

Independent Assurance Contract Launch- Engagement Event

7 July 2025



Schedule

2:00pm – 2:10pm	Introduction Jonathan Bailes, North East CA
2:10pm – 2:30pm	Lot Overview Andrew Dorrian – North East CA
2.30pm – 2.50pm	Commissioning Specification and returns Kim Farrage – North East CA
2.50pm – 3:00pm	Procurement Process and Next Steps Roger Guy, Senior Procurement Business Partner
3.00pm – 3.30pm	Q&A



Introduction

Jonathan Bailes



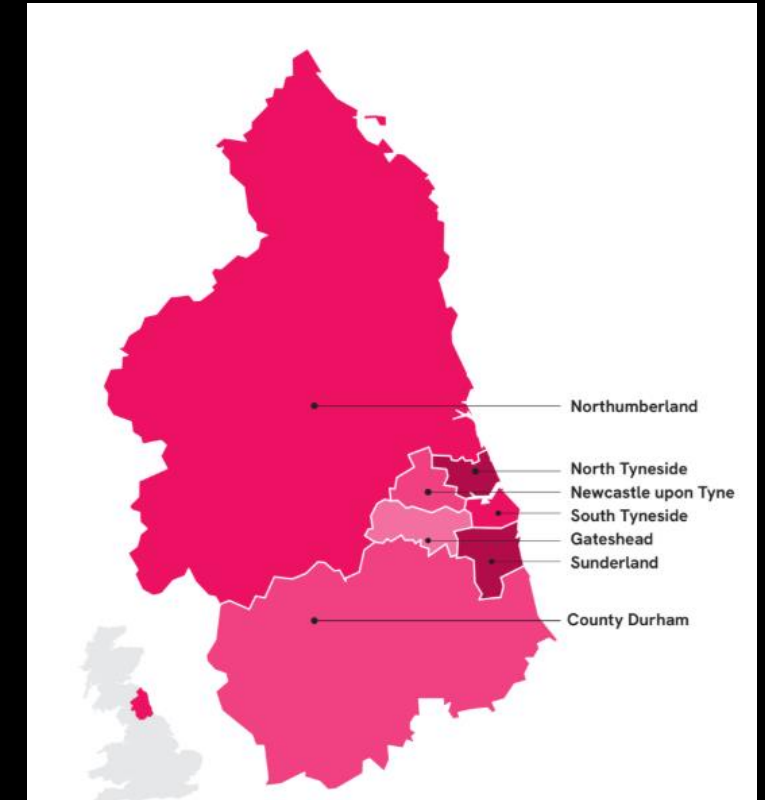
The Combined Authority

The North East Combined Authority was formed on 7 May 2024, following a devolution deal for the North East being announced in December 2023.

Led by an Elected Mayor and Cabinet, covering the seven local authority areas of County Durham, Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside and Sunderland, the CA gives local people more control over the things that matter most to them.

Through devolution deals, the Government is giving areas of the country more powers to make their own decisions on issues such as transport, skills and support for business.

We work closely with organisations and people from all across the region.



South Tyneside Council





Our Region

Low unemployment by historic standards but rising levels of health-related inactivity



3 deep-water ports, riverside assets, and international airport providing onward connectivity via Paris, Amsterdam and Dubai.

New CA, with strong political leadership and already delivering and innovating



A diverse geography with three cities, many vibrant towns, and extensive rural and coastline communities

An economy punching below its weight - with skills, productivity and GVA behind national averages. Closing the gap will benefit regional residents and economy, as well as UK plc.

Metro - the UK's original modern light rail system - operates over 77km of track, connecting Newcastle, Gateshead, North Tyneside, South Tyneside, and Sunderland. Complemented by the successful introduction of the **Northumberland Line**.



Excellent connectivity to rest of UK via East Coast mainline and strategic road network including A1, A19 and A69

2,000,000 inhabitants

4 universities, 9 FE colleges and other exemplar skills provision

Vibrant VCSE sector, with around 30,000 employees and unparalleled expertise of communities.

Distinctive cultural & visitor economy offer: >500km of coastline, two UNESCO Heritage sites, Northumberland National Park, historic castles and cathedrals, leading football teams, an international cricket ground, diverse and distinctive cultural venues

54,705 businesses providing 820,000 jobs

A £54bn economy at the heart of the UK union



Our Missions



1. Home of real opportunity



2. A North East we are proud to call home



3. Home to a growing and vibrant economy for all



4. Home of the green energy revolution



5. A welcoming home to global trade

The overall aim of these five missions is to increase opportunity, create more well-paid employment, improve transport connections, build a greener North East, and reduce child poverty.

Powering these missions is our commitment to devolving more powers out of Westminster wherever possible.

The North East Combined Authority believes people acting locally produces better results than having our decisions taken for us from afar.

We will continue to push for ambitious devolution deals and a single settlement with government.



Our Local Growth Plan

The North East has the assets and ambition to deliver growth that benefits the whole of the UK. Our regional coalition can play a vital role in helping Government deliver national targets with the right deployment of regional powers and investment.

If the North East were to grow at the same projected rate as the fastest growing G7 economy today our economy will be £13.1bn larger by 2033.

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Partners across the North East are working towards...



Creating tens of thousands of new jobs, including in the green, creative and foundational economies



Increasing residual household incomes for all our residents through better paid jobs and a better functioning housing market



Lifting tens of thousands of children out of poverty, as a first step towards its elimination



Supporting more people into work, including through a unified approach to work and health, and a more co-ordinated skills system



Supporting Government's commitment to deliver 1.5m new homes, enhancing our housing market for all our residents



Creating stronger neighbourhoods, including by reducing educational inequalities and investing in communities



Our Local Transport Plan

- The Mayor's LTP is a statutory plan which sets out in strategic terms what the Mayor aspires to achieve through transport provision and why. It was adopted in March 2025.
- Aim: to create a green, integrated transport network that works for all.
- Accompanied by delivery plan - the list of what we will build, introduce or change up to 2040 and what mechanisms we will use to deliver interventions.
- Covers movement of both people and freight.
- Our approach is that Making journeys is good as it benefits our economy. Greener journeys are even better as they also benefit our environment and health.





Transport Business Case Assurance Contract Overview

Andrew Dorrian



Independent Business Case Appraisal

- The North East CA is undertaking a significant pipeline of investment. Such investment is required to be robustly appraised in accordance with the Single Assurance Framework and Treasury Green book amongst other guidance.
- Work emanating from the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement, Bus Service Improvement Plan and the forthcoming Transport for City Regions programme is in scope through this tender.
- The types of projects where business appraisals are required (not exhaustive), are listed below.
 - Programme business cases
 - Rail Business Cases
 - Active Travel Business Cases (Programme Level and Assurance Statements)
 - Highways based interventions including modelling
 - Zero emission vehicle projects
 - Bus Capital and Revenue Projects
- As such projects are varied in their nature covering a whole host of transport schemes.
- A wider procurement for economic development projects is not included and may advance separately.



Introduction to the Invitation to Tender

- We have built this tender based on market and user engagement that took place in May and June 2025
- The procurement is for a ranked Open Procurement Framework (see overleaf) of a number of suppliers to undertake business case appraisal activities.
- The first task from the commission will be to refresh the business case guidance with clear templates and process maps and to ensure this process is collaborative.
- Consortium bids are permissible through this process. Up to six suppliers will be appointed
- In the operation of this framework regular engagement will take place with all appointed suppliers to build understanding, consistency and effectiveness in the operation of the contract. This should be reflected in submissions.
- Performance measures are also included as detailed overleaf.



Operation – Requirements

- Appointed supplier(s) will provide a final appraisal from the information provided in the business case and supporting documentation. This will include an unbiased evaluation of the business case, highlighting any risks or recommendations through a report and highlight tables.
- Appraisals will be high quality and clear which offer a clear and unambiguous view on the quality, deliverability and realism of proposals ensuring that applicant documentation is completed to a standard, inclusive and reflective of any queries, clarifications or development through the appraisal process
- A completed appraisal reports and highlight tables with analysis denoting red, amber, green matters with a suggested resolution. Where matters are not relevant, they should not be scored for example where the business case is advancing in phases.
- Typically, a draft appraisal report will be issued for resolution by the grant recipient (and if relevant their consultant teams) with optional meetings planned.
- The appointed supplier(s) will also be expected to work with North East CA, Transport and Programme Assurance Teams, North East CA Officers and the applicant / their suppliers to clarify any questions or concerns and ensure information is available to make high quality judgements.



Operation – Ranked Framework

- Framework suppliers will be ranked based on an assessment of quality and cost.
- Works orders will be placed from this framework call of contract using an order form and example will be shown in Appendix K. This will be a ranked framework using the following principles.
- Firstly, conflict management principles will apply, i.e. a consultant who has worked on the parent business case will not work on the appraisal regardless of a division of offices.
- The second principle is that the first ranked supplier will be given first preference followed by the second and third etc,
- Thirdly if a supplier has more than 4 task orders at any one time , the CA will determine that this should route to the next ranked supplier accounting for principles 1 and 2 above



Operation – Open Framework

- The framework is being procured as an Open Framework and is anticipated to start in October 2025 and will run until 31 March 2032. It is an Open Framework and as such the North East CA will review the contract in October 2027 and October 2029 to review contract performance, pricing and allow new entries to the market.
- The Provider shall be notified in writing not less than three months prior to the commencement of the review.
- This means that framework rates will be applicable from the start of the commission until the first review in October 2027 and October 2029.



Transport Business Case Assurance Contract Specification

Kim Farrage, Programme Manager



Overview of the Invitation to Tender (ITT)

- The procurement has been broken down into several components
 - ITT Open Document
 - Appendix A: Specification
 - Appendix B: Procurement Specific Questionnaire (PSQ)
 - Appendix C: Commercially Sensitive Information
 - Appendix D: Terms And Conditions
 - Appendix E: Key Performance Indicators
 - Appendix F: Scoring Matrix
 - Appendix G: Form Of Tender
 - Appendix H: Certificate Of Non-collusion And Non-canvassing
 - Appendix I: Data Sharing Agreement*
 - Appendix J: Tender Response Form
 - Appendix K: Order Form

* The Data Sharing Agreement (Appendix I) will be made available to successful bidders before any contract is awarded.



Returns

- Suppliers are required to complete and return the following separate documents:
- Appendix B: Procurement Specific Questionnaire - PSQ
- Appendix C: Commercially Sensitive Information (only if your Tender submission includes information considered by you to be confidential/commercially sensitive under the Freedom of Information Act 2000)
- Appendix G: Form of Tender
- Appendix H: Certificate of non-canvassing and non-collusion
- Appendix J: Tender response form .
- Any supplier who is successful in this Procurement will be required (before any contract is awarded) to enter into appropriate data protection agreements which are anticipated to be a Data Sharing Agreement (Appendix I).



Appendix J: Tender Response Form

- Each tender return is being evaluated and scored according the criteria as set out in Appendix F. This comprises of
 - Quality – 80%
 - Price – 20%
 - Terms and Conditions: pass/fail
- Guidance is available in each question with word limits stated, please adhere to the word limits
- Diagrams and tables can be used and do not form part of the word count but please do not add appendices with the exception of the provision of CVs of your delivery team in question 3.



Performance Measures

Timely Delivery	Suppliers return outputs within a timely fashion achieving a 95% compliance rate with the programme as agreed in the works order.
Outputs	At any stage during the contract suppliers should return queries of the Contracting Authorities and its partners within 5 working days .
	Efficacy of the advice will be tested by the Combined Authority to ensure it is accurate and robust with any recommended resolutions provided to the supplier, the supplier must return an action plan to embed those changes within 5 working days .

Payment will be associated with the delivery of outputs on a monthly basis as specified in the terms and conditions of the framework and the order form.



Social Value

- Social value is at the heart of the North East CA's commissioning and procurement activity - it seeks to maximise the collective benefit of our investments for our communities and residents.
- Potential suppliers will be asked to outline the added social value their organisation currently provides, alongside the additional steps they will commit to taking if awarded this contract – e.g. becoming an accredited real living wage employer, creation of local jobs for local people, utilising local community organisations in delivery supply chains
- Potential suppliers are encouraged to sign up to the North East CA's good employer accreditation scheme. (Shine) [Shine homepage](#)
- If applying as the lead body of a partnership, potential suppliers will also be asked to set out their commitment to working effectively with partners during delivery.
- Social value commitments will be monitored as part of the ongoing contract and performance management process.



Procurement Process and Next Steps

**Roger Guy, Senior Procurement Business
Partner**



Procurement Process

- Assurance Procurement is timed go live on **Friday 11th July 2025** via the Open e-tendering platform
- The initial term of a Contract for Service is anticipated to start in October 2025 and will run until October 2032 with reviews in 2027 and 2029 as referenced above.
- Once the ITT is live, all questions must be submitted via the e-tendering system – no communication can be undertaken with the North East CA outside of this process



Registration with our e-tendering system

Urgent Action for all Suppliers to Register on our New Procurement Platform

*As a supplier or potential supplier to North East CA you need to be registered on our **new e-tendering system, Open.***

*Open will gradually replace the NEPO Portal and become the place to find and compete for tendering opportunities in the North East. It is **free to register and use.***

*You will need to create an account on Open **to access and bid for public sector opportunities issued by the North East Combined Authority,** including this Connect to Work IPS Intervention.*

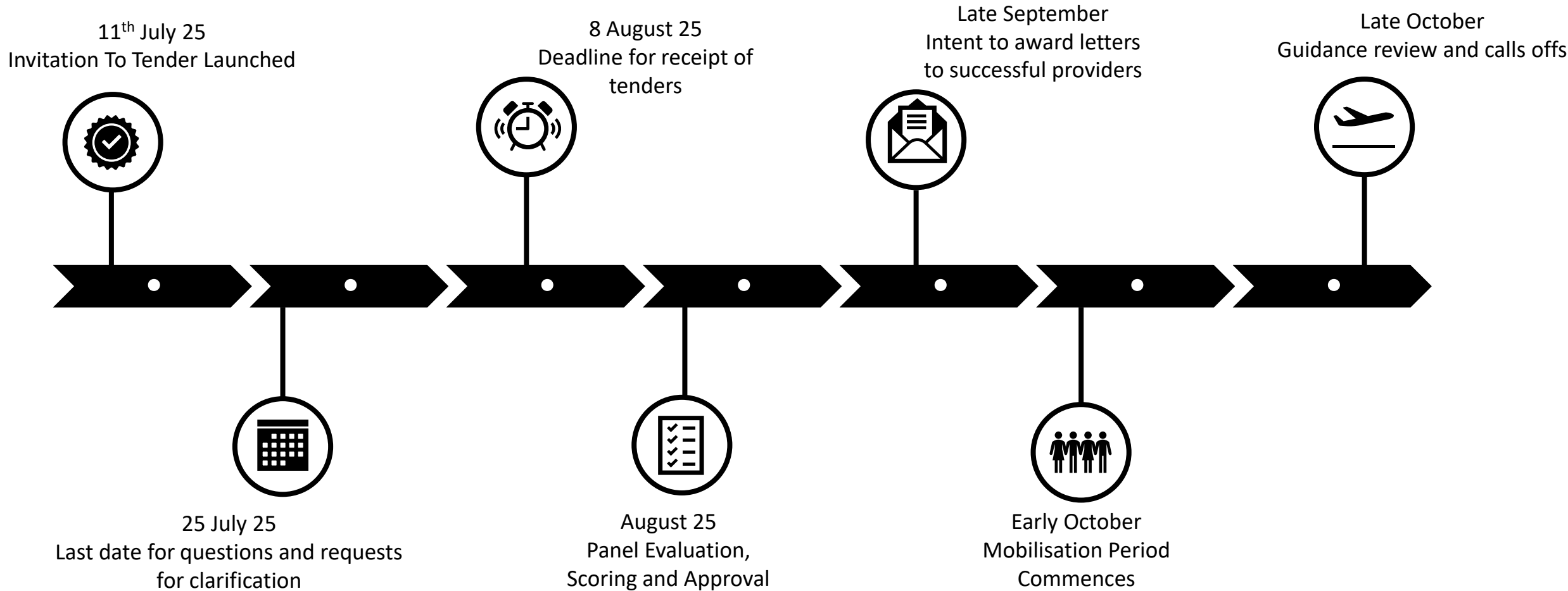
Visit www.open-uk.org to register an account.

The Open Hub provides resources and information to help you get the most out of the system. There is an FAQ section and a range of how-to guides so you can familiarise yourself with the system at your own pace.

Visit the [Open Hub](#) to find out more, or contact open.support@nepo.org



Timeline and next steps





Q&A

Any questions contact:
enquiries@northeast-ca.gov.uk

✉ enquiries@northeast-ca.gov.uk

🌐 northeast-ca.gov.uk

in the-north-east-combined-authority

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