the impact of works on our customers, we will improve the planning of work to our infrastructure, including fixed area planning, to maximise the work undertaken within each line closure, and communicate the benefits of this to our customers. We will continue to invest in our asset knowledge and review our inspection regime to avoid unforeseen asset derogation. We will also review opportunities to maximise reactive closures with multi-asset management and monitor lessons learned.

We will enhance accountability, ownership, efficiency, and agility across our workstreams. We will do this by developing business change and risk management skills and expertise, alongside embracing new technologies and processes, including promoting continuous improvement workstreams such as Project Evolve. We recognise that technology can provide efficiency and automation gains, whilst also enhancing cyber security, to support a resilient ICT network that is secure for our colleagues and customers. We will also establish opportunities to utilise technology to enhance the customer experience across our teams.

We will make sure our rule book is risk-based, allowing us to respond quickly and safely to disruption. We will also explore opportunities for innovation, efficiency, and agility.

We will proactively develop our procurement processes and team to help us to be more agile, pragmatic, balanced, and proportional, always seeking out value for money whether planning long or short term. We will seek to enhance early consultation, market intelligence, and horizon scanning, to increase our ability to attract external partners. We will ensure we have off the shelf procurement processes for essential needs, using public sector frameworks to gain significant advantage of aggregated public spending and accelerated procurement delivery with simplified processes to allow us to procure for specialist and complex needs. We will explore opportunities generated by the new Procurement Act to improve innovative and agile market engagement and procurement processes.

We will seek to improve our contracts management processes & methodologies to ensure improved compliance and performance whilst maintaining greater value for money.

We will make sure we have the resources in place to support our delivery of key projects, including to manage unforeseen risks, respond to new challenges, and deliver the Mayor and the North East Combined Authority's (North East CA's) priorities. We will increase our forward planning through longer planning cycles, to allow us to plan and deliver works more effectively.

Objective 9 – Improving the public transport offer

To allow us to clearly define what is expected from transport improvement projects, we will apply clear project scopes, embedding risk management throughout all our projects, and integrating value management. We will also embed effective project frameworks to deliver our defined project commitments.

We will make key upgrades to improve the public transport offer, including through our Metro Asset Renewal Programme, and we will look to combine funding sources to enhance projects and unlock commercial opportunities to deliver better improvements for our customers. We will continue to progress the design for Metro Go, our re-signalling programme, ensuring user and

operational requirements are robustly defined. Our signalling system is a safety critical asset, so we must replace the outdated system with a more modern, technologically advanced system. We will also progress with our development of future transport improvement schemes to be funded by the North East CA. We will continue to develop proposals for Metro to Washington, extending the connectivity of the Metro network. We will also be working closely with our colleagues at the North East CA to investigate the potential of bus reform, a key pledge in the Mayor's manifesto. Throughout all of this, we will ensure we engage and communicate effectively with our customers to inform them of enhancements to the region's public transport offer.

Innovation and Growth – Long term goals

By 2030, we will continue to deliver for the North East Combined Authority, local authorities, and the wider Tyne and Wear transport network. We will be supporting the delivery of an integrated transport network in the region and will have made significant strides to improve the region's transport offer, including through Metro Go and the Metro to Washington extension. Our aim is that Metro to Washington will be operational by 2033. We will use data and evidence to underpin our decision making, ensure we have robust asset management plans in place for all modes and assets, and be using agile, pragmatic, and service-focused procurement methods.

DRAFT

Sustainability

Objective 10 – Becoming financially sustainable

Our Medium-Term Financial Plan shows a reliance on reserves to balance our revenue budget until 2029, which means that we need to continue making the case for the continuation of growth in the revenue grant from the North East Combined Authority (North East CA), which is funded through the CA's transport levy on Tyne and Wear council, and other grant support. Growing fare and commercial revenue is also vitally important and the initiatives set out in this Plan will help, whether directly or indirectly.

Alongside this, we will improve our budgeting processes, introducing a zero-based approach to budget setting where financial plans reflect the priorities set out in this Plan, with funding redirected where new and emerging priorities arise.

We will upskill our colleagues with financial responsibilities to become better at managing budgets and understand that obtaining value for money in our use of resources is a pre-requisite. We will also embrace continuous improvement, including by expanding our Test to Invest scheme, to evaluate ideas for proof of concept before their wider implementation. This will include generating momentum behind Project Evolve to encourage innovative ideas, and, where appropriate, we will make resources available to support.

Our capital investment plans will be financed through funds that we will access from the North East CA, and other funding sources. Because investment needed to renew and enhance our infrastructure will always be greater than available resources, prioritising this investment will be data led. We will explore alternative funding streams, using them to enhance projects, and ensure we are ready to react to new and emerging priorities.

Objective 11 – Growing commercial revenue

We will improve our resources, skills, and capacity to ensure we are enabled to grow commercial revenue. We will raise the profile of non-fare revenue across the business and deliver training for the teams who can contribute to its generation. We will embed non-fare revenue generating actions across our activities and integrate into our colleagues' roles. We will ensure, through opportunities like bus reform, that we are ready with the resources and capacity to deliver for the region.

We recognise the importance of non-fare revenue sources to support our financial position, as well as the importance of the reinvestment of commercial revenue into enhancements to our public transport offer and the customer experience. We will increase commercial revenue, including through the delivery of our commercial strategy. We will undertake a strategic review of potential commercial partnerships, ensure the business has an improved recognition and awareness of commercial opportunities, and deliver our Plan for Growth, which prioritises the generation of commercial income as one of its key aims. Workstreams include enabling commercial filming on our infrastructure and exploring opportunities which jointly benefit farebox and commercial revenue.

Metro has over fifty commercial units and sites around the network, and we will continue to invest in them to make them appealing to future tenants, including building commercial opportunities into asset management plans, station refurbishment scopes, and development

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projects. We will continue to work with third parties to develop innovative approaches to enhancing our property portfolio.

To support all the above, we will deliver our Intellectual Property and Licensing Strategy, to control, protect, and commercialise our brand and intellectual property.

In addition, we recognise the opportunities presented by our state-of-the-art Learning Centre to increase commercial revenue, by utilising our skills, facilities, and training to third parties, to create a home of real opportunity.

We are also committed to robustly tackling fraud, including through the provision of additional ticket gates, initially at Regent Centre Metro Station, to improve safety at stations. A subsequent study will assess where other ticket gates could be included on our network. Through this, we will also explore the opportunity to use alternative technologies on our ticket gates, to deliver on the ambitions of the Mayor.

Objective 12 – Measuring the impact of our work

We recognise the importance of a green, integrated transport network in creating a region we are proud to call home. We are committed to enhancing our environment and approach to sustainability, we will explore opportunities for sustainable energy generation across our network, as well as opportunities to reduce energy use. We will seek alternative funding streams to enhance the sustainability of our projects and ensure we can demonstrate a commitment to environment and sustainability through our workstreams. Included in this, we will actively work to explore options to make our Shields Ferry operations more sustainable, as part of a project to support the replacement of the Pride of the Tyne vessel. More broadly, we will establish a roadmap to decarbonisation, to establish further metrics to record our environmental performance.

We will also aim to increase our understanding of environmental legislation and compliance, working towards international standards, and ensuring minimal impact through our projects, including through carbon savings across our workstreams. We recognise the challenges extreme weather can bring, so we will continue to review and prepare for extreme weather and climate change. The development of our Land and Estate Strategy will refine our focus on biodiversity, and lineside vegetation management.

We are keen to demonstrate our continued commitment to social value, including enhancing our understanding and quantification. We will make sure our approach to social value is clearly defined and will highlight examples of our contributions, integrated into our annual reporting. We will look to explore the expansion of some of our social ticketing offers, to enable travel for all groups and communities across the region and enhance affordability. Through our station usage, we will look to encourage community engagement throughout our activities.

We want to make sure that our governance is effective, enabling, and agile, balancing this by ensuring the achievement of value for money in our use of resources. Across the organisation, we will encourage data and evidenced decisions, through the development of our performance reporting and use of the Nexus balanced scorecard performance management framework. We will make sure our meetings are effective and action-oriented, following up on the impact of actions to ensure we learn lessons across our workstreams. This will be supported by a refresh to the project control manual, to ensure we embed consistent lessons learned processes. We

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will ensure our ongoing compliance with the new Procurement Act and respond to any future changes in legislation.

Sustainability – Long term goals

By 2030, we want to be clearly demonstrating our commitment to all aspects of environment, social, and governance (ESG). This includes expanding our electric road fleet and supporting infrastructure, with fully integrated asset management. We will have implemented social value across projects and will be proactively looking to demonstrate and enhance our social value position. We will have worked to enhance our financial sustainability through our Medium-Term Financial Plan. We will be driving commercial growth through strategy and policy and ensuring fare and non-fare revenue sources are considered across our projects. We will also be continuing pursuing opportunities to install new ticket gates, to deliver on the aims of the Mayor and the North East CA to create, safer, more secure transport networks.

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