



North East Joint Transport Committee

Tuesday, 13th July, 2021 at 2.30 pm

Meeting to be held in the Council Chamber - Civic Centre, Regent Street, Gateshead, NE8 1HH

AGENDA

	Page No
1. Apologies for Absence	
2. Declarations of Interest	
<p>Please remember to declare any personal interest where appropriate both verbally and by recording it on the relevant form (to be given to the Democratic Services Officer). Please also remember to leave the meeting where any personal interest requires this.</p>	
3. Minutes of the last meeting held on 15 June 2021	3 - 10
4. 2020/21 Revenue Budget and Capital Outturn Programme	11 - 28
5. 2021/2022 Revenue Budget and Capital Programme Update	29 - 53
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8. Transforming Cities Fund Tranche 2 - Grant Funding Agreements	81 - 86
9. Vision for Buses	87 - 116
10. East Coast Mainline - May 2022 Timetable Consultation Response	117 - 137
11. Appointment to Transport for the North, Rail North Committee	139 - 142
12. Exclusion of the Press and Public	

The Joint Transport Committee may wish to exclude the press and public during consideration of items 13, 14, 15 and 16 by virtue of paragraphs 1, 2,3,4 and 5 of Parts 1 and 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

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| 13. | Minutes of the confidential meeting held on 15 June 2021 | 143 - 144 |
| 14. | Tyne Pedestrian and Cycle Tunnels Update | 145 - 151 |
| 15. | Amendment to the Terms of Reference for the calculation of TT2 Pension Cash Collateral Account | 153 - 165 |
| 16. | North East Rail and Metro Strategy - Staffing Proposal | 167 - 171 |
| 17. | Date of next meeting | |

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 21 September 2021 at 2.30pm.

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NORTH EAST JOINT TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

DRAFT MINUTES FOR APPROVAL

DATE: 15 June 2021

Meeting held: Council Chamber, Gateshead Civic Centre

Committee Members Present:

Councillor: M Gannon (Chair)

Councillors: J Foreman, C Johnson, C Rowntree, G Sanderson and E Scott

In attendance:

Councillor: J McCarty and Mayor J Driscoll

Statutory Officers: M Barker (Monitoring Officer - Transport)
P Darby (Chief Finance Officer)
T Hughes (Managing Director, Transport North East)
S Ramsey (Lead Chief Executive for Transport)

Officers: G Armstrong, J Bailes, F Bootle, R Forsyth-Ward,
A Graham, A Harhoff, T Male, P Meikle, J Sparks, E Reynard
and A White.

1. APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2021/22

RESOLVED: The North East Joint Transport Committee appointed:

- (i) Councillor M Gannon as Chair for the municipal year 2021/22; and
- (ii) Councillor C Johnson as the Vice Chair for the municipal year 2021/22.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor T Dixon and Councillor N Forbes.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 16 MARCH 2021

The minutes were agreed as a correct record.

5. APPOINTMENT OF JTC COMMITTEES

The Committee considered a report which sought approval of the membership of the JTC Audit Committee, JTC Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Tyne and Wear Sub-Committee.

The report also sought approval for the reappointment of the Independent Chairs and Vice Chairs for the JTC Audit Committee and JTC Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the appointment of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Tyne and Wear Sub-Committee.

RESOLVED: The North East Joint Transport Committee:

- (i) Agreed the appointment of committee members and sub-committee members for the municipal year 2021/22 as set out in Appendix A of the report;
- (ii) Agreed the re-appointment of Mark Scrimshaw as Chair and Stuart Green as Vice Chair for the JTC Audit Committee for one year;
- (iii) Agreed the reappointment of David Taylor-Gooby as Chair and Andrew Clark as Vice Chair for the JTC Overview and Scrutiny Committee for one year;
- (iv) Agreed the appointment of Councillor C Johnson as Chair and Councillor J McElroy as Vice Chair for the Tyne and Wear Sub-Committee for the municipal year 2021/22; and
- (v) Agreed to delegate any changes to membership necessary to accommodate political balance, or appointments to any outstanding vacancies, on any of the Joint Transport Committees to the Lead Chief Executive (Transport) following consultation with the Chair of the JTC to comply with the relevant legislation and ensure any vacancies can be filled as soon as possible.

6. PROGRAMME OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR THE 2021/22 MUNICIPAL YEAR

The Committee considered a report which sought agreement of the proposed calendar of committee meetings for the municipal year 2021/22.

RESOLVED: The North East Joint Transport Committee agreed the proposed calendar of meetings as set out in Appendix A of the report.

7. TRANSPORT NORTH EAST – TRANSPORT PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee considered a report which provided an update on the progress made across the seven Delivery Plan categories in implementing the objectives of the North East Transport Plan and achieving the vision of ‘moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East’.

The Government has recently published the Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail which proposes a new public body, Great British Railways, to provide integrated rail services.

Consultation has begun on a new timetable for the East Coast Main Line (ECML), which if agreed, will be introduced in May 2022. The proposed new timetable will speed up services between London and Newcastle, but it results in a decrease in services to and from Berwick and Darlington. In addition, the direct LNER service from Sunderland to London will cease.

LRRRG funding for Tyne and Wear Metro continues to be provided by the Treasury and is due to end on 21 June, however it is expected that it will be extended due to the Government’s delay in ending lockdown restrictions. Negotiations are continuing regarding a long-term solution to the funding issue.

The Committee were advised that Trade Unions have recently announced strike action on Tyne and Wear Metro from 28 June – 4 July followed by an overtime ban. Negotiations are ongoing with Stadler-Rail with the aim of avoiding strike action.

Councillor Sanderson felt that the proposals for the ECML timetable changes were very frustrating for the region, especially for those passengers who use the trains to commute to and from Morpeth. In addition, a new theatre is being built in Berwick and reduced train services will have an impact on it. He also added that the proposals would encourage more people to use cars rather than public transport which is giving out the wrong message at the wrong time. He felt that the region needed to continue to work together for a more positive outcome.

Councillor Scott added that although there were some benefits for Durham and Chester-le-Street within the new timetable proposals, overall, she agreed that the changes would have a negative impact for the region.

Mayor Driscoll agreed with Councillor Sanderson's comments and added that increased Metro ridership is essential for the region's Bus Strategy and that the public just want a good integrated transport system.

Councillor Gannon commented that this was a major issue for the region and is something he has been campaigning about for a while. He added that investment needed to be made in the ECML including the reopening of the Leamside Line to increase rail capacity in the North East. Northumberland County Council are pushing ahead with the Northumberland Line to increase connectivity with the rest of the region as well as improving the economy and air quality. The Leamside Line provides an opportunity to connect with the Metro system as well as other public transport. He added that if this investment is not provided it will be a disaster for the North East's economy.

Councillor Gannon suggested that he writes again to the Secretary of State for Transport on behalf of the Committee, to outline its concerns over the proposals.

RESOLVED: The North East Joint Transport Committee noted the report.

8. ACTIVE TRAVEL UPDATE

The Committee considered a report which provided an update on three recent regional active travel activities and proposals – the Go Smarter, Go Active campaign, notification from the Department for Transport of Active Travel Capability Funding and a proposal to establish an Active Travel Partnership.

Go Smarter, Go Active Campaign

At its last meeting on 16 March 2021, JTC agreed to allocate £319,500 from Active Travel Fund Tranche 2 to deliver a marketing campaign to encourage the use of the cycling and walking infrastructure to explore the region, improve health and boost the local economy.

The regional campaign consists of three projects:

- Strongly advertised active travel itineraries for days out using active travel across the North East;
- Maps of our cycling and walking network; and
- Regional cycling road show events and interactive workshops in the seven local authority areas.

The campaign will be launched in June 2021.

Active Travel Capability Fund

On 3 March 2021, notification was received from the Department for Transport (DfT) that the region is to receive £2,157,597 Active Travel Capability revenue funding for 2021/22.

As part of the conditions for the funding, proformas have completed with input from each of the seven local authorities and have been submitted to DfT, outlining how the funding will be spent and providing assurance that the proposals offer value for money. Confirmation of the exact funding amount is expected imminently.

Active Travel Partnership

Following feedback from the North East Transport Plan consultation, it is proposed that a regional Active Travel Partnership is established to strengthen the links between the Joint Transport Committee and groups campaigning for active travel.

The Partnership would provide an opportunity to share identify best practice, share knowledge, expertise, data and research as well as improving relationships and strengthening regional funding bids.

Councillor McCarty was very supportive of the Go Smarter, Go Active campaign and added that it would be beneficial if it was available for the school holidays. She was also supportive of the Active Travel Partnership and suggested that this should also be open to lobbying groups who often contact elected members.

Councillor Gannon supported these comments.

RESOLVED: The North East Joint Transport Committee:

- (i) Noted the progress being made to deliver the Go Smarter, Go Active Campaign;
- (ii) Noted the proposals for spending the Active Travel Capability Funding indicative allocation have been submitted to the Department for Transport; and
- (iii) Agreed to the principle of establishing an Active Travel Partnership.

9. BUS PARTNERSHIPS

The Committee considered a report which outlined the process of developing an Enhanced Bus Partnership as required as part of the Government's National Bus Strategy.

The Joint Transport Committee has previously agreed to establish a voluntary bus partnership with local bus operators based on shared objectives. However, the National Bus Strategy requires that a more formal framework is put in place for partnership working between local transport authorities and local bus operators and requires that a statutory Enhanced Bus Partnership is implemented under the Bus Services Act 2017.

In addition, the National Bus Strategy requires that local transport authorities must commit to developing an Enhanced Bus Partnership by the end of June 2021 and publish a statutory notice to that effect. In addition, they must develop and publish a Bus Service Improvement Plan by the end of October, setting out the outcomes they wish to see delivered through the Enhanced Bus Partnership by the end of October 2021, and negotiate and implement it by April 2022.

The Government has announced funding of £3bn nationally to support the policies set out in the National Bus Strategy and have been clear that funding will not be available to local transport authorities and local bus operators who do not develop an Enhanced Bus Partnership.

The National Bus Strategy and funding support provides the JTC with the opportunity to start delivering the objectives set out in the North East Transport Plan.

The Committee were advised that a representative from the Tyne and Wear Public Transport Users Group (TWPTUG) had wished to speak at the meeting today but was unable to attend, to speak to the Committee about the Group's views on bus franchising which it felt would provide better outcomes for passengers than an Enhanced Partnership. Correspondence from the Group has been received by the Chair and would be circulated to the Committee.

The Committee were reminded that the JTC does not have the automatic powers to establish a bus franchise and would need permission from the Secretary of State for Transport in order to do this, which would be a lengthy process.

Mayor Driscoll noted that all of the bus operators want to provide the best service possible but there is still low ridership as a result of the pandemic. He added that the Government are not providing a choice regarding implementing an Enhanced Bus Partnership as funding would not be made available for any other model. He believed that a bus franchise is a better option for the region in the longer term and suggested that this option should remain open alongside the development of the Enhanced Partnership.

Councillor Scott requested that the Committee be provided with resource implications on a franchise model and the costs for each local authority.

Councillor Gannon agreed and added that he was clear most of the local authorities would prefer a bus franchise, but this was not possible under the National Bus Strategy or within the gift of the Joint Transport Committee due to the complications around the Governance arrangements. He accepted that the Enhanced Partnership would need to be established within the very tight timescales.

Councillor McCarty endorsed Councillor Gannon's comments and added that there was no choice regarding the Enhanced Partnership. She also agreed with Councillor Scott's suggestion that the costs of a bus franchise be investigated.

Councillor Gannon agreed and requested that a report be presented to a future JTC regarding bus franchises including the financial and legal implications.

Councillor Johnson agreed with the points raised by the TWPTUG and added that the region needed an effective bus service with as much funding as possible. Without the Enhanced Partnership this would not be possible.

Councillor Gannon agreed and asked whether the ambitions of a bus franchise could be achieved via the Enhanced Partnership?

RESOLVED: The North East Joint Transport Committee:

- (i) Agreed to confirm to Government their commitment to developing an Enhanced Partnership in line with the National Bus Strategy requirements;
- (ii) Agreed to issue formal notice of intent to prepare an Enhanced Partnership Plan and Schemes to bus operators and to begin consultation with local bus operators in order to pursue it; and
- (iii) Noted the requirement for local authorities as statutory highway authorities for the area to commit to be part of the partnership program.

10. BUS PARTNERSHIP PROJECT RESOURCES

The Committee considered a report which proposed the establishment of a project team to deliver an Enhanced Bus Partnership for the region in line with the National Bus Strategy, and how the budget will be funded.

A variety of roles are required as part of the project team as well as specialist legal advice. There is also likely to be a need to invest in bus industry IT software as well as the costs of running public engagement exercises.

The estimated total cost of the project is £1.684m. A contribution from JTC reserves has been identified, as well as some funding from DfT and Nexus. However, this leaves a funding gap of £844,000 which, unless other funding streams can be identified will need to be met by the seven local authorities.

RESOLVED: The North East Joint Transport Committee:

- (i) Agreed to establish a project team to deliver an Enhanced Partnership;
- (ii) Agreed a gross budget of £1.684m (inclusive of 20% contingencies) to deliver the project, with LA7 authorities providing a contribution of up to £844k in the amounts set out in paragraph 2.4 of the report.

11. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: The North East Joint Transport Committee agreed to exclude the press and public during consideration of item 11 by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

North East Joint Transport Committee

Date: 13 July 2021

Subject: 2020/21 Revenue Budget and Capital Programme Outturn

Report of: Chief Finance Officer

Executive Summary

This report provides the North East Joint Transport Committee (JTC) with the outturn position in relation to the 2020/21 Transport Revenue Budget and Transport Capital Programme.

The report covers all areas of the revenue budget including the Transport Levies and grants to Durham, Northumberland and Nexus, Transport Strategy Unit and the Tyne Tunnels revenue account.

The outturn position shows that expenditure was within the revised budgets approved by the JTC. Where grants are paid to other organisations for the delivery of transport service (i.e. Durham, Northumberland and Nexus), the grant is fixed for the year but the report provides details of how the grant has been applied by each organisation to the provision of public transport services.

Durham County Council, Northumberland County Council and Nexus all reported surpluses against the grant paid from the JTC, which will be retained within their own reserves.

The Tyne Tunnels account outturn was a small surplus of £0.023m, which has been retained in the Tyne Tunnels reserves.

The Transport Strategy Unit outturn was a small underspend against the budget for the year which meant that there was a lower than budgeted use of reserves required to support expenditure in year. Additional unbudgeted income was received at the year end from Nexus to support work on local rail studies and the Bus Partnership programme. These funds will be held in reserves for use to fund expenditure in 2021/22 and future years.

The Transport capital programme encompasses a wide range of capital schemes, mainly delivered by constituent local authorities and Nexus, but also investment in the Combined Authorities' own assets, including the Tyne Tunnels.

The report identifies that total capital expenditure incurred on Transport schemes was £83.449m during 2020/21 against the revised programme budget of £95.612m, an underspend of £12.163m.

The revised capital programme included £2.725m for Tranche 1 of the Transforming Cities Fund, with outturn spend of £1.932m as a small number of schemes will now complete during 2021/22.

Tranche 2 of the Transforming Cities Fund programme totalling £198.484m was awarded to the JTC by the DfT in March 2020. £0.726m of expenditure was incurred during 2020/21, primarily on payments to support project sponsors' work on developing detailed business cases for full approval. Expenditure of £1.142m for the Nexus Metro Flow project is outlined within the sections on the Metro capital programme. This was £0.560m underspent against the revised programme budget of £1.702m due to savings on the procurement of the main contractor for the works.

Investment on electric vehicle infrastructure was supported during 2020/21 with the Go Ultra Low project now largely complete and expenditure of £0.426m incurred during the year. £0.419m was incurred on the Low Emission taxis project to deliver dedicated chargers for the taxi and private hire industry.

Expenditure in the year on the Metro Asset Renewal Plan programme totalled £20.990m against a revised programme budget of £24.635m and is within the minimum and maximum levels set for the year by the Department for Transport (DfT).

The Metro Fleet Replacement project outturn for the year was £43.689m against revised budget of £48.605m, due to a delay in the commencement of construction works at Gosforth Depot which is not expected to cause a delay in the overall programme timetable.

Expenditure on Nexus Other Capital Projects was £0.770m against the revised programme budget of £2.074m, largely due to delays to the commencement of works to refurbish the North Shields Ferry Landing.

In terms of the Tyne Pedestrian and Cycle Tunnels there is still outstanding work to complete on the commissioning of the inclined lifts to enable the operation of the tunnels to be handed over to TT2. The tunnels have been operating well during 2020/21 with access via the vertical lifts.

Most of the capital works during the year have been funded through government grants awarded (£80.603m) with elements of the Nexus capital programme and the Tyne Pedestrian and Cyclist Tunnels works funded by reserves (£2.846m) held specifically for this purpose.

Recommendations

The North East Joint Transport Committee is recommended to note the report.

1. Background Information

- 1.1 At its meeting held on 21 January 2020, the JTC agreed a Transport levy budget for 2020/21 of £82.800m, with regular updates, including a forecast outturn position being reported to JTC over the last twelve months. This report presents the final outturn position for the 2020/21 financial year.
- 1.2 In January 2020, the Joint Transport Committee (JTC) also approved the initial 2020/21 capital programme totalling £81.566m. The capital programme was then updated to take account of adjustments for slippage from 2019/20 and for new grant approvals made after the original capital programme was agreed, particularly in relation to Transforming Cities Fund Tranche 2 – which was reported at the meeting in July. The programme was subsequently updated in reports to the JTC in October, November 2020 and January 2021.

2. Proposals

2.1 Transport Revenue Budget Summary

The table below summarises the outturn position against the net Transport Levy budget (i.e. the net cost to the JTC after external income) for 2020/21. The levies and grants to Durham, Northumberland and Nexus are fixed for the year, but details of how the grant were applied by each organisation to the provision of public transport services is set out in more detail in the following sections. Expenditure on the Retained Transport Levy budget was below the revised budget with a variance of £0.084m due to lower financing charges on historic debt inherited from the Tyne and Wear Integrated Transport Authority.

Table 1: Transport Levy Budget 2020/21

	Original Budget	Revised Budget	Outturn	Variance
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Total Transport Levies				
Grant to Durham	15.456	15.456	15.456	0.000
Grant to Northumberland	6.224	6.224	6.224	0.000
Grant to Nexus	59.000	59.000	59.000	0.000
Retained Transport Levy Budget	2.120	2.120	2.036	(0.084)
NET	82.800	82.800	82.716	(0.084)
Contribution (to)/from JTC reserves	0.000	0.000	(0.084)	(0.084)

Durham

2.2 The following table provides a detailed breakdown of expenditure for Durham:

Table 2: Durham County Council

	2020/21 Original Budget	2020/21 Revised Budget	2020/21 Outturn	Variance (Outturn vs Revised Budget)
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Concessionary Fares	11.932	11.932	11.680	(0.252)
Subsidised Services	2.556	2.564	2.479	(0.085)
Bus Stations	0.177	0.159	0.178	0.019
Bus Shelters	0.019	0.082	0.115	0.033
Passenger Transport Information	0.088	0.061	0.102	0.041
Staffing	0.684	0.685	0.668	(0.017)
Share of JTC Transport Costs	0.010	0.010	0.010	0.000
Net Expenditure	15.466	15.493	15.232	(0.261)
JTC Levy	(15.466)	(15.466)	(15.466)	0.000
(Surplus) / Deficit for the year	0.000	0.027	(0.234)	(0.261)

2.3 Expenditure for Durham County Council was £0.261m below the revised budget for the year, which represents an underspend against the transport grant of £0.234m. This was mainly due to savings on Concessionary Fares arising from a change in government guidance from January 2021 which allowed reimbursement to be reduced by an equivalent to the reduction in services operated by bus companies during the third national lockdown.

Subsidised Services were £0.085m under budget relating to minor variances across the bus network. Bus Shelters were £0.033m over budget due to additional repairs to and provision of bus shelters in County Durham. Expenditure on Passenger Transport Information was £0.041m over budget relating to additional expenditure on IT services.

The underspend against the levy grant will be retained by Durham County Council reserves.

Northumberland

2.4 The following table provides a detailed breakdown of expenditure in Northumberland:

Table 3: Northumberland County Council

	2020/21 Original Budget	2020/21 Revised Budget	2020/21 Outturn	Variance (Outturn vs Revised Budget)
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Concessionary Fares	4.812	4.772	4.618	(0.154)
Subsidised Services	1.230	1.230	1.170	(0.060)
Bus Services	0.024	0.024	0.036	0.012
Passenger Transport Information	0.025	0.025	0.00	(0.025)
Staffing	0.133	0.133	0.133	0.000
Share of JTC Transport Costs	0.010	0.010	0.010	0.000
Net Expenditure	6.234	6.194	5.967	(0.227)
JTC Levy	(6.234)	(6.234)	(6.234)	0.000
(Surplus) / Deficit for the year	0.000	(0.040)	(0.267)	(0.227)

2.5 The outturn position was £0.227m underspent against the revised budget, primarily relating to underspends on both Concessionary Fares and Subsidised Bus Services. Following the Covid-19 outbreak the majority of supported services within Northumberland continued to operate, albeit for the most part at a reduced frequency. The Council continued to pay operators at full contracted prices with the exception of some seasonal services that had been due to commence from 5 April 2020 when these services were suspended until the resolution of the Covid-19 crisis or at such point when it was deemed fit to resume. Some of these services have now commenced operating. These supported services include instances of services running commercially at popular/peak times, but where support is given to maintain journeys at other times for example early mornings or late evenings.

2.6 Northumberland County Council also makes payments to operators under the Government's English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) which entitles pass holders to free off-peak travel after 9:30am on local bus services. Patronage using the scheme was significantly reduced due to the introduction of the Government's lockdown policy in response to the Covid-19 outbreak. The Council has continued to reimburse operators at pre-pandemic levels to ensure the viability of routes and operators is maintained, in line with the Cabinet Office Procurement Policy Note 02/20 – Supplier Relief due to Covid-19, for at least the period of the outbreak to enable the resumption of socially necessary services afterwards.

Tyne and Wear - Nexus

2.7 In the most recent report to the JTC on 16 March 2021 (which covered the

period up to 2 January 2021), the forecast outturn for the year ended 31 March 2021 was reported as a deficit of £0.170m before taxation. Since that date, due to changes in government legislation regarding Concessionary Travel payments to commercial operators, along with savings in support services this position has improved. The final outturn position for the financial year is a surplus of £2.318m.

- 2.8 Usable reserves reduced by £0.520m year on year as £2.838m was used to finance capital expenditure during 2020/21 not funded by government grant, as set out in the capital report at section 2.38.
- 2.9 The variances against budget for the year are shown in the table below split by service area and are shown after the allocation of indirect costs:

Table 4: Nexus Outturn 2020/21

	2020/21 Budget	2020/21 Outturn	Variance (Outturn vs Revised Budget)
	£m	£m	£m
ENCTS & Discretionary CT	38.536	37.041	(1.495)
Metro	3.299	3.299	-
Bus Services	12.602	12.348	(0.254)
Other	4.563	4.094	(0.469)
Total Requirement	59.000	56.782	(2.218)
NEMOL adjustments	-	(0.100)	(0.100)
Levy/NECA grant	(59.000)	(59.000)	-
Surplus before capital adjustments	-	(2.318)	(2.318)

- 2.10 As previously reported the Covid-19 pandemic has significantly impacted the financial position of Nexus. The outturn includes £35.150m of emergency government funding, which represents 66% of the original fare and commercial revenue budget for Nexus for 2020/21.

2.11 **English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) and Discretionary Concessionary Travel (CT)**

The under spend across both statutory and discretionary elements of the CT budget is a net saving of £1.495m.

In line with Government guidance Nexus reimbursed bus operators in respect of Concessionary fares at pre-Covid budgeted levels to 6 January 2021 and due to a change in government guidance, at an average of 80% of pre-Covid budgeted levels during national lockdown 3 (based on the level of service being operated by the bus companies during the period through to early April). The saving generated by reducing payments from this date in 2020/21 was £1.037m.

Of the £33.708m statutory ENCTS payments made over the year, it is estimated that £21.326m, or 63%, is effectively an overpayment for which Nexus placed reliance on Public Procurement Notices issued by the Cabinet Office and more latterly, a Statutory Instrument that was laid before parliament in March 2021.

The remaining savings of £0.458m are due to higher than budgeted income of £0.115m and £0.343m of savings across support services.

2.12 **Metro**

Over the course of the financial year the Covid-19 pandemic had a significant adverse effect on patronage and Metro fare revenue. Metro fares and commercial revenue was £15.652m, which is £33.895m less than budget. Whilst Government (DfT) had previously committed up to £38.000m of LRRRG for 2020/21 Metro's fare and commercial revenue losses have averaged at 68% as opposed to the forecast at the beginning of the pandemic (which was just below 80%).

Metro also attracted £0.316m in Coronavirus Job Retention Support funding from Government for a limited number of furloughed staff.

Additional costs amounting to £1.046m attributable to Covid-19 e.g. PPE, deep cleaning, additional signage etc have been more than offset by savings which mostly relate to a reduction in traction energy.

At the year end, the call on the Tyne and Wear transport levy for Metro services remained at £3.299m.

2.13 **Bus Services**

Bus commercial revenue was £0.822m, which was £1.335m less than budget (62% down).

Additional secured services costs in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic are £0.400m and includes £0.136m for additional services to the Nightingale vaccination centre. The costs have been partially offset by cost savings of £0.317m in relation to support services.

The overall net losses for bus services was £1.418m which was 100% funded from LACBSSG.

The Department of Education confirmed that the region will receive £5.5m of grant funding to provide additional bus and special needs services to allow for social distancing. Nexus costs in respect of additional scholars' services provided to the end of the financial year are £1.358m and will be met in full from this grant.

The take up of the taxi card scheme has been significantly lower this year which has resulted in an overall cost saving to Nexus of £0.254m. This has not been factored into the determination of LACBSSG as it does not form part of the secured bus services budget.

2.14 **Other**

Other includes Ferry, Local Rail, Bus Information and Passenger Transport Information.

Other revenue losses for the year total £0.469m, comprising £0.270m of lost Ferry income, £0.091m of revenue in relation to replacement Metro passes and £0.136m of lost retail sales commission. These losses have been claimed from MHCLG. The funding is calculated on a percentage basis and it is anticipated to cover £0.308m (62%) of such losses.

The £0.188m net loss in other income has been offset by savings of £0.656m across a wide range of headings, the majority of which relates to indirect overheads/support services.

The combined outturn position for all other service areas is a surplus of £0.468m.

2.15 North East Metro Operations Limited (NEMOL)

At entity level, NEMOL has made a small surplus of £0.100m which is due to the release of Research and Development tax credits for prior years of £0.070m and the release of an unused provision of £0.030m relating to 2019/20.

NEMOL has effectively been wound up because it no longer employs any staff and its pension deficit has transferred to Stadler Rail Services (in regards active employees) and Nexus (in regards deferred pensioners and pensioners in payment).

Tyne Tunnels

2.16 The Tyne Tunnels are operated as a ringfenced account, so all costs associated with the tunnels are fully met from toll income and Tyne Tunnels reserves, with no call on the levy or other public funding. The outturn position for the year is in line with the updated position reported to the March 2021 JTC meeting and shows the payment of support to TT2 for the introduction of the Tyne Pass Scheme which will be repaid with interest by TT2 over the life of the concession to 2037. Details are set out in the table below:

2.17 *Table 5: Tyne Tunnels Revenue Account*

	2020/21 Original budget	2020/21 Revised budget	2020/21 Outturn	Variance (Outturn vs Revised Budget)
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Tolls Income	(28.441)	(18.714)	(20.443)	(1.729)
TT2 Contract Payment	21.653	11.900	12.717	0.817
TT2 Advance (Tyne Pass)	0.000	6.670	6.670	0.000
Employees	0.062	0.069	0.069	0.000
Historic Pension Costs	0.053	0.050	0.050	0.000
Premises	0.000	0.015	0.001	(0.014)
Support Services	0.100	0.113	0.189	0.076

Supplies and Services	0.045	0.042	0.047	0.005
Financing Charges	6.816	6.815	7.668	0.853
Interest/Misc. Income	(0.050)	(0.050)	(0.081)	(0.031)
Repayment from former TWITA reserves	(0.240)	(0.240)	(0.240)	0.000
(Surplus)/Deficit on Tyne Tunnels account	(0.002)	6.670	6.647	(0.023)

2.18 Major variances against the revised budget are accounted for as follows:

- (i) Tolls income recovered more strongly during the early months of 2021 than previously anticipated when the revised budget for the year was prepared. There has been a corresponding overspend against the revised budget for contract payments to TT2, which are determined with reference to traffic levels and which are offset by additional tolls income.
- (ii) Overall traffic levels for the 2020/21 were significantly below normal levels, dropping to as low as 30% of normal levels during March and April 2020, the lowest level of traffic seen during the life of the TT2 contract. During the summer months of 2020 traffic increased and by the end of August was almost 85% of normal levels. However local Covid-19 restrictions put in place from mid-September onwards saw usage levels drop off again. Traffic during the November national lockdown was 73% of normal levels. During the early months of 2021 traffic dropped again to 65% under the January national lockdown restrictions and has remained around 70-75% of normal levels during March.
- (iii) Higher than budgeted financing charges are shown in the outturn, due to a Voluntary Additional Revenue Provision for the repayment of debt being made during the year.

2.19 The final outturn position was a small surplus of £0.023m which has been taken to reserves.

Transport Strategy Unit (TSU)

2.20 The Transport Strategy Unit (TSU) supports the JTC, providing relevant information to support policy choices and to deliver policies at a regional level. The TSU's activities include developing and maintaining the Transport Plan, coordinating and preparing bids for external funding, providing input to the LEP's strategies and plans on transport, maintaining a project pipeline and assurance framework, preparing responses to transport consultations and policy-making opportunities by government and other external agencies, providing input into Transport for the North (TfN) pan-Northern policies and plans and managing relationships with other authorities (whether local, combined, national or sub-

national) with whom the JTC may share a common interest.

2.21 The TSU is funded through a top slice of the Local Transport Plan (LTP) Integrated Transport Block grant which is awarded to the JTC plus contributions from the Transport Levies which are retained to support JTC activity centrally and external contributions to fund specific posts and activities. A series of studies looking at the feasibility of various local rail expansion proposals was commenced by Nexus in early 2020. The lead responsibility for these studies has now transferred to Transport North East (TNE), contracts have been novated to facilitate this and the budget established by Nexus has been transferred to TNE to fund completion of this work (£0.754m in 2020/21 and £1.187m in 2021/22), and will be held in reserves to fund expenditure in future years. A further contribution £0.500m has been made by Nexus to support work on the development of the bus partnership which will be held in reserves and will reduce contributions required from Tyne and Wear councils to support this work during 2021/22.

2.22 The outturn for the year shows expenditure of £15.070m against a revised budget of £16.850m. This includes payments of Covid-19 grants to local authorities which were lower than the budget by £1.647m resulting from lower than originally anticipated costs claimed by the local authorities and Nexus on supported bus services (reimbursed by LACBSSG grant from DfT) and Home to School transport (reimbursed by grant from DfE). Any unused grants have been rolled forward to be used in the 2021/22 financial year or returned to the relevant awarding body where not required.

2.23 The outturn position is summarised in the table below:

Table 6: Transport Strategy Unit

	2020/21 Original Budget	2020/21 Revised Budget	2020/21 Outturn	Variance (Outturn vs Revised Budget)
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Gross Expenditure				
Employees	0.721	0.684	0.694	0.010
Transport Plan and Strategy Work	0.050	0.108	0.074	(0.034)
TSU Research and Development	0.120	0.091	0.059	(0.032)
TSU Travel and Miscellaneous	0.016	0.003	0.009	0.006
TSU IT / Equipment / Accommodation	0.010	0.019	0.017	(0.002)
TSU Contingency	0.010	0.000	0.000	0.000
Go Ultra Low – Revenue	0.000	0.156	0.079	(0.077)
TCF Tranche 1 and Tranche	0.000	0.194	0.262	0.068

2 Programme Management				
Covid –19 grants	0.000	15.515	13.868	(1.647)
Bus Covid Recovery Project	0.000	0.080	0.008	(0.072)
Total Expenditure	0.927	16.850	15.070	(1.780)
	2020/21 Original Budget	2020/21 Revised Budget	2020/21 Outturn	Variance (Outturn vs Revised Budget)
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Gross Income				
LTP funding - TSU	(0.500)	(0.500)	(0.500)	0.000
LGF funding - TSU	(0.095)	(0.056)	(0.025)	0.031
Retained Transport Levy	(0.129)	(0.129)	(0.129)	0.000
External funding for specific posts	(0.148)	(0.168)	(0.165)	0.003
ERDF grant – Go Ultra Low – Revenue	0.000	(0.156)	(0.079)	0.077
TCF Grant income	0.000	(0.194)	(0.262)	(0.068)
Covid-19 grants	0.000	(15.515)	(13.868)	1.647
Budget transfer from Nexus – Metro and Rail Studies	0.000	0.000	(0.754)	(0.754)
Budget transfer from Nexus – Bus Partnership	0.000	0.000	(0.500)	(0.500)
Total Income	(0.872)	(16.718)	(16.282)	0.436
Net	0.055	0.132	(1.212)	(1.344)
(Use of) / Transfers to Reserves				
JTC Unallocated reserve	0.000	(0.080)	(0.008)	0.072
Regional Transport Team Reserves	(0.005)	(0.002)	0.016	0.018
Go Smarter legacy funds - Other	(0.050)	(0.050)	(0.050)	0.000
Earmarked Reserve – Metro and Rail Studies	0.000	0.000	0.754	0.754
Earmarked Reserve – Bus Partnership	0.000	0.000	0.500	0.500

Transport Capital Programme 2020/21 Outturn

- 2.24 A summary of the Transport capital programme for 2020/21 is set out in the table below, with further details provided in the following sections.

Table 7: Transport Capital Programme Outturn 2020/21

	2020/21 Revised	2020/21 Outturn	Variance
	£m	£m	£m
Transforming Cities Fund Tranche 1	2.725	1.932	(0.793)
Transforming Cities Fund Tranche 2 (Excluding Metro Flow)	1.517	0.726	(0.791)
Go Ultra Low	0.384	0.426	0.042
Go Ultra Low Taxi Project	0.497	0.419	(0.078)
Metro Asset Renewal Plan	24.635	20.990	(3.645)
Metro Fleet Replacement	48.605	43.689	(4.916)
Nexus Other Capital Projects	2.074	0.770	(1.304)
Metro Flow	1.702	1.142	(0.560)
Tyne Tunnels	1.007	0.952	(0.055)
Local Transport Plan ¹	11.309	11.246	(0.063)
Active Travel Fund (capital elements)	1.157	1.157	0.000
Total Capital Programme	95.612	83.449	(12.163)

Transforming Cities Fund

- 2.25 The North East has been awarded £208m grant from the Transforming Cities Fund (TCF), of which £10m was for Tranche 1 and £198m was for Tranche 2. Within the Tranche 2 schemes, £104m is for schemes where the decision making on funding is devolved to the region, and the remaining £94m is for the Metro Flow scheme managed by Nexus, where the decision-making on the funding is retained by the Department for Transport (DfT).
- 2.26 Outturn expenditure on the Tranche 1 schemes, some of which saw delays due to the Covid-19 pandemic, is £1.932m against the revised programme budget of £2.725m. The majority of Tranche 1 schemes have now reached final completion. Tranche 1 funding that was initially allocated to two schemes in Newcastle has been refocused to achieve similar outcomes at different locations in the City Centre and its approaches and will complete during 2021/22.
- 2.27 Following agreement from the JTC at its last meeting, funds were released to cover

¹ Excluding amounts for local contribution to Metro ARP, shown within Nexus capital programme lines

spend for development and design work in 2020/21 for a number of TCF Tranche 2 schemes. Outturn expenditure for these claims and programme management costs totalled £0.726m against the revised forecast of £0.249m, with the additional spend being on claims from projects for development and design work.

Go Ultra Low

- 2.28 The Go Ultra Low project is jointly funded through funding from Office for Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV) and European Regional Development Funding (ERDF) resources and includes the construction of one of the UK's first Electric Vehicle (EV) filling stations at West Wear Street in Sunderland city centre, along with the installation of a number of rapid charging clusters across the region.
- 2.29 The GULNE project ended on 30 May 2021. With the exception of one out of the eleven new Electric Vehicle hubs which has yet to be commissioned, all the project deliverables are in place including SME engagement and the Sunderland EV filling station.
- 2.30 Expenditure to the end of the year was £0.426m against a revised programme budget of £0.384m.

Go Ultra Low taxi project

- 2.31 Eight of the ten dedicated chargers for the taxi and private hire industry (funded by the Office of Zero Emission Vehicles) are now connected and operational with one available in every North East local authority. The final two chargers at sites in Newcastle and North Tyneside will be connected as soon as the sites become available.
- 2.32 Outturn expenditure for 2020/21 was £0.419m against a revised programme budget of £0.497m with the remaining works on the project to be completed in 2021/22.

Nexus Capital Programme

- 2.33 The JTC approved the Nexus Capital Programme for 2020/21 in January 2020 totalling £74.0m. The Capital Outturn for 2020/21 was £66.591m, against a revised budget of £77.006m.

Table 8: Nexus Capital Outturn 2020/21

	2020/21 Original Budget	2020/21 Revised Budget	2020/21 Outturn	Variance
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Metro Asset Renewal Programme	23.666	24.635	20.990	(3.645)
Fleet Replacement Programme	46.086	48.605	43.689	(4.916)
Other Capital Projects	1.552	2.074	0.770	(1.304)
Metro Flow	2.658	1.702	1.142	(0.560)
	73.962	77.016	66.591	(10.425)

Metro Asset Renewal Plan (ARP)

- 2.34 The 2020/21 outturn for the Metro ARP Capital Programme is £3.645m lower than the revised budget. The difference largely resulting from delayed Track Works (Heworth to Pelaw) and reduced spend on Development Projects, curtailed as grant funding for the 2021/22 programme is now confirmed at £20.0m as opposed to the £40.0m initially approved by DfT.

Metro Fleet Replacement

- 2.35 The underspend of £4.916m against the revised budget for the Fleet Replacement Programme was due to a delay in the commencement of construction works at Gosforth Depot but importantly, at this point in time, this will not impact on the overall project delivery date.

Nexus Other Capital Projects

- 2.36 Other Capital Projects show an underspend of £1.304m. Approximately half of the underspend relates to the delayed progress on the North Shields Ferry Landing Relocation project and Covid-19 related delays to Ferry Vessel works. There is also reduced spend on both TCF funded car park projects, which will now be delivered in 2021/22.

Metro Flow

- 2.37 There was a £0.560m underspend as the cost associated with the procurement of the Metro Flow main contractor was less than anticipated.
- 2.38 The 2020/21 Nexus Capital Programme is funded by:

Table 9: Nexus Capital Programme 2020/21 - Funding

	Original Budget	Revised Budget	Actual Outturn	Variance
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Metro Rail Grant (DfT)	20.000	20.000	20.000	0.000
Metro Rail Grant (DfT) b/fwd into 2019/20	0.000	(0.396)	(0.396)	0.000
Metro Rail Grant (DfT) b/fwd 21/22	0.000	4.000	4.000	0.000
Fleet Replacement Grant (DfT)	29.800	29.800	35.800	6.000
Transforming Cities Grant (DfT)	3.221	2.190	1.225	(0.965)
LTP Grant	2.299	2.299	2.980	0.681
LEP Grant	0.000	0.504	0.141	(0.363)
Fleet Reserves	16.286	16.583	2.372	(14.211)
NESTI	0.000	0.030	0.030	0.000
Nexus Reserves	2.356	0.975	0.439	(0.536)
Over Programming	0.000	1.031	0.000	(1.031)
	73.962	77.016	66.591	(10.425)

2.39 Highlights of the Capital Programme in 2020/21 include:

- Felling to Heworth track renewal works
- Continuation of the Overhead Line Replacement project, which included the renewal of central corridor infrastructure in 2020/21
- Renewal of track circuits
- Continuation of Platform Compliance Works
- Opening of the Nexus Learning Centre in South Shields
- Opening of the Benton Square maintenance facility
- Completion of the procurement for the main contractor works to the Metro Flow project and contract award to Buckingham Group
- Completion and opening of the Howdon Satellite Depot facility
- Commencement of the replacement Gosforth Depot project. Clearing the site for the new facility and partial demolition of the existing depot
- Continuation of the Fleet Replacement Programme with initial design phase achieved and work towards the final design milestone almost complete
- Driver cab mockup delivered and consultation largely complete. Saloon consultation also largely completed.

Tyne Tunnels

2.40 It was anticipated at the time of setting the 2020/21 budget that the works would be fully completed, and the Tyne Pedestrian and Cycle Tunnels would be handed over to the operation of TT2 in year. However, due to further contractor delays related to Covid-19 travel restrictions, the new inclined lifts have not yet been completed and put into operation during 2020 as planned.

2.41 Until the lifts are operational the Tunnels cannot be handed back to TT2 and will continue to incur costs if they are to remain open to the public. Costs including onsite security, maintenance contracts, cleaning and utilities are being incurred. There is also further expenditure required on lift parts, engineers and testers to complete the inclined lifts. An update report on the refurbishment and the inclined lift works was provided to JTC Audit Committee in December 2020 and regular updates on the works are being taken to the Tyne and Wear Sub Committee.

2.42 Outturn capital expenditure for the year was £0.952m against a revised programme budget of £1.007m. In line with approval given at the last JTC meeting, capital works were funded from temporary grant funding provided by the North East LEP, to enable them to maximise usage of their Local Growth Fund grant in year. Payment will be made of the equivalent amount from the Tyne Tunnels reserves in 2021/22, in line with the original funding approval for the scheme.

Local Transport Plan

2.43 Local Transport Plan (LTP) Integrated Transport Block funding is made available by the DfT to the whole JTC area. This block is allocated between the JTC constituent authorities on a locally agreed basis with an allocation to Nexus (mainly used to provide the match funding needed for the Metro ARP capital programme). The LTP

block allocation is also used to contribute to the costs of the Transport Strategy Unit and, in Tyne and Wear, to the Urban Traffic Management and Control (UTMC) centre. Expenditure to the year end (excluding amounts paid to Nexus which are reported within the Metro ARP capital programme) was £11.246m against the programme of £11.309m.

Active Travel Fund (ATF) (Capital Elements)

- 2.44 The region successfully secured £2.262m of the ATF in July 2020, which was made up of £1.157m capital grant and £1.105m revenue grant, for temporary measures to reallocate road space to pedestrians and cyclists in order to make these travel modes safer and more convenient. The capital grants were paid to JTC constituent local authorities in full during 2020/21.

Capital Programme Financing

- 2.45 Capital expenditure for the year has been financed as follows:

Table 10: Financing of Capital Expenditure 2020/21

	2020/21 Revised Programme	2020/21 Outturn	Variance
	£m	£m	£m
Government Grants	77.047	80.603	3.556
Borrowing	0.000	0.000	0.000
Earmarked Reserves	18.565	2.846	(15.719)
Total Funding	95.612	83.449	(12.163)

3. Reasons for the Proposals

- 3.1 This report is for information, to enable the JTC to fulfil its role of monitoring transport budgets and the Transport Capital Programme on behalf of the two combined authorities.

4. Alternative Options Available

- 4.1 This report is for information.

5. Next Steps and Timetable for Implementation

- 5.1 The impact of the outturn position has been reflected in the revised forecasts for 2021/22 which are the subject of a separate report elsewhere on this agenda.

6. Potential Impact on Objectives

- 6.1 There are no impacts on objectives arising from this report which is for information.

7. Financial and Other Resources Implications

7.1 The financial implications are set out in detail within the body of the report. The report is for information and provides the Joint Transport Committee with a summary of outturn expenditure budget and capital programme approved in January 2020 and revised in January 2021. There are no financial decisions arising from this report.

8. Legal Implications

8.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from this report which is for information.

9. Key Risks

9.1 Financial risks associated with the authority's activities, and actions taken to mitigate these, will be factored into strategic risk management processes for the Joint Transport Committee.

10. Equality and Diversity

10.1 There are no equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

11. Crime and Disorder

11.1 There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

12. Consultation/Engagement

12.1 The Revenue Budget for 2020/21 was subject to a period of consultation and engagement as part of the approval process. Detailed budget proposals are subject to consultation as appropriate, which is organised by the relevant delivery body.

13. Other Impact of the Proposals

13.1 There are no other impacts arising from these proposals.

14. Appendices

14.1 None

15. Background Papers

15.1 JTC Revenue Budget report January 2020 ([Public Pack](#))[Agenda Document for North East Joint Transport Committee, 21/01/2020 14:00 \(northeastca.gov.uk\)](#)

JTC Revenue Budget report January 2021 ([Public Pack](#))[Agenda Document for North East Joint Transport Committee, 19/01/2021 14:30 \(northeastca.gov.uk\)](#)

JTC Capital Programme report January 2020 ([Public Pack](#))[Agenda Document for North East Joint Transport Committee, 21/01/2020 14:00 \(northeastca.gov.uk\)](#)

JTC Capital Programme report January 2021 ([Public Pack](#))[Agenda Document for North East Joint Transport Committee, 19/01/2021 14:30 \(northeastca.gov.uk\)](#)

16. Contact Officers

16.1 Eleanor Goodman, NECA Finance Manager,
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17. Sign off

- The Proper Officer for Transport:
- Head of Paid Service:
- Monitoring Officer:
- Chief Finance Officer:

18. Glossary

DfE – Department for Education

DfT – Department for Transport

ENCTS – English National Concessionary Travel Scheme

JTC – Joint Transport Committee

LRRRG – Light Rail Revenue Restart Grant

MHCLG – Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

TWITA – Tyne and Wear Integrated Transport Authority

North East Joint Transport Committee

Date: 13 July 2021

Subject: 2021/22 Revenue Budget and Capital Programme Update

Report of: Chief Finance Officer

Executive Summary

This report provides the North East Joint Transport Committee with the forecast of outturn for the 2021/22 Transport Revenue and Capital Budget, based on the position as at the period ending 31 May 2021 and factoring in the outturn position for 2020/21.

The report covers all areas of the revenue and capital budget including the Transport Levies and grants to Durham, Northumberland and Nexus, and the Tyne Tunnels revenue account.

Any under or overspends against the budgets for the three main organisations delivering transport services on behalf of the Joint Transport Committee are retained within the reserves of these organisations and will be considered in the setting of the transport budgets for future years.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant and continuing impact on transport activity, with decreases in income on Metro and the Tyne Tunnels in particular, being experienced.

As reported to the JTC at its last meeting, Durham County Council, Northumberland County Council and Nexus all continue to make payments in relation to the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) and tendered bus services to bus operators at pre-COVID levels, in line with the request from central government.

Durham County Council and Northumberland County Council are currently showing a breakeven position until they have more information on how the COVID-19 pandemic will affect transport services.

For Nexus, the 2021/22 budget was set using pre-Covid service levels on the basis that government support would continue in the form of Local Rail Revenue Restart Grant (LRRRG) and Local Authority Coronavirus Bus Services Support Grant (LACBSSG). As a result of social distancing restrictions continuing, it is estimated that further government support of £3.800m will be required in addition to the £21.944m budgeted for 2021/22. Continued support beyond 19 July is still subject to discussion with government officials and HM Treasury approval.

The forecast for the Transport Strategy Unit is an increase in expenditure compared with the original budget as a result of the Enhanced Bus Partnerships and Active Travel initiatives and a continuance of grants to authorities due to Covid-19 restrictions.

Traffic at the Tyne Tunnels reduced significantly in the period from mid-March 2020 onwards before recovering as the year progressed but continues to be below normal levels. However, the structure of the project agreement means that the net position on the JTC Tyne Tunnels budget is forecast to be in line with the budget due to reduced toll income being offset by reduced contract payments to TT2 Ltd.

This report also provides the Joint Transport Committee with details of the 2021/22 capital programme plans, together with expenditure and forecasts of the outturn position based on the position at the end of May 2021. Included in the revised budgets is the impact of the 2020/21 outturn position where a number of schemes underspent last year and for which the budget has been reprofiled into the current year.

The report identifies that total capital expenditure on Transport schemes of £168.241m is forecast against the revised programme budget of £162.337m, an outturn forecast overspend of £5.904m. The revised programme also takes into account new grant approvals. Expenditure to the end of May 2021 totalled £22.479m – 13% of the forecast total capital expenditure for the year.

The Transport capital programme encompasses a wide range of capital schemes, mainly delivered by constituent local authorities and Nexus, but also investment in the Combined Authorities' own assets, including the Tyne Tunnels.

Most of the capital works during the year will be funded through government grants awarded (£147.055m forecast) with elements of the Nexus capital programme and the Tyne Pedestrian and Cyclist Tunnels works funded by reserves (£21.186m forecast) held specifically for this purpose.

Recommendations

The North East Joint Transport Committee is recommended to:

- i. Note the report.
- ii. Agree the extension of the Metro and Local Rail Extensions studies budget period for a further two years to 31 March 2024, to be funded by the budget transferred from Nexus as set out in section 2.30-2.33.
- iii. Agree the £0.300m increase in the budget for the Tyne Pedestrian and Cycle Tunnels refurbishment project as set out in section 3.36.

1. Background Information

- 1.1 The JTC meeting held on 19 January 2021 agreed a Transport net revenue budget for 2021/22 of £82.895m and a Transport net capital budget of £152.674m. This report presents an update against the original budget with the forecast prepared based on the position at 31 May 2021.

2. Forecast of Revenue Outturn 2021/22 – Period to 31 May 2021

Transport Revenue Budget

- 2.1 The table below summarises the forecast outturn position against the net Transport Revenue budget for 2021/22. The levies and grants to Durham, Northumberland and Nexus are fixed for the year, but details of how the grant will be applied by each organisation to the provision of public transport services is set out in more detail in the following sections.

Table 1: Transport Revenue Forecast of Outturn 2021/22 to 31 May 2021

	2021/22 Original Budget	Spend to date 31 May 21	2021/22 Forecast Outturn	2021/22 Forecast Variance
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Total Transport Levies				
Grant to Durham	15.467	2.579	15.467	0.000
Grant to Northumberland	6.328	1.053	6.328	0.000
Grant to Nexus	57.813	9.636	57.813	0.000
Nexus contribution to Metro Futures Planning Studies budget (2021/22 only)	1.187	0.198	1.187	0.000
Retained Transport levy budget (to meet central costs)	2.120	0.530	2.120	0.000
Net	82.895	13.996	82.895	0.000
Contribution (to)/from NECA Reserves	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

- 2.2 Durham County Council, Nexus and Northumberland County Council continue to make payments to operators under the Government's English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) which entitles pass holders to free off-peak travel after 9.30 am on local bus services. Patronage using the scheme was significantly reduced due to the introduction of the Government's lockdown policy in response to the Covid-19 outbreak. Transport Authorities continue to reimburse operators at pre pandemic levels to ensure the viability of routes and operators is maintained, in line with the Cabinet Office Procurement Policy Note 02/20 – Supplier Relief due to Covid-19, for at least the period of the outbreak to enable the resumption of socially necessary services afterwards.

Durham

- 2.2 The budget for public transport activity in Durham for 2021/22 is £15.467m compared to £15.466m for 2020/21. The 2021/22 forecast based on the position to the end of May is in line with the current budget.

Any projected underspend at the year-end will be retained by Durham County Council.

- 2.3 The following table provides a detailed breakdown of expenditure in Durham:

Table 2: Durham Transport Forecast of Outturn 2021/22 to 31 May 2021

	2021/22 Original Budget	Spend to Date (to 31 May 2021)	2021/22 Forecast Outturn	2021/22 Forecast Variance
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Concessionary Fares	11.932	1.329	11.932	0.000
Subsidised Services	2.556	0.908	2.556	0.000
Bus Stations	0.177	0.717	0.177	0.000
Bus Shelters	0.019	0.115	0.019	0.000
Passenger Transport Information	0.088	0.028	0.088	0.000
Staffing	0.685	0.114	0.685	0.000
Share of JTC Transport Costs	0.010	0.000	0.010	0.000
Net Expenditure	15.467	3.211	15.467	0.000

- 2.4 Following the COVID-19 outbreak most of the supported services within County Durham continue to operate, albeit for the most part at a reduced frequency. The Council has continued to pay operators at full contracted prices at this time. Further guidance is awaited from the Department for Transport on ongoing payments to operators at pre-pandemic levels and if any post Covid-19 recovery funding will be made available to both operators and local transport authorities.

Northumberland

- 2.5 The budget for public transport activity in Northumberland for 2021/22 is £6.328m compared to £6.224m for 2020/21. The main reason for the increase is due to increasing ticket prices and therefore increased reimbursement levels to operators for concessionary travel. The initial forecast based on the position to 31 May is summarised in the table below:

Table 3: Northumberland Transport Forecast of Outturn 2021/22 to 31 May 2021

	2021/22 Original Budget	Spend to Date (to 31 May 2021)	2021/22 Forecast Outturn	2021/22 Forecast Variance
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Concessionary Fares	4.902	0.323	4.902	0.000
Subsidised Services	1.231	0.255	1.231	0.000
Bus Stations	0.026	(0.001)	0.026	0.000
Passenger Transport Information	0.025	0.000	0.025	0.000
Staffing	0.134	0.022	0.134	0.000
Share of NECA Transport Costs	0.010	0.000	0.010	0.000
Total Grant	6.328	0.599	6.328	0.000

- 2.6 The forecast outturn position for 2021/22 is uncertain at this stage as further guidance is awaited from the Department for Transport on ongoing payments to operators at pre-pandemic levels and if any post Covid-19 recovery funding will be made available to both operators and local transport authorities.

Nexus

Budget 2021/22

- 2.7 The 2021/22 budget was set using pre-Covid service levels on the basis that government support would continue in the form of LRRRG and LACBSSG. The budget includes £21.944m of Covid support with the remaining shortfall between income and expenditure of £2.680m being funded from Nexus reserves.
- 2.8 At the time of budget setting, it was assumed that social distancing would end by 1 April 2021. However due to continued Covid restrictions and the end of social distancing delayed until 19 July 2021, all things being equal, it is estimated that further government support of £3.800m will be required in addition to the £21.944m budgeted for 2021/22, taking the total Covid support to £25.744m.
- 2.9 Continued support beyond 19 July is still subject to discussion with government officials and HM Treasury approval and a further update will be provided within the next revenue monitoring report.

Period 2 Revenue Monitoring 2021/22

- 2.10 Metro revenue to the end of P2 is £3.817m which is a reduction of £0.388m (9%) against budget. In percentage terms, this denotes a loss against pre-Covid expected revenues on Metro of 52% cumulatively to the end of May.
- 2.11 In addition, there was a shortfall in investment income of £0.020m and other Covid related costs of £0.068m to the end of P2.

- 2.12 This brings the total LRRRG required to support Metro to £4.493m which is £0.476m higher than the budget of £4.017m.

Concessionary Travel

- 2.13 In line with government supplementary guidance, Nexus reimbursed bus companies for concessionary fares during 'National Lockdown 3' based on the number of services operating rather than at budgeted levels. This has provided a saving of £0.192m to date. Nexus is also considering whether, in the context of operators not restoring services to 100% of pre-Covid levels, further savings in this budget are possible.

Bus Services

- 2.14 Bus commercial revenue to the end of P2 is £0.355m which is £0.134m higher against budget. This is a significantly stronger than expected recovery for fare revenue and is 90% of pre-Covid revenue levels.
- 2.15 The bus shuttle service continues to run to the Nightingale vaccination centre in the Sunderland area. The costs to the end of period 2 are £0.078m and as this service is a direct result of Covid-19 the costs will be claimed from LACBSSG.
- 2.16 In addition, costs of £0.258m have been added to the claim on behalf of small operators who do not have access to LACBSSG funding.
- 2.17 This brings the total LACBSSG required to support Bus Services to £0.395m which is £0.202m higher than the budget of £0.193m
- 2.18 Additional scholar's services for the summer term (April to July) are estimated as costing £0.851m. This is currently based on duplicate services continuing for the full summer term to take account of social distancing. The costs of the additional scholar's services require 100% funding from the Department for Education, without which they cannot continue to be provided unless savings from elsewhere can be found.

Other

- 2.19 Ferry revenue to the end of period 2 is £0.041m which is £0.006m higher than budget but remains £0.017m (29%) lower than pre-Covid levels. We expect £0.011m of these losses to be funded by MHCLG, subject to the scheme continuing this current financial year.

Summary

- 2.20 To the end of Period 2, all of Metro's Covid related losses have been met by DfT grant. The same position applies to Secured bus services and a small saving of £0.192m has accrued in connection with concessionary fares reimbursement.

Table 4: Nexus Forecast of Outturn 2021/22

	2021/22 Original Budget	Spend to date (to P2)	2021/22 Forecast Outturn at P2	2021/22 Forecast Variance
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Concessionary Travel	38.604	6.048	38.412	(0.192)
Subsidised Bus Services	14.833	5.000	14.833	0
Metro	24.103	2.825	27.903	3.800
Other	4.897	0.824	4.897	0
Projected Covid-19 support	(21.944)	(9.345)	(25.744)	(3.800)
Transport Levy Grant	(57.813)	(5.125)	(57.813)	0
	2.680	0.227	2.488	(0.192)
Reserves	(2.860)	(0.227)	(2.488)	0.192

Retained Levy

- 2.21 This budget relates primarily to activity inherited from the former Tyne and Wear Integrated Transport Authority (TWITA) as well as some costs such as external audit and the cost of servicing the JTC which relate to the whole JTC area. Most of the budget relates to capital financing debt changes on historic supported borrowing. Additionally, there is budget provision to pay for support services, other supplies and services, and a repayment to the Tyne Tunnels account for the use of reserves in 2013/14 to pay off the Tyne and Wear Pension Fund deficit
- 2.22 Expenditure for the year is currently forecast to be in line with the budget of £2.120m with no significant variances.

Table 5: Retained Levy Revenue Forecast of Outturn 2021/22 to 31 May 2021

	2021/22 Original Budget	Spend to date (to 31 May 2021)	2021/22 Forecast Outturn	2021/22 Forecast Variance
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Support Services/Staffing	0.151	0.005	0.151	0.000
Administration and Governance	0.232	0.036	0.232	0.000
Financing Charges	1.737	0.240	1.737	0.000
Total Expenditure	2.120	0.281	2.120	0.000
Contribution from Levies	(2.120)	(0.281)	(2.120)	0.000
Contribution (to)/from Reserves	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

Tyne Tunnels Revenue Account

- 2.23 The Tyne Tunnels are jointly owned by the North East Combined Authority (NECA) and the North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA). They comprise two vehicle tunnels and the pedestrian and cyclist tunnels. The Tyne Tunnels receive no government or local funding and costs are met from the tolls charged to users of the vehicle tunnels.
- 2.24 TT2 and Transport North East constantly review the traffic flows through the Tyne Tunnels. Normal levels of traffic are approx. 55,000 vehicles per day. As a result of COVID-19 lockdown measures, traffic levels dropped drastically during March and April 2020 to approx. 17,000 vehicles per day which is 30% of normal levels. This is the lowest level of traffic seen during the life of the TT2 contract.
- 2.25 Covid-19 effects continued throughout 2020 and into 2021 as traffic numbers were affected by lockdown measures. Traffic during the second lockdown was approximately 65-75% of normal expected traffic. Currently traffic in May 2021 was up to 90% of normal activity but this still shows a shortfall in toll income. Whilst there have been significant effects on traffic and toll income, all the financial risk has been borne by TT2 Ltd, the concessionaire and operator of the tunnels.
- 2.26 The structure of the project agreement with TT2 means that the JTC retains the first proportion of traffic income per month, with the traffic risk overwhelmingly borne by TT2. This 'Band 0' income represents approximately 30% of journeys, so the JTC is expected to retain the full budgeted income for the year which will enable all costs to be met.
- 2.27 The forecast outturn position for the JTC is in line with the budget as reduced toll income is offset by reduced payments to TT2 under the contract. An increase is forecast in the support services budget as there is likely to be a need for additional engineering advice in relation to the vehicle tunnels and professional advice in relation to the Tyne Pass project during the year.

Table 6: Tyne Tunnels Revenue Forecast of Outturn 2021/22 to 31 May 2021

	2021/22 Original Budget	Spend to date (to 31 May 2021)	2021/22 Forecast Outturn	2021/22 Forecast Variance
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Tolls Income	(30.004)	(4.861)	(29.795)	0.209
TT2 Contract	21.707	2.997	21.498	(0.209)
Employees	0.093	0.011	0.093	0.000
Pensions	0.054	0.008	0.054	0.000
Premises	0.021	0.000	0.021	0.000
Support Services	0.129	0.000	0.129	0.000
Supplies & Services	0.095	0.021	0.095	0.000

	2021/22 Original Budget	Spend to date (to 31 May 2021)	2021/22 Forecast Outturn	2021/22 Forecast Variance
Financing Charges	8.195	0.000	8.195	0.000
Interest /Other Income	(0.050)	(0.008)	(0.050)	0.000
Repayment from TWITA for temporary use of reserves	(0.240)	(0.240)	(0.240)	0.000
(Surplus) /Deficit on Tyne Tunnels revenue account	0.000	(2.072)	0.000	0.000

The North East Transport Strategy Unit

2.28 The Transport Strategy Unit (TSU) supports the JTC, providing relevant information to support policy choices and to deliver policies at a regional level. The TSU's activities include developing and maintaining:

- The Transport vision and plan
- The funding plan and bids for external funding'
- Input into the LEP's strategies and plans on transport, and local business organisations
- A project pipeline and assurance framework
- Responses to transport consultations and policy-making opportunities by government and other external agencies
- Input into Transport for the North (TfN)'s pan-Northern policies and plans; and
- Relationships with other authorities (whether local, combined, national or sub-national) with whom the JTC may share a common interest.

2.29 In addition to the significant current activity of developing the Transport Plan and related delivery programmes, other major policy developments include the development of a new bus enhanced partnership strategy, the expansion of the Metro and local rail network, developing a model for rail devolution, and growing the programme to increase the uptake of walking and cycling. There are also significant funding opportunities for well-developed bids along with a need for strong delivery programme management.

2.30 Forecast expenditure for the Transport Strategy Unit in 2021/22 is estimated to be £9.394m compared with the original budget of £2.660m, primarily as a result of the additional costs of the Enhanced Bus Partnerships scheme (£1.517m), Covid-19 costs due to the extension of restrictions (£2.738m) and additional Active Travel funding from the government (£2.477m).

2.31 Expenditure has been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and will now take place during the financial year. Funding from 2020/21 which was not used has been carried forward to the current year.

Metro and Local Rail Studies

- 2.32 A series of studies looking at the feasibility of various local rail expansion proposals was commenced by Nexus in early 2020, with a total budget agreed by the JTC of £2.4m. The work was planned to run until 31 March 2022. The lead responsibility for these studies has now transferred to Transport North East (TNE), contracts have been novated to facilitate this and the remaining budget established by Nexus has been transferred to TNE to fund completion of this work (£0.754m transferred in 2020/21, £1.187m transferred in 2021/22).
- 2.33 The Covid-19 pandemic impacted on the delivery programme as resources were channelled to dealing with the consequences on both Metro and Heavy Rail services. Preparation of the 'Restoring Your Railways' (RYP) bids and the pursuit of an umbrella business case for Leamside have drawn resources away from the management of the Extension programme. Similarly, the starting of drafting work on the North East Rail and Metro Strategy has also used the same resource initially identified for the extensions work. Staff turnover including TUPE transfers from Nexus to NECA has also held up progress at certain points.
- 2.34 If successful with one, two or three of the RYP bids, work will need to be procured to develop the business case(s) to a level acceptable for submission during the current year. Should the bids not be successful the region may wish to pursue the strategic outline business case development independently.
- 2.35 It is therefore recommended that the period for the use of the funding transferred be extended from 31 March 2022 to 31 March 2024 to deliver the remaining studies and any further work that may arise from the North East Rail and Metro Strategy.

Table 7: TSU Revenue Forecast of Outturn 2021/22 to 31 May 2021

	2021/22 Original Budget	Spend to date (to 31 May 2021)	2021/22 Forecast Outturn	2021/22 Forecast Variance
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Gross Expenditure				
Employee costs - Managing Director Transport North East and TSU	0.758	0.133	0.758	0.000
Transport Plan and Strategy Work	0.070	0.000	0.070	0.000
TSU Research and Development	0.100	0.002	0.100	0.000
TSU Travel and Miscellaneous	0.013	0.000	0.013	0.000
TSU IT / Equipment / Accommodation	0.001	0.000	0.001	0.000
TSU Contingency	0.010	0.000	0.010	0.000
Go Ultra Low – Revenue	0.000	0.002	0.002	0.002
TCF Tranche programme management	0.361	0.012	0.361	0.000
Covid-19 grants	0.000	1.400	2.738	2.738
Active Travel Planning	0.000	0.000	2.477	2.477

	2021/22 Original Budget	Spend to date (31 May 2021)	2021/22 Forecast Outturn	2021/22 Forecast Variance
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Metro Futures Planning Studies	1.187	0.010	1.316	0.129
Enhanced Bus Service Partnership	0.160	0.015	1.677	1.517
Total Expenditure	2.660	1.574	9.523	6.863
Gross Income				
LTP funding - TSU	(0.500)	(0.083)	(0.500)	0.000
Retained Transport Levy	(0.187)	(0.038)	(0.187)	0.000
External funding for specific posts	(0.216)	(0.031)	(0.216)	0.000
ERDF grant - Go Ultra Low - Revenue	(0.000)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
TCF Tranche income	(0.361)	(0.012)	(0.361)	0.000
Covid-19 grants	(0.000)	(1.400)	(2.738)	(2.738)
Government grants – other	(0.000)	(0.000)	(2.477)	(2.477)
Enhanced Bus Partnerships funding – LA's	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.844)	(0.844)
Enhanced Bus Partnerships funding – DfT	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.100)	(0.100)
Metro Futures Planning Studies – funded by Nexus contribution from Levy	(1.187)	(1.187)	(1.187)	(0.000)
Total Income	(2.451)	(2.753)	(8.612)	(6.161)
Net Expenditure to be funded from Reserves	0.209	(1.179)	0.911	0.702
Use of Reserves				
JTC unallocated reserves	(0.160)	0.000	(0.233)	(0.073)
Metro and Local Rail Studies reserve	0.000	0.000	(0.129)	(0.129)
Regional Transport Team reserves	(0.005)	0.000	(0.005)	(0.000)
Enhanced Bus Partnerships Funding – Nexus	0.000	0.000	(0.500)	(0.500)
Go Smarter legacy funds – Transport Plan	(0.044)	0.000	(0.044)	(0.000)

3. Capital Outturn 2021/22 – Based on Period to 31 May 2021

- 3.1 In January 2021, the JTC approved the initial 2021/22 capital programme of £152.674m. The capital programme was updated to take account of adjustments for slippage in the 2020/21 outturn and the revised budget is £162.127m.
- 3.2 A summary of the Transport capital programme for 2021/22, together with an initial forecast outturn position and details of actual expenditure to 31 May is set out in the table below, with further details provided in the sections that follow.

Table 8: Capital Forecast of Outturn 2021/22 to 31 May 2021

	2021/22 Original Budget	2021/22 Revised budget	2021/22 Initial Forecast	2021/22 Forecast Variance	Actual Expenditure to 31 May 2021
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Transforming Cities Fund Tranche 1	0.248	1.046	0.931	(0.115)	0.000
Transforming Cities Fund Tranche 2 (Excluding Metro Flow)	34.735	30.180	30.180	0.000	0.001
Active Travel Fund – Tranche 2	7.239	6.977	6.977	0.000	0.000
Go Ultra-Low	0.000	0.127	0.127	0.000	0.000
Ultra-Low Emission Vehicles – Taxi Project	0.000	0.033	0.033	0.000	0.000
Metro Asset Renewal Plan	19.222	23.609	23.609	0.000	1.673
Metro Fleet Replacement	63.069	64.215	70.197	5.982	18.565
Nexus non-Metro Programme	8.252	3.379	3.379	0.000	0.145
Metro Flow	8.100	20.632	20.669	0.037	0.186
Tyne Tunnels	0.500	0.800	0.800	0.000	0.017
Local Transport Plan(1)	11.309	11.339	11.339	0.000	1.892
Total Capital Programme	152.674	162.337	168.241	5.904	22.479

(1) Excludes amounts for local contribution to Metro ARP, shown within Nexus capital programme lines

Transforming Cities Fund (TCF) – Tranche 1 and Tranche 2

- 3.3 The North East has been awarded £208m grant from the Transforming Cities Fund (TCF), of which £10m was for Tranche 1 and £198m was for Tranche 2. Within the Tranche 2 schemes, £104m is for schemes where the decision making on funding is devolved to the region, and the remaining £94m is for the Metro Flow scheme managed by Nexus, where the decision making on the funding is retained by the Department for Transport (DfT).
- 3.4 The Tranche 1 schemes, which saw delays due to the Covid-19 pandemic are progressing well. Claims for quarter 1 of 2021/22 are currently being processed. 14 of the 19 schemes have reached financial completion and it is anticipated that the remaining 5 schemes will complete by the end of 2021/22 with details set out in the table below:

Table 9: Capital Forecast of Outturn 2021/22 – TCF Tranche 1 to 31 May 2021

Theme Name	2021/22 Original Budget	2021/22 Revised Budget	2021/22 Initial Forecast	2021/22 Forecast Variance	Actual Expenditure to 31 May 2021
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Theme 1: Cycling Links to Key Employment Sites	0.000	0.125	0.052	(0.073)	0.000
Theme 2: Cycling Links to Newcastle City Centre	0.248	0.248	0.248	0.000	0.000
Theme 3: Cycling links to Sunderland City Centre	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	Complete
Theme 4: Public Transport Reliability Upgrades	0.000	0.274	0.237	(0.037)	0.000
Theme 5: Transport Improvements at Barras Bridge	0.000	0.359	0.359	0.000	0.000
Additional Theme 1: Bowes Railway Path Improvements	0.000	0.037	0.032	(0.005)	0.032
Additional Theme 2: Horden Rail Station Links (North)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	Complete
Total	0.248	1.043	0.928	0.115	0.032

- 3.5 For the Tranche 2 schemes, regular four-weekly meetings with the scheme promoters started in November 2020 and are being used to monitor progress. These meetings have allowed the TCF team to be made aware of any risks involved with the schemes, to work with the scheme promoters to mitigate these risks and to gather up to date information to inform the Programme Board. The Transport Programme Board meet monthly to review progress on the Programme and to decide on recommendations to present to the JTC.
- 3.6 Independent reviews of Appraisal Specification Reports (ASRs) and outline Business Cases (OBCs) are well under way for the majority of schemes, however, it should be noted that some delays are being experienced due to capacity issues in the Local Authorities, particularly on highway design. These delays are not anticipated to impact negatively on the deliverability of the schemes. It is anticipated that 5 schemes will come forward for approval at the November JTC meeting. This represents £22.8m of TCF funds, which as a proportion of the overall programme represents 11.5%. This is additional to the funding associated with

Sunderland Station, which represents a further 8.2% of the overall programme.

3.7 The schemes to be delivered using the TCF Devolved Pot retain a considerable degree of over-programming (£18.150m - 8.3%) and the TCF team is working with scheme promoters to understand opportunities for how this can be managed.

3.8 One scheme (Durham Bus Station) is now in the delivery phase, with a rapid acceleration of the programme anticipated based on programmes of expenditure in OBCs or milestones for approvals in the assurance phase. Two schemes have also progressed to the next state of assurance, Newcastle Streets for People and Sunderland Station.

3.9 *Table 10: Capital Forecast of Outturn 2021/22 – TCF Tranche 2 to 31 May 2021*

TCF Tranche 2	2021/22 Revised Budget	2022/23 Revised Budget	Total Forecast Expenditure Budget
	£m	£m	£m
Devolved Programme Level	30.180	72.892	103.072
Nexus Metro Flow (reported with Nexus Capital Programme)	20.632	74.068	94.700
All Programmes	50.812	146.960	197.772

Active Travel Fund – Tranche 2

3.10 In November 2020, the North East region was allocated £9.049m of grant funding from Tranche 2 of the Active Travel Fund (ATF) (£7.239m capital and £1.810m revenue). £0.262m of the capital funding was used in 2020/21.

3.11 Funding is intended to support the delivery of ambitious new cycling and walking infrastructure schemes, forming part of the Governments £2 billion commitment set out in ‘Gear Change’ to deliver a step change in the provision of high-quality schemes that deliver better streets for everyone.

3.12 Ten Active Travel schemes across the seven Local Authorities have been allocated £6.808m from the slippage from 2020-21. The remaining £0.170m is currently unallocated, however a strategy for this is being developed which may include the introduction of new schemes if these emerge. The table below shows details of the schemes:

3.13 *Table 11: Capital Forecast of Outturn 2021/22 – ATF Tranche 2 to 31 May 2021*

Scheme Name	2021/22 Original Budget	2021/22 Revised Budget	2021/22 Initial Forecast	2021/22 Forecast Variance	Actual Expenditure to 31 May 2021
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Great North Cycleway	0.000	0.520	0.520	0.000	0.000
Gateshead Town Centre	0.000	0.361	0.361	0.000	0.000
Grey Street	0.000	1.961	1.961	0.000	0.000
RVI Active Travel Access Improvements	0.000	0.825	0.825	0.000	0.000
Strategic Corridors	0.000	1.260	1.260	0.000	0.000
A183 Whitburn Road Cycleway	0.000	0.900	0.900	0.000	0.000
Waterloo Road / Renwick Road Cycle Improvements	0.000	0.269	0.269	0.000	0.000
Four Active Travel Corridors	0.000	0.432	0.432	0.000	0.000
Regional Opinion Survey	0.000	0.032	0.032	0.000	0.000
Active Travel Campaign	0.000	0.249	0.249	0.000	0.000
Unallocated	6.978	0.170	0.170	0.000	0.000
Total	6.978	6.978	6.978	0.000	0.000

Go Ultra-Low

3.14 The Go Ultra -project is jointly funded through funding from the Office for Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV) and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) resources and includes the construction of one of the UK's first Electric Vehicle (EV) filling stations at West Wear Street in Sunderland City Centre, along with the installation of a number of rapid charging clusters across the region.

3.15 The Go Ultra-Low North East Programme has been extended until May 2021 by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. This extension is primarily so that the remaining EV rapid hubs can be installed as this had to be paused due to the furlough of staff as a result of the Covid-19 lockdown. Work in 2021/22 is on bring the remainder of the rapid charging clusters into operation.

Ultra-Low Emission Vehicles – Taxi Project

3.16 The North East was awarded a grant of £500,750 from the Office of Low Emission Vehicles, Ultra Low Taxi Infrastructure scheme to deliver 10 chargers dedicated to the Taxi and Private Hire trade across 9 sites. All chargers were expected to be

completed in 2020/21, however one site was delayed owing to it being inaccessible (used as a Covid testing centre). 9 charges are now live. The final charger will be completed in this financial year.

3.17 Forecast Capital expenditure to 31 March 2022 is £0.033m.

Nexus Capital Programme

3.18 The JTC approved Nexus' Capital Programme for 2021/22 to 2023/24 in January 2021. The programme was approved at £98.643m and is sub-divided into the following sections:

- i. Metro Asset Renewal Programme (MARP)
- ii. Fleet Replacement Programme (FRP)
- iii. Other Capital Project (OCP); and
- iv. Metro Flow (MFL)

Total Nexus Capital Programme Summary

3.19 Nexus' revised capital programme for 2021/22 provides for gross expenditure of £111.835m. The main reasons for the increase are as follows:

- £9.9m net slippage from the 2020/21 programme
 - £3.6m relates to the MARP where a number of development projects were deferred as a result of the reduction in grant funding in 2021/22;
 - £4.9m relates to the FRP although it should be recognised that the programme was keeping to time and to budget at the end of 2020/21;
 - The remainder relates to MFL and other TCF projects.
- £1.2m net increase in existing project budgets and/or additional projects:
 - The increase (£0.9m) in is mainly in respect of platform compliance works at various Metro stations, necessary to accommodate the new fleet;
 - Additional projects include urgent repairs to the rail tamping machine and new software for back office systems;
- £2.0m net acceleration of projects originally planned for 2022/23:
 - £12.0m has been added to the programme in connection with MFL, necessary to accommodate the payment milestones now that the principal contractor has been appointed;
 - £5.7m in connection with the north ferry landing relocation has slipped into 2022/23 because of delays with the development of this project;
 - £3.9m in connection with the FRP has slipped into 2021/22

At the end of period 2 the total programme spend was £20.569m, against the budgeted spend of £21.916m.

3.20 The 2021/22 forecast outturn is £117.854m against a budget of £111.835m. The £6.019m net overspend is detailed below.

Table 12: Nexus Capital Programme Forecast 2021/22

	Original Budget £m	Current Budget £m	Actual / Forecast £m	Variance £m
Cumulative to Period 2				
Metro Asset Renewal Programme		1.688	1.673	(0.015)
Fleet Replacement Programme		19.492	18.565	(0.927)
Other Capital Projects		0.518	0.145	(0.373)
Metro Flow		0.217	0.186	(0.031)
		21.916	20.569	(1.346)
Forecast Outturn				
Metro Asset Renewal Programme	19.222	23.607	23.607	0.000
Fleet Replacement Programme	63.069	64.215	70.197	5.982
Other Capital Projects	8.252	3.379	3.379	0.000
Metro Flow	8.100	20.632	20.669	0.037
	98.643	111.833	117.852	6.019

3.21 At the end of period 2, £20.656m of capital grant has been claimed from the Department for Transport (DfT). This includes both the MARP and the FRP. The actual amount claimed in total was 98.2% of forecast and therefore within DfT tolerance levels of +/- 5%.

Metro Asset Renewal Programme (MARP)

3.22 Cumulative actual spend at the end of Period 2 was £1.673m against the baseline budget of £1.688m, resulting in a small £0.015m difference.

3.23 Forecast outturn for 2021/22 is £23.607m against a baseline budget of £23.607m. In the context funding from DfT not approved beyond 2021/22, the forecast outturn continues to be under review with, in particular, the estimated cost of project delivery and risk contingencies included within the current forecast being examined further.

3.24 The May grant claim was £0.665m, compared to the forecast £0.700m and therefore within the +/- 5% DfT target.

3.25 Total grant claimed to date is £2.091m and Metro Rail Grant (MRG) capital grant of £16.000m is forecast to be received, against a minimum grant level of £16.000m.

3.26 The remaining £7.609m of forecast spend will be funded from £4.836m of local funding (LTP and Fleet Reserves), plus £1.000m Highways Challenge Fund grant for Tanners Bank. There is also over programming with a value of £1.773m within

the forecast programme.

Fleet Replacement Programme (FRP)

3.27 Cumulative actual spend at the end of Period 2 was £18.565m against the baseline budget of £19.492m. The majority of the £0.927m underspend relates to delays in the receipt of designs for the Gosforth Depot and construction activities have been reprogrammed as a consequence. However, sub-contractors have been appointed and mobilisation of the civils contractor has been brought forward. None of these changes to programme are expected to delay the depot completion date.

3.28 Forecast outturn for 2021/22 is £70.197m against a baseline budget of £64.215m. The £5.982m increase in the forecast relates to the manufacture and supply of the new trains where an assessment of work in progress currently indicates that the programme is slightly ahead of schedule. All things being equal, this will require an in-year increase in the grant required from DfT, something that is being discussed with officials. It should be noted that this does not represent an increase in the total grant required for the programme which remains at £337m.

Other Capital Projects (OCP)

3.29 In 2021/22 Other Capital Projects have a budget of £3.379m comprising of:

Table 13: Nexus Other Capital Projects 2021/22

	Current Budget £m
Callerton Car Park	0.330
Digital Car Parking	0.992
HCE PAYG Development	0.030
Bus Contracts	0.235
PCI DSS	0.045
Drivers Sign On	0.006
Ferry North Landing Relocation	1.226
Ferry Vessels and Infrastructure	0.515
	3.379

3.30 Cumulative actual spend at end of period 2 was £0.145m against an expected target of £0.518m. The £0.373m underspend relates to a delay in receiving external consultancy advice in respect of the Ferry Vessels project.

3.31 Forecast outturn for 2021/22 remains £3.379m against an approved budget of £3.379m.

Metro Flow (MFL)

- 3.32 Cumulative actual spend at the end of Period 2 was £0.186m against an expected cumulative spend of £0.217m.
- 3.33 Forecast outturn for 2021/22 is £20.669m against a baseline budget of £20.632m, The project is expected to be 100% TCF capital grant funded in 2021/22 with funding approval expected in Summer 2021.

Tyne Tunnels Capital Programme

- 3.34 It was anticipated at the time of setting the 2021/22 budget that works would be completed by September 2021, and that the Tyne Pedestrian and Cycle Tunnels would be handed over to the operation of TT2 in year. However, due to further contractor delays related to Covid-19 travel restrictions it is anticipated that this will now be delayed until December 2021.
- 3.35 Until the works are completed, additional costs will be incurred if the Tunnels are to remain open to the public. Costs including onsite security, maintenance contracts, cleaning and utilities are being incurred. There is also further expenditure required on lift parts, engineers and testers to complete the inclined lifts. Regular updates on the works will continue to be provided to the Tyne & Wear Sub Committee from July onwards.
- 3.36 An increase in the budget of up to £0.300m is requested to enable completion of the inclined lifts and all works to enable handover to TT2. This will be funded from the Tyne Tunnels reserve which totalled £9.222m at 31 March 2021. Should the additional amount required reduce following negotiations with contractors, the requirement from the Tunnels reserve will be reduced. Capital expenditure to 31 May is £0.017m. Forecast capital expenditure to the year-end is expected to be up to £0.800m compared with the original budget of £0.500m.

Local Transport Plan

- 3.37 Local Transport Plan (LTP) Integrated Transport Block funding is made available by the DfT to the whole JTC area. This block is allocated between the JTC constituent authorities on a locally agreed basis with an allocation to Nexus (mainly used to provide the match funding needed for the Metro ARP capital programme. The LTP block allocation is also used to contribute to the costs of the Transport Strategy Unit (TSU) and, in Tyne and Wear, to the Urban Traffic Management and Control (UTMC) centre. Quarter one payments have been made to the authorities following receipt of the grant from DfT and expenditure to 31 May 2021 is £1.892m.
- 3.38 The table below sets out the proposed allocation of the grant awarded to the JTC. The contributions to the Transport Strategy Unit and the UTMC have not been changed since the amounts previously agreed by the JTC.

Table 14: Capital Forecast of Outturn 2021/22 – LTP to 31 May 2021

	2021/22 Gross Allocation	2021/22 Topslice for TSU & UTMC	2021/22 Net Allocation	Actual Expenditure to 31 May 2021
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Durham	2.811	(0.063)	2.748	0.640
Gateshead	1.339	(0.142)	1.197	0.193
Newcastle	1.662	(0.178)	1.485	0.238
North Tyneside	1.097	(0.142)	0.955	0.132
Northumberland	1.708	(0.063)	1.646	0.365
South Tyneside	0.849	(0.121)	0.728	0.091
Sunderland	1.618	(0.172)	1.447	0.233
Nexus / Public Transport Allocation	2.973	(0.063)	2.910	0.000
Total	14.057	(0.944)	13.116	1.892
Nexus ARP	2.718			
Total excluding Nexus ARP	11.339			

Overall Capital Programme Financing

3.39 Forecast Capital Expenditure for the year will be financed as follows:

Table 15: Capital Programme Financing 2021/22

	2021/22 Original Budget	2021/22 Revised Budget	2021/22 Revised Forecast	2021/22 Variance Revised Forecast vs Revised Budget
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Government grants	147.174	147.133	147.055	(0.078)
Earmarked Reserves	5.500	15.204	21.186	5.982
Total Funding	152.674	162.337	162.241	5.904

4. Reasons for the Proposals

4.1 This report is for information, to enable the JTC to fulfil its role of monitoring transport budgets on behalf of the two combined authorities.

5. Alternative Options Available

5.1 This report is for information with no decision required.

6. Next Steps and Timetable for Implementation

6.1 Performance against the revenue budget for 2021/22 will be closely monitored and update reports presented to the JTC at regular intervals during the coming year.

7. Potential Impact on Objectives

7.1 There are no potential impacts arising from this report which is for information.

8. Financial and Other Resources Implications

8.1 The financial summary is set out in the main body of the report. There are no financial or other resource implications from this report which is for information.

9. Legal Implications

9.1 The Authority has a duty to ensure it can deliver a balanced budget. The Local Government Act 2003 imposes a duty on an Authority to monitor its budgets during the year and consider what action to take if a potential deterioration is identified. There are no legal implications arising from this report, which is for information.

10. Key Risks

10.1 Risks associated with the delivery of transport services by the key delivery bodies are factored into the risk management processes of those organisations. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is having a significant and continuing impact on transport budgets and the financial consequences will continue to be carefully assessed and monitored. The JTC holds reserves to mitigate against financial risks associated with its transport functions, and the level of these are considered to be adequate at the year end.

11. Equality and Diversity

11.1 There are no equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

12. Crime and Disorder

12.1 There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

13. Consultation/Engagement

13.1 The revenue budget for 2021/22 was subject to consultation with key stakeholders including constituent authorities as part of the budget setting process. Budget holders were consulted on the forecasts included in the report.

14. Other Impact of the Proposals

14.1 There are no other impacts arising from this report which is for information.

15. Appendices

15.1 Appendix 1: Nexus Capital Programme 2021/22

16. Background Papers

16.1 Joint Transport Committee Budget 2021/22 – report to 19 January 2021 meeting.

17. Contact Officers

17.1 Eleanor Goodman, Finance Manager, eleanor.goodman@northeastca.gov.uk,
0191 433 3860

18. Sign off

- 18.1
- The Proper Officer for Transport:
 - Head of Paid Service:
 - Monitoring Officer:
 - Chief Finance Officer:

19. Glossary

19.1 DfT – Department for Transport
ENCTS – English National Concessionary Travel Scheme
JTC – Joint Transport Committee
NECA – North East Combined Authority
NEMOL – North East Metro Operations Limited
TCF – Transforming Cities Fund
TT2 – Tyne Tunnels 2 Limited

Appendix 1: Nexus Capital Programme 2021/22

Metro Asset Renewal Programme

	Original Budget £m	Current Budget £m	Actual / Forecast £m	Variance £m
Cumulative to Period 2		1.688	1.673	(0.015)
Outturn				
Civils	1.150	1.369	1.369	0.000
Permanent Way	3.550	4.126	4.126	0.000
Overhead Line	3.321	3.046	3.046	0.000
Stations	0.031	1.336	1.336	0.000
Signalling	1.850	2.605	2.605	0.000
Metro Cars (Old)	3.223	3.223	3.223	0.000
Programme Management & Risk Contingency	2.910	2.826	2.826	0.000
Comms, Plant, Power, Mechanical & Electrical etc.	1.605	2.800	2.800	0.000
Business Applications	0.233	0.774	0.774	0.000
IT Infrastructure/Hardware	1.349	1.502	1.502	0.000
	19.222	23.607	23.607	0.000
Funded by:				
Metro Rail Grant (DfT)	20.000	20.000	20.000	0.000
Metro Rail Grant (DfT) b/fwd into 2020/21	(4.000)	(4.000)	(4.000)	0.000
Metro Rail Grant (D fT) b/fwd from 2022/23				0.000
LTP Grant	2.222	2.222	2.222	0.000
Highways Challenge Fund	1.000	1.000	1.000	0.000
Fleet Reserves		2.614	2.614	0.000
Over Programming		1.771	1.771	0.000
	19.222	23.607	23.607	0.000

Fleet Replacement Programme

	Original Budget £m	Current Budget £m	Actual / Forecast £m	Variance £m
Cumulative to Period 2		19.492	18.565	(0.927)
Outturn				
MSA	25.300	25.300	31.394	6.094
DCC	30.696	31.203	31.243	0.040
Howdon Depot		0.122	0.113	(0.009)
Project Delivery	1.997	2.066	2.075	0.009
Project Contingency	5.076	5.524	5.372	(0.152)
	63.069	64.215	70.197	5.982
Funded by:				
Fleet Replacement Grant (DfT)	59.666	54.100	54.100	0.000
Fleet Reserves	3.403	10.115	16.097	5.982
				0.000
				0.000
	63.069	64.215	70.197	5.982

Other Capital Projects

	Original Budget £m	Current Budget £m	Actual / Forecast £m	Variance £m
Cumulative to Period 2		0.518	0.145	(0.373)
Outturn				
Callerton Car Park	0.876	0.330	0.330	0.000
Digital Car Park	0.506	0.992	0.992	0.000
HCE PAYG Development	0.023	0.030	0.030	0.000
Bus Contracts		0.235	0.235	0.000
PCI DSS		0.045	0.045	0.000
Drivers Sign On		0.006	0.006	0.000
Ferry North Landing Relocation	6.569	1.226	1.226	0.000
Ferry	0.278	0.515	0.515	0.000
	8.252	3.379	3.379	0.000
Funded by:				
Transforming Cities Grant (DfT)	1.382	1.322	1.322	0.000
LTP Grant	0.382	0.382	0.382	0.000
LEP Grant	5.181	0.000	0.000	0.000
Nexus Reserves	1.307	1.675	1.675	0.000
	8.252	3.379	3.379	0.000

Metro Flow

	Original Budget £m	Current Budget £m	Actual / Forecast £m	Variance £m
Cumulative to Period 2		0.217	0.186	(0.031)
Outturn				
Metro Flow	8.100	20.632	20.669	0.037
	8.100	20.632	20.669	0.037
Funded by:				
Transforming Cities Grant (DfT)	8.100	20.632	20.632	0.000
Metro Rail Grant (DfT)			0.037	0.037
	8.100	20.632	20.669	0.037

Total Nexus Capital Programme

	Original Budget £m	Current Budget £m	Actual / Forecast £m	Variance £m
Cumulative to Period 2				
Metro Asset Renewal Programme		1.688	1.673	(0.015)
Fleet Replacement Programme		19.492	18.565	(0.927)
Other Capital Projects		0.518	0.145	(0.373)
Metro Flow		0.217	0.186	(0.031)
		21.915	20.569	(1.346)
Outturn				
Metro Asset Renewal Programme	19.222	23.609	23.609	0.000
Fleet Replacement Programme	63.069	64.215	70.197	5.982
Other Capital Projects	8.252	3.379	3.379	0.000
Metro Flow	8.100	20.632	20.669	0.037
	98.643	111.835	117.854	6.019
Funded by:				
Metro Rail Grant (DfT)	20.000	20.000	20.037	0.037
Metro Rail Grant (DfT) b/fwd into 2019/20	(4.000)	(4.000)	(4.000)	0.000
Metro Rail Grant (DfT) b/fwd from 2021/22	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Fleet Replacement Grant (DfT)	59.666	54.100	54.100	0.000
Transforming Cities Grant (DfT)	9.482	21.954	21.954	0.000
LTP Grant	2.604	2.604	2.604	0.000
LEP Grant	5.181	0.000	0.000	0.000
Fleet Reserves	3.403	12.729	18.711	5.982
Highways Challenge Fund	1.000	1.000	1.000	0.000
Nexus Reserves	1.307	1.675	1.675	0.000
Over Programming	0.000	1.773	1.773	0.000
	98.643	111.835	117.854	6.019

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North East Joint Transport Committee

Date: 13 July 2021

Subject: Transport Plan Progress Report

Report of: Managing Director, Transport North East

Executive Summary

This report provides an update on progress made across the seven Delivery Plan categories in implementing the objectives of the North East Transport Plan and achieving the vision of ‘moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving north-east.’

Bus partnership development work is continuing as is progress in developing a bid to the Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas (ZEBRA) 2021-2022 scheme.

School transport funding has been confirmed up to the end of the summer term but the Department for Education has stated that they do not currently see a need to continue additional dedicated transport funding into the autumn term.

Our regional Active Travel Campaign, ‘Go Smarter, Go Active’, launched at the end of June with the first summer roadshow planned for 19th July.

A Zero Emission Vehicle policy is being developed while work continues on delivery of the Go Ultra Low taxi scheme.

Good progress is being made with implementation of schemes under the Transforming Cities and Active Travel Funds, the reopening to passengers of the Northumberland Line and the various rail expansion studies, including the proposed reopening of the Leamside line.

The Tyne Pedestrian and Cycle Tunnels (TPCT), are now open 24/7 for night workers as well as daytime hours, and the full refurbishment of this listed structure is almost complete.

The proposed May 2022 East Coast Main Line timetable change is a cause of severe concern as it is likely to result in a significant cut in the number of services calling at some North East stations.

Recommendations

The Joint Transport Committee is recommended to note the contents of this report.

1. **Background**

1.1 The North East Transport Plan sets out a vision of ‘moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving north-east’ through the delivery of transport improvements under seven categories:

- Helping people make the right travel choice
- Upgrading north-east active travel infrastructure
- Bus, ferry and first and last mile
- Local rail and Metro
- Road infrastructure
- Maintaining and renewing our transport network
- National and international connectivity

Progress under each category is outlined below.

There are also five objectives, which are:



Carbon-neutral north east



Overcome inequality and grow our economy



Healthier north east



Appealing sustainable transport choices



Safe secure network

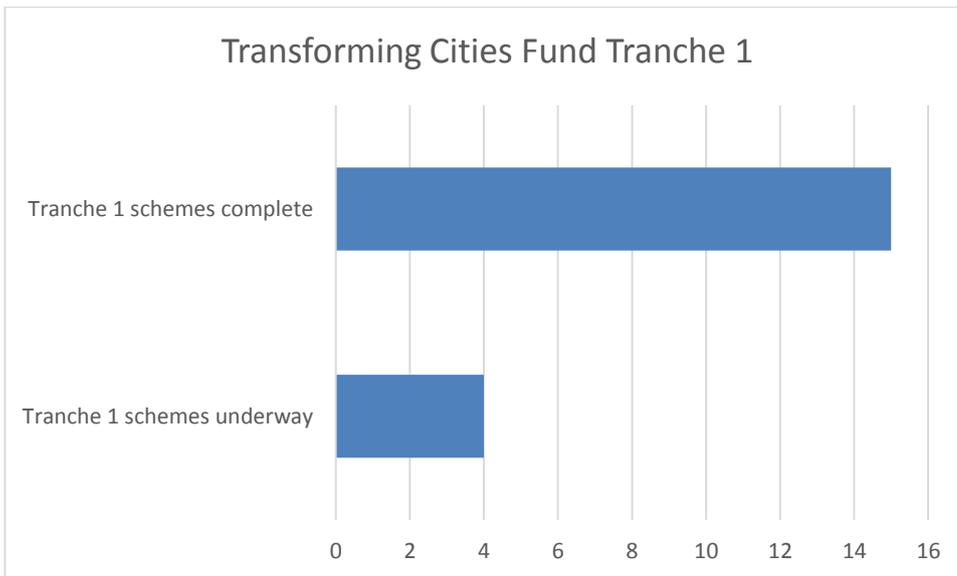
The symbols have been used below to denote how the listed schemes / actions contribute to the achievement of the various objectives.

2. **Helping people make the right travel choices**

2.1 **Transforming Cities Fund**



Of the 19 Tranche 1 schemes, 15 are now complete and the other four are well underway. There has been progress with the Sunderland Central Station Tranche 2 scheme which is now being considered at this JTC meeting. There have been delays with some business case development, but the programme is expected to be delivered by March 2023.



Next milestones

The Tranche 1 programme is set to be complete by the end of 2021. The Sunderland Central Station scheme is to be presented at this meeting.

Key risks

Any issues with delivery could cause further delays in programme completion, however this is not expected.

Further delays in business case development could result in schemes not being delivered by March 2023. Progress continues to be monitored closely.

RAG rating 

2.2

Intra-city Transport Fund



The Intra-city Transport Fund is a fund of circa £4.2bn over a five-year period to be shared between eight city regions from 2022 for investment in intra-city transport; our region is a candidate to access the fund, subject to appropriate Governance being in place The region is currently undertaking an exercise to demonstrate the benefits of this potential long term devolved settlement for transport. This includes what could be reasonably achieved and delivered. Engagement is planned with members in the coming weeks.

Next milestones

Production of a high-level prospectus demonstrating the scale of ambition; a draft will be made available to members at the July meeting and will be refined thereafter.

Key risks

Funding conditions not yet confirmed, scale of funding unknown.



RAG rating:

Subject to further discussions with government to confirm the scale of funding, conditions and timings.

2.3

Zero Emission Vehicle policy



A Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) Policy is being developed to set out how, working with partners, we intend to deliver the region's ZEV aspirations.

Next milestones

Policy to be submitted to the September meeting of JTC.

Key risks

Differing strategies amongst LA7 authorities inhibit a regional approach.

RAG rating:



2.4

Go Ultra Low taxi project



Eight of the ten dedicated chargers for the taxi and private hire industry (funded by the Office of Zero Emission Vehicles) are connected and operational with one available in every North East local authority. We launched the network at an engagement event with the taxi and private hire trade on the 17th June 2021 with further events planned in 2021 and 2022. These events are designed to understand barriers to entry to the market, provide information and support around the propensity to switch to EV use and make links with the trade. An information hub is now available at, <https://www.cenex.co.uk/north-east-rapid->

[charger-network-information-hub/](#). The final two chargers at sites in Newcastle and North Tyneside will be connected as soon as the sites become available.

Next milestones

Make final connections at the Newcastle City Centre, Blandford Square site and bring forward the one in North Tyneside as soon as the site is released. Host a further workshop with the trade in late Summer 2021.

Key risks

There are issues impacting on fully implementing the schemes. Legal constraints on one site (Blandford Square, Newcastle) while another site (Coronation Street, North Tyneside) is currently in use as a Covid testing centre.

RAG rating:  This reflects the issues with the Newcastle site

3. Upgrading north-east active travel infrastructure

3.1 Active Travel campaign

The regional 'Go Smarter, Go Active' Active Travel Campaign launched at the end of June with press coverage and the opportunity for the public to book roadshow events. Promotional activities have also commenced for the campaign, including use of social media.

Next milestones

The first summer roadshow is scheduled for the week commencing 19th July with them taking place on a weekly basis until the end of the school summer holidays. The regional walking and cycling maps and the suite of itineraries for fun-filled days out across the North East region using sustainable modes are also expected to be published in July.

Key risks

Poor / inclement weather impacting on the campaign.

RAG rating: 

3.2 Active Travel Fund

Consultation is still underway for a number of schemes within the Tranche 2 programme. Construction of schemes is anticipated to start by the end of July 2021. All schemes to be completed by the end of March 2022, with the exception of Grey Street which was granted an extension to July 2022 by the Department for Transport.

Tranche 3 of the Active Travel Fund has been announced. Funding will be allocated by the Department for Transport following a round of bidding. A

process by which to prioritise schemes for a regional bid is being devised.

Next milestones

The first permanent scheme construction for Tranche 2 will begin in July 2021 on the A167 Great North Cycleway Improvements (Newton Aycliffe) scheme. The bid for Tranche 3 of Active Travel Fund will be submitted by the closing date of 9th August 2021.

Key risks

Timescales for project delivery or scope could be impacted if scheme designs require amendment or enhancement following consultation feedback.

Due to the competitive nature of the bidding process, there is the potential of receiving a proportionately lower settlement for Tranche 3 as opposed to the regional allocation which was received for Tranche 2.

RAG rating:



4. **Bus, Ferry and First and Last Mile**

4.1

Bus partnership development



The national bus strategy was launched in March, setting out an ambitious vision to dramatically improve bus services (outside London) through greater local leadership. The Strategy sets out a more formal framework for partnership working between local transport authorities and local bus operators and requires that each local transport authority implement a statutory Enhanced Partnership under the Bus Services Act 2017.

Following JTC's decision to enter into an Enhanced Partnership at their June meeting, correct processes have been followed to publish the notice of the Enhanced Partnership.

Since JTC last met, resources have; and continue to be secured to form the team to deliver the project. Procurement processes are commencing to secure professional service to support the project such as legal support. To top up funding secured for the project from LA7 authorities, a bid has also been submitted to the North East LEP to secure development funding for the production of a Business Case for bus corridors in our region which will aim to lower bus journey times and improve reliability.

Next milestones

A separate report is included on the agenda covering the production of "Your Vision for Buses", which presents a document to JTC for approval to stimulate dialogue about bus services across stakeholders in our region in. The engagement process, if agreed by JTC will run until September 10th 2021.

Key risks

Challenging time scales pose a key risk to this project which involves the production of detailed plans and documents as well as lengthy discussion

between Transport North East, bus operators and Highways Authorities.

4.2

Zero Emission Bus Regional Area (ZEBRA) bid



Working with bus operators, the region has submitted a bid to the Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas (ZEBRA) 2021-2022 scheme. A package of investment has been developed with a wide range of stakeholders which focuses on a number of bus corridors which fall within air quality exceedance areas. This will see 79 buses delivered on a mix of inner town and city operations, longer distance routes and rural operations.

Next milestones

The region will find out if we have been successful at Expression of Interest stage in August and if successful, we will be invited to develop a business case which will be submitted in January 2022. A further update will be given to JTC members in September.

Key risks

Need for match funding from operators; securing funding from Government; Energy supply and delivery; manufacturing capacity for delivery.

RAG rating:



Our EoI has been submitted and we await the outcome of the DfT's review.

4.3

School travel update



Additional grant funding of £111,922.00 was received from the Department for Education (DfE) for the start of the second summer half term up until 25th June. The DfE have committed to funding additional home to school/college transport services until the end of the summer term, under the same terms and conditions but are not providing upfront allocations.

They are carrying out a survey and reconciliation process in mid-July and will use this to capture spend for the second half of the summer term and provide further allocations as needed, taking into account any underspends. DfE have asked for consideration to be given to reducing services where appropriate to account for students not attending for this period, such as post-16 and also for local authorities to promote active travel for journeys to school or college.

They do not currently see a need to continue additional dedicated transport funding into the autumn term.

Next milestones

The current measures will continue until the end of the school year.

Key risks

The potential for social distancing on public transport being continued into the

autumn term when there is currently no additional home to school/college funding expected for this period.

RAG rating:



5. Local rail and Metro

5.1 North east Rail and Metro strategy



First working draft of the strategy document completed ready for a Super Feedback Week during w/c 5 July, to gather feedback from key stakeholders on draft version of the strategy.

A successful Steering Group workshop held in June captured a wide range of views on what a rail strategy should aim to deliver. Findings will be incorporated into the final document.

Key milestones

Super feedback week – w/c 5th July.

Key risks

Working to tight deadlines, timeframes to be aligned with ongoing strategy work in other areas. Encompassing both Metro & heavy rail into a single strategy.

RAG rating:



5.2 Rail expansion studies



South of Tyne & Wearside (SoT&W) – Phase 1 final report covering Pelaw to Washington/IAMP was submitted to TNE at the end of June.

Next milestones

SoT&W Phase 3 (Washington – South Hylton) study underway, due to conclude and report to TNE by the end of July. Phase 2 (Sunderland-Doxford) will commence after this.

The region's Restoring Your Railways 3 ('RYR3') bids are still awaiting a Government decision on outcomes.

Key risks

Delays to original timescales.

RAG rating:



5.3 Metro funding



Nexus are in ongoing correspondence with DfT and the Treasury to provide

evidence for the importance of continuing support for Metro to assist in the economic and social recovery of the region. Funding currently only confirmed to 19th July 2021.

Next milestones

19th July 2021.

Key risks

No funding confirmed before the 19th July 2021; funding confirmed does not fully cover deficit between fare box and operating costs.

HM to update

5.4

Local rail



The issues with yaw damper cracking affecting express trains using the East Coast Mainline have been resolved.

The December 2021 timetable is in development and the May 2022 ECML impact details (see later item) have been shared.

There has been a resumption of events planning to ensure capacity meets demand. The message remains: “Travel safe / with confidence” and staff training is continuing.

Next milestones

Summer marketing campaigns are to be introduced to help attract passengers back to the network.

Key risks

The financial impact if passenger numbers remain depressed.

RAG status:



5.5

Northumberland line



Work continues with DfT/ Northern to develop an integrated ticketing solution to feed into the Full Business Case on 1st October. Network Rail Early Enabling works have started on site. Planning applications for five new stations have been submitted.

Approval has been given for a new pedestrian footbridge at Chase Meadows, Blyth to replace the existing level crossing.

Next milestones

Planning applications need to be submitted for the remaining stations and the Transport and Works Act order inquiry is programmed for November 2021. The

line is anticipated to reopen to passengers by 2024.

Key risks

The Northumberland Line project has a full governance structure in place which monitors and mitigates any risks to delivery through workstream level risk registers.

RAG status:



5.6

Leamside line



Work is ongoing and the project team will consider the Williams-Shapps Review and Integrated Rail Plan outcomes. Arup commenced work on the Umbrella Strategic Outline Business Case (USOBC), organised stakeholder engagement sessions throughout June, including the NEJTC expansion schemes. The Land Value Capture report is being reviewed whilst the RYR3 bid outcome still awaited.

Next milestones

Next Programme Board on 30th July.

Arup's USOBC report is to be submitted to TNE by mid-July.

Key risks

National, regional and local stakeholders all have an interest in the shape that the Leamside Line project might take; the project will need to manage any conflicting stakeholder or potential funder aspirations.

RAG rating: 

6. Road infrastructure

6.1 Tyne Bridge

Funding is being sought through the Levelling Up Fund and Major Road Network processes to restore and improve the iconic Tyne Bridge, in time for its 100th anniversary in 2028, with support from political leaders across the region and an accompanying “Evening Chronicle” campaign (called Restore the Tyne Bridge now). The government has said it wants to see the bridge “restored to its former glory” but a funding decision will not be made until the autumn.

Next milestones

A decision on funding will be made in the autumn.

Key risks

Inability to secure funding for necessary restoration work will increase the costs of maintaining this key transport asset in the longer term.

RAG rating: 

6.2 Highways England’s next round of route strategies

Highways England has published its vision for route strategies for the third road period (2025-2030) which can be viewed at <https://highwaysengland.co.uk/media/w0vhd3un/vision-for-route-strategies.pdf>

Route strategies will inform the Government’s future investment in motorways and A-roads in England as part of the next Road Investment Strategy (RIS3).

Next milestones

Extensive consultation on the proposals will take place with road users, business, environmental groups and local authorities this summer.

Key risks

None.

RAG rating: 

7. Maintaining and renewing our transport network

7.1

Tyne Tunnel



In respect of the Tyne traffic tunnels, traffic levels are increasing towards expected levels as Covid-19 restrictions are lifted and schools and businesses return to normal working arrangements.

Work is continuing on the Tyne Pass Scheme to introduce barrierless travel for Tunnel users. This will modernise the outdated payment system and will bring significant environmental benefits in terms of reduced vehicle emissions and improved air quality. The go-live date for the full Tyne Pass scheme for open-road tolling with no barriers, is planned before the end of 2021. Interim stages are now in place as an option for drivers, including Pay Later and barrierless lanes for pre-paid account holders to give them priority faster lanes. TT2 (the operator of the tunnels) is implementing the Tyne Pass Scheme, planning the civil engineering works required, recruiting additional staff for the contact centre and refining the processes for Unpaid Toll Charge Notices enforcement to ensure that a high standard of customer service is in place by the go-live stage for Tyne Pass.

The Tyne Pedestrian and Cycle Tunnels (TPCT), are welcoming more cyclists than ever and are now open 24/7 for night workers as well as daytime hours. The full refurbishment of this listed structure is almost complete. The outstanding work required is on the installation of the new inclined lifts.

Next milestones

The Tyne Pass scheme is planned to go live in November/December 2021. More details on the scheme are provided in regular reports to the JTC Tyne and Wear Sub-Committee ('TWSC').

In terms of the inclined lifts installation at the TCPT, this work is planned for autumn 2021 to enable the lifts to be fully operational by the end of the year.

Key risks

There is a delivery and financial risk on the Tyne Pass Scheme, but that rests with TT2 who operate the Tunnels and who are responsible for implementation of the scheme and for enforcement of unpaid tolls. There will be a reputational risk to JTC if the scheme is not delivered on time or produces adverse outcomes for users. Safeguards have been put in place via the Project Agreement with TT2 and via the processes for management of the Concession.

There are delivery and financial risks to the JTC in relation to the Tyne Pedestrian and Cyclist Tunnels (TPCT) works, as the tunnels refurbishment has been overseen by Newcastle City Council on behalf of the JTC and has been funded by tunnels income. At this stage of the refurbishment, the financial risk is lower as the work has almost been completed and the tunnels are open to the public, with only the inclined lift work to be completed

RAG rating: 

8. **National and international connectivity**

8.1

Transport for the North

TfN Board have launched public consultation on their new Decarbonisation Strategy, which proposes a close to zero date of 2045 for carbon emissions from surface transport in the North. TNE will be submitting a response and taking part in one of three regionally-focused consultation events.

Next milestones

North east consultation event on 6th July. Public consultation ends on 31st August.

Key risks

Differing rates of progress in reducing carbon across northern authorities; challenging nature of actions required to meet target.

RAG rating: 

8.2 **East Coast Main Line May 2022 Major timetable change consultation**

A new timetable for the East Coast Main Line (ECML) is being proposed to start in May 2022. LNER propose to add a 3rd train per hour between Newcastle and London. However capacity issues on the line between Northallerton and Newcastle means that there is a limitation of 6 passenger trains per hour. If the train service is to be grown to one destination, it must inevitably be reduced to another to keep within the limitation. The once-daily direct LNER service between Sunderland and London will be cancelled.

This Committee has agreed to stand by the retention of the current rail connectivity pattern (2 to London, 2 to Manchester and 2 to Birmingham), rather than introducing a third train service to London in each hour at the expense of trains to either Birmingham or Manchester.

We propose that the timetable changes should be put on hold, and a “taskforce” be established by the government to examine the capacity constraints and put forward options to resolve them both short- and long- term.

The following table shows the net effect on the number of trains each day at NE stations:

Berwick upon Tweed	56	50	-6
Alnmouth	43	44	1
Morpeth	75	54	-21
Newcastle	172	171	-1
Chester-le-Street	28	38	10
Durham	163	155	-8
Darlington	183	154	-29
Northallerton (to/from Ncle)	43	52	9

Next milestones

Following publication of timetable proposals on 11th June, an 8-week public consultation is due to end on 5th August.

Key risks

Unlocking economic growth and connectivity across the North, lessening the North-South divide and strengthening East-West links remains a key priority for our region. Reducing calls at North East rail stations would damage their accessibility, connectivity and economic growth potential.

RAG rating:



9. Proposals

- 9.1 This report is for information. Members are asked to note the contents of the report.

10. Reasons for the Proposals

- 10.1 This report is for information purposes.

11. Alternative Options Available

- 11.1 Not applicable to this report.

12. Next Steps and Timetable for Implementation

- 12.1 Next steps are set out under each respective item.

13. Potential Impact on Objectives

- 13.1 Successful delivery of the various transport schemes and investment proposals outlined in this document will assist the JTC in delivering its objective to maximise the region's opportunities and economic potential.

14. Financial and Other Resources Implications

- 14.1 The report provides an update and overview of progress against the seven Delivery Plan categories in implementing the objectives of the North East

Transport Plan and achieving the vision of 'moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving north-east.'

- 14.2 The North East Transport Plan includes proposed / required investment totalling £7billion to achieve the aims and ambitions of the JTC, the majority of which is dependent on future funding decisions by central government. The financial and other resource implications aligned to the plan were agreed as part of the Transport Budget and Levies 2021/22 report to the JTC on 19 January 2021 and in subsequent reports to augment and amend the budget as appropriate.

15. Legal Implications

- 15.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report, which is for information only

16. Key Risks

- 16.1 Appropriate risk management arrangements are in place for each programme of work overseen by the delivery agencies responsible. Key risks are set out under each respective item.

17. Equality and Diversity

- 17.1 Successful delivery of schemes to improve public transport, walking and cycling will help to address transport-related social exclusion and create a fairer society.

18. Crime and Disorder

- 18.1 There are no specific crime and disorder implications associated with this report.

19. Consultation/Engagement

- 20.1 Many of the schemes and proposals outlined in this report have been, or will be, the subject of engagement with appropriate stakeholders or the wider public.

21. Other Impact of the Proposals

- 21.1 No specific impacts.

22. Appendices

- 22.1 1 - Progress on Key Performance Indicators.

23. Background Papers

- 23.1 None.

24. Contact Officers

24.1 Tobyn Hughes, Managing Director, Transport North East
Tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk

25. Sign off

- Head of Paid Service:
- Monitoring Officer:
- Chief Finance Officer:

26. Glossary

26.1 RYR3 – The Restoring Your Railway fund is a government programme that provides funding to restore lost rail connections to communities. Assessment of Round 3 bids is currently underway.

All other abbreviations or acronyms are spelled out in the report.

Appendix 1

Progress on Key Performance Indicators

<u>KPI</u>	<u>Direction of travel</u>	<u>Key insight</u>
<u>Sustainable Travel</u> 33% of journeys made	No Change	An updated National Travel Survey for 2020 has not yet been

<p>by public transport, walking and cycling.</p> <p>Data Source: DfT National Travel Survey 2019, published August 2020.</p>		<p>released for comparison. Other data sources have Metro and bus use remaining below pre-covid levels, however cycling numbers are up</p>
<p><u>Public transport accessibility</u></p> <p>45% People within 25 minutes of key employment, education and retail sites by public transport.</p> <p>Data source: Commissioned analysis August 2020</p>	<p>No Change</p>	<p>Data is not yet available to update, however, there have been no major changes to infrastructure.</p>
<p><u>Climate action</u></p> <p>CO2 emissions per capita: 1.7 tonnes CO2 emitted per person annually using transport.</p> <p>Data source: UK local authority and regional CO2 emissions statistics: 2018, Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, published June 2020</p>	<p>No Change</p>	<p>National data has not yet been released for 2019 or 2020</p>
<p><u>Take up of ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEVs)</u></p> <p>0.34% Proportion of licenced vehicles in our region that are classed as ultra-low emission (end of 2019)</p> <p>Data source: Department for Transport vehicle</p>	<p>Increase</p>	<p>0.48% of licenced vehicles in the region are classed as ultra-low emission (end of 2020). Data published May 2021.</p>

licensing statistics		
<p><u>Air quality</u></p> <p>For 2019, the highest, median, hourly nitrogen dioxide reading was 26.9ug/m³ occurring in the morning traffic peak.</p> <p>Data source: Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs Automatic Urban and Rural Network (AURN)</p>	Decrease	For 2020, the highest, median, hourly nitrogen dioxide reading was 20.1ug/m ³ occurring in the morning traffic, however this is expected to be unusually low due to lock down restrictions
<p><u>Network performance</u></p> <p>In terms of efficiency, in 2019 our regional network scored 71.8%</p> <p>Data source: Department for Transport congestion data.</p>	No Change	Data is not yet available to update – should be available by the next update.
<p><u>Motor vehicle traffic</u></p> <p>Estimated vehicle miles per head in our region in 2019 5,077</p> <p>Data source: Department for Transport National Travel survey, published August 2020</p>	No Change	National data has not yet been released for 2020
<p><u>Road safety: numbers killed and seriously injured</u></p> <p>Numbers killed and seriously injured (KSI) three year rolling average (2016-17 to 2018-19) 778</p> <p>Data source: Traffic Accident Data Unit</p>	Decrease	In the three-year rolling average from 2017 to 2020 there were 704 KSI.

<p><u>Road safety: number of slight injuries</u></p> <p>Number of slight injuries three year rolling average (2016-17 to 2018-19) 3,275</p> <p>Data source: Traffic Accident Data Unit</p>	<p>Decrease</p>	<p>In the three-year rolling average from 2017 to 2020 there were 2,934 slight injuries</p>
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North East Joint Transport Committee

Date: 13 July 2021

Subject: North East Rail and Metro Strategy Update Report

Report of: Managing Director, Transport North East

Executive Summary

This report provides an update on progress made in the development of the North East Rail and Metro Strategy (NERMS), including a timeline for the production and approval of the strategy document.

Recommendations

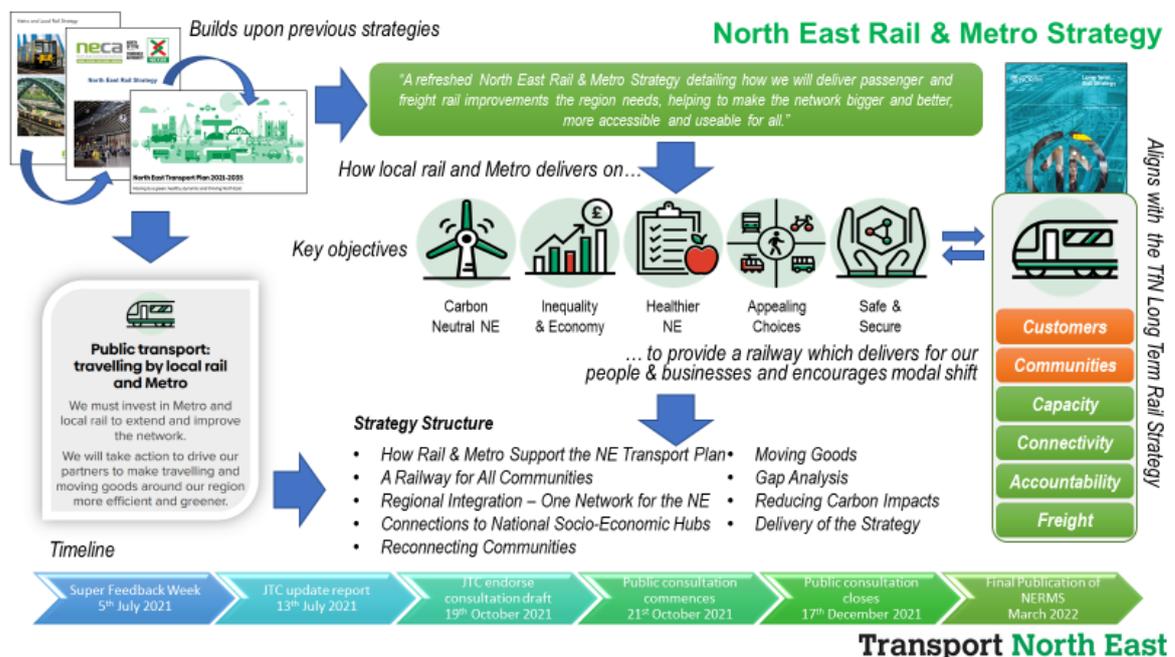
The Joint Transport Committee is recommended to note the strategy update.

1. Background:

- 1.1 Formally approved in March 2021, the North East Transport Plan identifies a suite of sub-strategies to be directly aligned to the overall vision and objectives, including a North East Rail and Metro Strategy (NERMS) to be delivered in the 2021/22 financial year.
- 1.2 The NERMS has the following overarching requirement as set out in the Transport Plan - *“A refreshed North East Rail and Metro strategy detailing how we will deliver passenger and freight rail improvements the region needs, helping to make the network bigger and better, more accessible and useable for all.”*
- 1.3 Work has thus commenced on the drafting of the NERMS with a view to completing the document by the March 2022. This report is the first formal update to members and forms part of the plan to engage with the JTC at regular intervals through the drafting process.

2. Proposals

- 2.1 The format, tone, and style of the NERMS will match that of the Transport Plan. A plan on a page is shown below:



- 2.2 Work has commenced on drafting the chapters outlined in the graphic above and an initial stakeholder engagement session has been held to seek views on potential content. This included a representation from Transport Focus, the independent watchdog for transport users. They share our aim of putting the interests of transport users first and aim to get the best deal for existing and future passengers. In addition to TNE and Nexus, the full list of steering group

members is listed below:

Community Representation

- North East England Chamber of Commerce (*Businesses*)
- Transport Focus (*Passengers*)
- Tyne Valley CRP (*Local Communities*)
- Railfuture North East (*Local Campaigns*)
- Newcastle University (*HE/FE Sector*)

LA & Industry Input

- Network Rail (*National scope*)
- Transport for the North (*Regional scope*)
- LA7 Heads of Transport (*Local input*)
- North East Rail Management Unit (*Local input*)
- Northern Railway and LNER (*TOCs*)
- North East Freight Partnership (*FOCs*)

2.3 An initial outline draft has been circulated to a variety of organisations as part of Super Feedback week (using a similar process to the Transport Plan development) to gauge early views on the emerging content and presentation.

2.4 The following table provides a summary of the chapters and topics covered within the current working version:

Chapter	Working Title	Key topics
1	Introduction	Showcases the North East local rail and metro network. Demonstrates how rail supports our economy, environment, and communities Sets out the vision and objectives for the overall NERMS and how it supports the Transport Plan.
2	A Railways for All Communities	Picks up comments from the ‘Big Transport Conversation’ (held for the Transport Plan) to identify what users and communities want from local rail and Metro services. Sets out the North East’s current position and future aspirations for various aspects rail services e.g. the customer experience, future payment products, safety, and security measures. Outlines future needs of local rail and Metro including new and improved stations.
3	Regional Integration	Describes the role and remit of the North East Rail Management Unit and the desire for greater local rail devolution as an enabler to better integration of public transport across the region. Considers the Williams-Shapps Review and outlines opportunities for greater local devolution to bring local rail under closer accountability through specification, management, and integration of services akin to the Tyne and Wear Metro. Members may wish to discuss how they would wish to see greater integration of the local rail and Metro passenger service offer.
4	Connections to National Socio-	Describes the current rail links from the North East to the wider UK.

	Economic Hubs	Highlights our region's capacity constraints on the ECML for further growth in the passenger and freight sectors. Showcases Northern Powerhouse Rail and HS2 as enablers to achieve better connectivity. <i>It is also recognised at this stage that the Integrated Rail Plan for the North and Midlands is yet to be published. The outcomes may influence the content of this chapter. As too will the outcome of the May 2022 ECML timetable consultation.</i>
5	Reconnecting Communities	Showcases how the current and proposed local rail and Metro expansion schemes, plus new stations, will extend the reach of our rail and Metro networks to provide greater connectivity for more communities across the region
6	Moving Goods	Sets out the current situation for rail freight across our region and identifies where further investment is required
7	Gap Analysis	Analyses services on our current local rail routes against TfN's Long Term Rail Strategy criteria Presents the current and future direct connections between different areas across the LA7 and identifies where strategic gaps could still exist.
8	Decarbonisation	Provides a commentary on the wider situation around the decarbonisation agenda and how rail needs to play a greater role, primarily through modal shift but also through the removal of diesel trains. Summarises new technologies for rail traction
9	Conclusions & Delivery Plan	Set out recommendations for developing Metro and local rail services plus timeframes for project delivery <i>(To be completed upon approval of the main NERMS body)</i>

3. Reasons for the Proposals

3.1 This report provides an update on progress of the development of the NERMS.

4. Alternative Options Available

4.1 Not applicable.

5. Next Steps and Timetable for Implementation

5.1 The project plan for the development of the NERMS includes the following key milestones:

- June to August 2021- Initial drafting (including stakeholder input and super feedback week)
- October 2021 – JTC to approve consultation draft
- October to December 2021 – public and stakeholder consultation
- February 2022– consultation responses and proposed changes to JTC

- March 2022 – JTC approve final strategy document

6. Potential Impact on Objectives

6.1 The NERMS will be fully aligned with the Transport Plan objectives.

7. Financial and Other Resources Implications

7.1 There are no financial implications to produce the NERMS. Any subsequent schemes or initiatives will need to secure funding through capital or revenue bids.

8. Legal Implications

8.1 There are no legal implications at this stage of production of the NERMS

9. Key Risks

9.1 There is a potential risk to the programme for producing the NERMS document following the departure of one of the Heavy Rail team, who was leading the work. However, a replacement is being sought which will hopefully keep the overall programme on track.

10. Equality and Diversity

10.1 There are no specific equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

11. Crime and Disorder

11.1 There are no specific crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

12. Consultation/Engagement

12.1 A steering group has been established to help with the early development of the strategy and to keep the project focussed. In the autumn, a public consultation is planned to cover an 8-week period.

13. Other Impact of the Proposals

13.1 The delivery of a North East Rail and Metro Strategy will significantly help with the planning and implementation of local interventions aimed at improving the stated Transport Plan objectives as well as strengthening the lobbying position on regional and national schemes that are vital for the North East's economic and social future.

14. Appendices

14.1 None

15. Background Papers

15.1 None.

16. Contact Officers

16.1 Tobyn Hughes, Managing Director,
Transport North East
Email: tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk

17. Sign off

- Head of Paid Service:
- Monitoring Officer:
- Chief Finance Officer:

18. Glossary

18.1 All acronyms or technical terms used are explained in the body of the report.

NERMS – North East Rail and Metro Strategy

JTC – Joint Transport Committee

TfN – Transport for the North

TNE – Transport North East

CRP – Community Rail Partnership

HE/FE – Higher Education and Further Education

LNER – London North Eastern Railways

TOC's – Train operating companies

FOC's – Freight operating companies

ECML – East Coast Main Line

Appendix

None

North East Joint Transport Committee

Date: 13 July 2021

Subject: Transforming Cities Fund Tranche 2 – Grant Funding Agreements

Report of: Managing Director, Transport North East.

Executive Summary.

The purpose of this report is to seek delegated authority to approve and allocate funding from the Transforming Cities Fund (TCF) Devolved Pot to the Sunderland Station scheme. A business case for the scheme is currently being considered in accordance with the region's Transport Assurance Framework with the scheme appraisal being conducted by Transport North East's retained independent consultants.

It is necessary to expedite approval of the scheme, given the need to start on site in August 2021, in order to meet the construction programme within TCF timelines. Delegated authority is sought from the Joint Transport Committee for the Transport North East Managing Director, in consultation with the Section 73 Officer and Monitoring Officer subject to successful appraisal of the scheme business case and due diligence in line with the Transport Assurance Framework to approve the Sunderland Station scheme and enter into a Grant Funding Agreement (GFA) with Sunderland City Council.

Recommendations

The North East Joint Transport Committee is recommended to:

- i. Delegate authority to the Transport North East Managing Director, in consultation with the Section 73 Officer and Monitoring Officer, to approve the release of £16,326,814 from the TCF Devolved Pot to the Sunderland Station scheme, subject to successful appraisal in line with Transport Assurance Framework.
- ii. Instruct officers to prepare and execute a Grant Funding Agreement with Sunderland City Council for the Sunderland Station scheme.

1. **Background Information**

1.1 In March 2020 the North East region was awarded £198m from the Government's Transforming Cities Fund to aid the delivery of sustainable transport capital measures. In total, £94m of this funding is allocated to the Nexus led Metro Flow scheme, with the remaining £104m allocated to the region to spend on smaller sustainable transport schemes.

1.2 A programme of schemes was considered by this Committee in May 2020, and the local authority promoters of those schemes have since been advancing the design of their schemes and preparing business cases for investment.

1.3 As they come forward, the business case for each scheme in the programme is considered using the regionally agreed Transport Assurance Framework and reviewed by an independent consultant retained by Transport North East (TNE) to ensure:

- the level of analysis undertaken by the scheme promoter is appropriate to the size of the scheme;
- the scheme gives good value for public money;
- the risks associated with delivery of the scheme have been identified and where possible mitigated; and
- the appropriate governance and procurement processes are in place to complete the scheme by March 2023, a key requirement of DfT's grant funding conditions.

1.4 The business case for the Sunderland Station scheme has now come forward and is currently being considered in accordance with the region's Transport Assurance Framework with the scheme appraisal being conducted by TNEs retained consultants.

2. **Proposals**

2.1 This report details only the second TCF scheme to come forward with a business case for appraisal in accordance with the Transport Assurance Framework.

2.2 The Sunderland Station scheme entails the improvement of the existing concourse area at Sunderland Station. These improvements will provide the station with enhanced modern facilities, which will support the overall passenger experience and serve as a gateway into the retail core of Sunderland and the wider city centre. These improvements will benefit businesses, commuters and visitors to the area. The scheme will also better serve Sunderland's growing student population, helping to drive the growth of the city's knowledge industry, and promote sustainable, low carbon travel.

- 2.3 In addition to the station enhancements, the scheme will also involve the construction of a new 400 space Multi-Storey Car Park (MSCP), on land to the south of the rail station adjacent to Holmeside. This new car park will be managed by the Council in order to provide long and short stay rail parking to directly cater for the station.
- 2.4 In total, the Sunderland Station scheme will cost £19.2m of which £16.3m is provided by the TCF Devolved Pot with Sunderland City Council contributing the remaining £2.9m as a local match funding contribution.
- 2.5 The programme for the delivery of the scheme is on a critical path, Sunderland City Council are scheduled to enter into a contract for station works on the 23rd July 2021, with the first phase of works on the station elements of the scheme due to start in August 2021, whilst works on the MSCP will commence in April 2022. It is envisaged that all station works will be complete by January 2023, and remaining elements in relation to the MSCP will complete in March 2023.
- 2.6 Given the aforementioned time constraints associated with the programme of delivery for the scheme and the lack of an available Committee date in August, delegated authority is sought to approve the scheme business case subject to a positive appraisal outcome. It is vital that the decision-making process required to enable Sunderland City Council and NECA to enter into a Grant Funding Agreement (GFA) can be expedited so as not to forestall critical stages of delivery.
- 2.7 It is recommended that the Committee confer delegated authority to the TNE Managing Director, in consultation with the S73 Officer and the Monitoring Officer, to prepare and execute a GFA with Sunderland City Council subject to a successful appraisal in line with the agreed regional Transport Assurance Framework. That Agreement will provide Sunderland City Council, as scheme promoter, with permission to draw down funding from the TCF Devolved Pot which is held by NECA on behalf of the JTC and meet the deadline for TCF scheme completion, March 2023

3. Reasons for the Proposals

- 3.1 The scheme proposals will contribute to the delivery of the Transforming Cities Fund programme, which in turn will contribute to the delivery of the overarching regional objectives outlined in the North East Transport Plan. The proposed approval route for the scheme is recommended to ensure the first phase of works can commence in August 2021. This start date is essential for the scheme to meet the programme of construction and ensure the overall scheme can be delivered by the March 2023 deadline for TCF expenditure.

4. Alternative Options Available

- 4.1 As part of the business case development for Sunderland Station a range of delivery options were assessed against value for money, risk and deliverability considerations. A preferred option was selected and progressed on the understanding that the approach offered the best mix of benefits offset against a comparably lower level delivery risk. The business case demonstrates why the chosen solution provides the best option in terms of meeting passenger needs

whilst also providing value for public money.

4.2 Two options are presented to the North East Joint Transport Committee.

4.3 Option 1 – The North East Joint Transport Committee accept the recommendations set out in this report, and confer delegated authority to the TNE Managing Director, in consultation with the S73 Officer and the Monitoring Officer, to prepare and execute a GFA with Sunderland City Council subject to a successful appraisal in line with the agreed regional Transport Assurance Framework, enabling the Sunderland Station scheme to deliver with TCF programme timescales.

4.4 Option 2 - The North East Joint Transport Committee do not accept the recommendations set out in this report, in which case the Sunderland Station will not be able to deliver in line with the TCF programme timescales and the passenger benefits outlined within the business case of the scheme will not be realised.

4.5 Option 1, is the recommended option.

5. Next Steps and Timetable for Implementation

5.1 A Grant Funding Agreement will be prepared by officers subject to successful appraisal and will be subsequently agreed with Sunderland City Council, after which construction can commence. TNE will require that the Council provides quarterly monitoring update reports that will detail progress, expenditure and risks

6. Potential Impact on Objectives

6.1 The proposal will contribute positively to the high-level strategic objectives in both the regional Strategic Economic Plan and the North East Transport Plan.

7. Financial and Other Resources Implications

7.1 The TCF allocation proposed in this report amounts £16,326,814. The financial summary for the TCF Devolved Pot can be updated as follows:

- Total TCF Funds: £198,483,104
- Funds Committed (inc. Sunderland Station): £19,939,314
- Remaining Devolved Pot: £178,543,790
- Total TCF ask: £216,679,625
- Over-programming: £18,196,521

7.2 There are no Human Resources or ICT implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

8. Legal Implications

8.1 A Grant Funding Agreement is required in order to enable the scheme promoter to commence drawing down the funding allocation associated with

Sunderland Station. A standard Grant Funding Agreement template has been prepared for all TCF schemes that is utilised to minimise any legal risks and ensure NECA's obligations (on behalf of the JTC) to the Department for Transport in regards to the TCF devolved funding, these obligations are appropriately transferred to the scheme promoters through the Grant Funding Agreement.

9. Key Risks

- 9.1 The key risk for this Committee relates to the potential for the construction of this scheme to be delayed or overspent. The funding mechanism included within the Grant Funding Agreement ensures that risks to the Committee are appropriately mitigated, transferred, and borne by the scheme promoter.

10. Equality and Diversity

- 10.1 The scheme will be designed to modern standards and compliant with appropriate legislation, ensuring that any equality and diversity implications are minimised. In particular, the scheme will take account of the access needs of people with disabilities, and the safety and security needs of vulnerable people.

11. Crime and Disorder

- 11.1 The scheme will be designed to modern standards, appropriate consultation with statutory consultees has taken place through the design of the scheme, ensuring that any crime and disorder implications will be minimised.

12. Consultation/Engagement

- 12.1 This report has been shared with the Capital Programme Board and Transport Strategy Board, comments have been taken on board from both groups. The scheme promoter has managed all consultation requirements pertaining to the scheme itself.

13. Other Impact of the Proposals

- 13.1 The improved station facilities in Sunderland are likely to have a positive economic impact on the city centre benefitting businesses, commuters and visitors to the area. The scheme will also better serve Sunderland's growing student population, helping to drive the growth of the City's knowledge industry whilst promoting sustainable, low carbon travel.

14. Appendices

- 14.1 None

15. Background Papers

15.1 None

16. Contact Officers

16.1 Jonathan Bailes, Transport Programme Lead

E-mail: jonathan.bailes@transportnortheast.gov.uk

Tel:

17. Sign off

- The Proper Officer for Transport: ✓
- Head of Paid Service: ✓
- Monitoring Officer: ✓
- Chief Finance Officer: ✓

18. Glossary

- DfT – Department for Transport
- TCF Devolved Pot – the Transforming Cities Fund allocation from DfT that is available to spend on the prioritised schemes identified in our November 2019 TCF Strategic Outline Business Case submission
- Transport Assurance Framework – a framework for business case development and review that ensures good decision making, procurement and governance is in place for all projects, for schemes that can demonstrate good value for public money

North East Joint Transport Committee

Date: 13 July 2021

Subject: Vision for Buses

Report of: Managing Director, Transport North East

Executive Summary

The National Bus Strategy, published by government earlier this year, set out government's ambitions for bus networks and stated that a £3bn national pot of funding will become available that Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) may bid into for enhancements to their bus network. The strategy also set out the conditions which LTAs should adhere to, not only to access the national funding for enhancements; but also to secure ongoing financial support for bus operations in their area. The key milestones are:

- 30th June 2021: commit to establishing Enhanced Partnerships under the Bus Services Act
- 31st October 2021: publish a local Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) in line with the strategy requirements
- April 2022: Have an Enhanced Partnership (EP) in place or be following the Franchising process

At their meeting on 15th June 2021, the JTC approved that a Statutory Notice should be issued stating the JTC's intention to enter into Enhanced Partnerships with bus operators, so attention therefore turns to the need to publish a BSIP.

The formulation of an Enhanced Partnership, as well as the authorship of a high quality BSIP, require a period of meaningful engagement with stakeholders to gather insight as to what is required from a bus network. This report presents a document "North East Vision for Buses" which is designed to articulate JTC's aspirations for the region's bus network; and to stimulate debate in the region through an informal engagement process which will capture feedback which can serve as evidence making the case for investment through the BSIP document.

Recommendations

The North East Joint Transport Committee is recommended to approve the "North East Vision for Buses" document in Annex A to this report; and agree that this document should be used as a basis for a period of public and stakeholder engagement over future aspirations for our region's bus network.

1. Background Information

- 1.1 The National Bus Strategy (NBS) was launched during March, setting out governments vision for the future of bus services outside London. It follows the announcement in February 2020 of a £3 billion transformational fund to help level up buses across England towards London standards.
- 1.2 The strategy is wide ranging and ambitious in its aims to avoid a car led recovery by making buses cheaper and more attractive; to not only get overall patronage back to its pre-COVID-19 level, but then to exceed it.
- 1.3 The NBS indicates that the former commercially-led model for buses is broken and sets out a requirement for all Local Transport Authorities (LTA) to commit to working with bus operators to develop an Enhanced Partnership (EP), except where they have already started the Franchising process (i.e. Greater Manchester).
- 1.4 The aims of the strategy are complementary to the JTC's own vision and objectives set out in our region's transport plan; and the concept of Enhanced Partnerships builds on the work already undertaken within our region to deliver benefits to bus users through collaborative working between the JTC and bus operators.
- 1.5 At their meeting on 15th June 2021, the JTC approved that a Statutory Notice should be issued stating the JTC's intention to enter into Enhanced Partnerships with bus operators. This Statutory Notice has been duly issued which now compels JTC follow the process towards Enhanced Partnership.
- 1.6 The publication of a BSIP is a key milestone in this process due on the 31st October this year. A BSIP should be data led; and should include evidence that engagement has been undertaken with the public and other key stakeholders as part of its formulation.
- 1.7 As an enabler to engagement over buses, a 'Vision for Buses' document has been compiled. The document, compiled collaboratively with North East bus operators, sets out what JTC wishes to see from the region's bus network and why.
- 1.8 Ten key solutions are included within the document summarising JTC's vision:
 - An enhanced network that is simple and easy to understand
 - Faster and more reliable journey times
 - A simple and flexible fares structure
 - Better integration between modes
 - More early morning and evening services
 - Clear and consistent information that is easy to access
 - Improved safety and security
 - Cleaner and greener vehicles
 - Improved connectivity beyond our boundaries

- A first-class customer experience

2. Proposals

- 2.1 It is proposed that JTC approve the Vision for Buses document in Annex A of this report; and that this document is used as a centre piece of public engagement over the region's aspirations for buses.
- 2.2 The period of public engagement will extend from July through to September this year; and will encompass discussions with a diverse range of stakeholders including businesses, community groups, bus users, passenger groups.
- 2.3 A variety of approaches will be used in the engagement process, which will run from July until September, ranging from digital focus groups through to face to face meetings. Care will be taken to ensure the full diversity of the region is represented, including consideration of specific rural and urban needs.

3. Reasons for the Proposals

- 3.1 The reasons for the proposals are twofold. Firstly, to document JTC's ambitions for our region's bus network; and secondly to stimulate discussion in the region, evidence from which will be used to inform the production of our BSIP.

4. Alternative Options Available

- 4.1 Two options are available to JTC:

Option 1 – The North East Joint Transport Committee may accept the recommendation set out in paragraph 3.1 above.

Option 2 – The North East Joint Transport Committee may not accept the recommendations set out in paragraph 3.1 above. The consequence of this would be an inferior BSIP which is not aligned with DfT guidance; this may in turn attract a reduced level of funding.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

5. Next Steps and Timetable for Implementation

- 5.1 The JTC's Vision for buses will be published with immediate effect on the Transport North East Website. Public engagement will extend throughout July and August.

6. Potential Impact on Objectives

- 6.1 A successful Enhanced Partnership will help deliver the objectives of the Transport Plan, and in particular a green recovery through the provision of attractive forms of sustainable transport.

7. Financial and Other Resources Implications

- 7.1 The approach to financing and resourcing the project to deliver an Enhanced Partnership was agreed in a paper at JTC on 15 June 2021. The budgets have

been adjusted to reflect the costs of undertaking this project.

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 The Enhanced Partnership follows a statutory framework requiring legal notices and formal agreements. The EP will become legally binding on the LTA, LHAs and Bus Operators. Specialist legal advice has been sought in support of the project, particularly in relation to subsidy control and competition law matters.

9. Key Risks

- 9.1 Failure to comply with the requirements of the National Bus Strategy requirements would lead to the removal of existing bus funding support and risk causing severe damage to the existing bus network in the region.

There are also risks in relation to future government funding and the return in bus passenger numbers following the pandemic, such that JTC aspirations for the bus network may be difficult to achieve.

The proposals outlined in this report mitigate these risks.

10. Equality and Diversity

- 10.1 The Bus Service Improvement Plan and Enhanced Partnership will be developed in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty.

11. Crime and Disorder

- 11.1 The Bus Service Improvement Plan and Enhanced Partnership will address issues of safety and security to ensure that bus services are safe and perceived to be safe by all.

12. Consultation/Engagement

- 12.1 The proposals outlined in this report are an enabler to engagement. Furthermore, the process for developing and implementing an Enhanced Partnership includes statutory consultation with the public, bus operators and other key stakeholders.

13. Other Impact of the Proposals

- 13.1 An Enhanced Partnership offering an attractive bus network would benefit the environment and economy through a green recovery and provision of realistic sustainable transport choices

14. Appendices

- 14.1 Vision for Buses Document – to follow

15. Background Papers

- 15.1 [Bus Back Better - The National Bus Strategy](#) [Bus Back Better](#)

publishing.service.gov.uk)

The Bus Services Act 2017 – Enhanced Partnership Guidance [governmebus-services-act-2017-enhanced-partnerships-guidance.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/98482/governmebus-services-act-2017-enhanced-partnerships-guidance.pdf)

JTC report – Bus Partnerships (JTC1f and JTC1g – items 9 and 10 on agenda) (Public Pack) [Agenda Document for North East Joint Transport Committee, 15/06/2021](#)

16. Contact Officers

16.1 Philip Meikle, Transport Strategy Director, Transport North East
Philip.meikle@transportnortheast.gov.uk

17. Sign off

- The Proper Officer for Transport:
- Head of Paid Service:
- Monitoring Officer:
- Chief Finance Officer:

18. Glossary

BSIP - Bus Service Improvement Plan

EP - Enhanced Partnership

JTC - Joint Transport Committee

LTA - Local Transport Authority

NBS - National Bus Strategy

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Your Vision for Buses

Moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East

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Foreword

Bus services are hugely important to people in the North East and help thousands of passengers travel every day to access work, education or leisure. We know that bus use in our region is bouncing back amongst the fastest in the UK, our network is responsible for over a staggering 160 million journeys each year, so it's clear to see the critical role buses play in the lives of local people.

When we consulted on the North East Transport Plan, the public asked loud and clear for a local bus strategy; people want to know what our plans are to improve the bus network. Working closely with regional bus operators, we are developing an enhanced partnership which will help to secure future Government funding and reshape our bus network, making it better, more efficient and user-friendly for passengers.

We want to know what the public think about our plans so far and I urge people to get involved in the Big Bus Conversation to join this important discussion. We need to take action to encourage people out of their cars and onto sustainable public transport as the region recovers from the impact of the pandemic. Tell us how we can help you to do that. We are listening and now is the time to let us know what you'd like to see.



Cllr Martin Gannon
Chair of the North East Joint
Transport Committee

Bus operators across the region have been investing to transform and improve services for a number of years, seeing the first growth in passenger numbers in a decade just before the pandemic hit. Covid 19 has had a dramatic impact on the region, changing the ways people think and travel. A deep collaborative effort between the region's bus operators, the Metro and Local Transport Authorities has steered our public transport network through the depths of the pandemic, showing what can be achieved by working together in partnership and delivering for the changing needs of customers.

The National Bus Strategy gives a pathway to the ambition of much stronger alignment between the highway network, bus services and their users, considerably raising the profile of the role of buses and enabling them to provide even better standards of service to keep the region moving and support its economic, air quality and active travel needs.

The development of Bus Service Improvement Plans for the North East is a partnership effort between the bus operators and local authorities, focused on the outcomes for passengers. Brave and bold decisions will need to be taken by all parties but, with the right supporting measures in place, we are optimistic about the future of bus services and stand ready to deliver this plan with our partners.



Martijn Gilbert
Chair, NEbus – bus
operators association

Executive Summary

What's Your Vision for Buses?

Buses are at the heart of the North East Transport Network, important to people at every stage of their lives and in every place. Working together, our local and combined authorities and our bus operators have developed some big ideas for how to make the bus play an even greater role.

Are they the right ideas? That's for you to say. What's the most important? That's for you to say.

This document describes the background buses in the North East and then asks you to set the priorities for the future. This is your invitation to join in the Big Bus Conversation.

Over 160 million journeys a year were made by bus in the North East before the Covid pandemic. There have been big changes in the way people live and travel over the past year or so. Buses provided essential services during the pandemic, and bus ridership is making a rapid recovery as things open up again.

We want the bus network to play an even greater role in bringing healthy and fair economic growth across the region. The government is willing to back that, with funding through Bus Back Better, their strategy to make the bus a key part of the Covid recovery and 'Levelling-Up'.

We know that there is a lot to do. People living and working in our cities, towns, villages and countryside all need bus access, as do the visitors who come to this historic region. The consultation for the North East Transport Plan told us that people don't have equal access: the service offer

is very different; fares can vary a lot and can be confusing; the buses are more reliable here than in the rest of England, but could be better... and all of these factors and more contributed to a gradual decline in bus use in recent decades.

The work that has gone into this document found many ways in which the North East is well placed to grow bus use within a total transport network: harnessing technology, simplifying ticketing, improving information, and providing better integration with better walking routes to bus and better link-ups between buses, taxis, ferries, metro and rail.

Buses are essential to delivering our North East Transport Plan objective: a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East. Increasing the share of all transport that is by bus will support the Strategic Economic Plan for a growing and decarbonised economy, because an increasing proportion of the North East bus network is run by low emission vehicles, and since a bus takes the space of just 3 cars but carries many more people we can free up road space for essential trips by getting more people on buses.

The bus is uniquely well placed to give access to work and training opportunities for everyone, because it is so flexible and services can be created quickly and easily, once the funding is in place. And the more people that use the buses, the less funding they need.

Did you know that in the North East we have the lowest life expectancy of all the English regions? There are many ways in which the bus can help shift that: walking to and from the bus stop can be the difference in activity that makes someone healthier; reaching communities that are isolated can help improve mental health and stress; our buses are easily accessible and friendly for people who have extra physical or learning needs; buses help older people to get to health and social services and to travel independently for

the full range of economic and social services; buses also give young people and teenagers greater independence. The North East Transport Plan makes the commitment that we will leave no-one behind. And, of course, reducing car use can reduce traffic accidents as well as improving the poor air quality that causes so many illnesses and deaths.

We have committed to a carbon-neutral North East, overcoming inequality and growing our economy, a healthier population, through sustainable transport – bus and cycle and walk – on a network that is safe and secure.

Overall, a clear Bus Network that is easy to understand and gives confidence you can get anywhere, anytime.

We are working with bus operators to set minimum standards for each type of route, for reliability and for frequency, every five minutes on the busiest routes, every ten on urban core routes outside the very busiest; express service fast links from towns and villages into cities or connecting with rail or Metro; good bus links between towns; and more rural routes, with on-demand services where the area is so rural that regular bus routes wouldn't be used.

The great news is that we now have the opportunity to fix all of them. Our Transport Plan committed to having a Bus Strategy by April 2022



A double decker bus can take 75 cars off the road

(Greener Journeys)

and the government has indicated that funding for bus improvement is available providing our strategy is a good one. We want your input to tell us what good looks like. We have the partnership in place to deliver the Vision for Buses. We're asking here for your input to make it Your Vision for Buses.

Do you think good bus services are the fair way to give every adult access to education, skills and higher value jobs?

Do you think a car dominated recovery would be a disaster for our environment?

Did you know that modern buses have high-backed, comfortable seats, free wifi on board, providing comfortable journeys that with bus priorities can be a lot quicker than the car?

Tell us Your Vision for Buses and email your thoughts to buses@transportnortheast.gov.uk

With a new bus strategy we can:

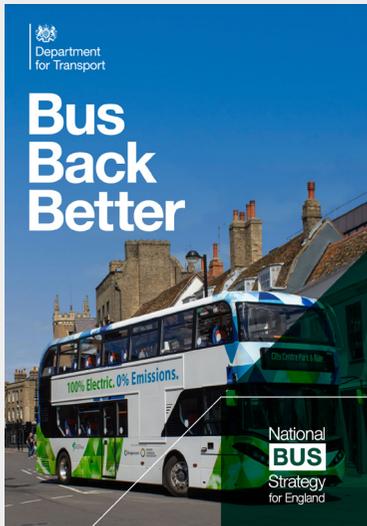
- Simplify fares
- Make buses more regular, with even-spaced intervals
- Increase the rural network
- Put on more early and late services
- Improve reliability
- Recruit more drivers, creating jobs
- Improve access for people who have difficulty getting around
- Open up job sites to more people
- And much, much more...

Tell us Your Vision for Buses

Introduction

Let's think about the stories behind those who travel on the North East bus network everyday. In rural Northumberland a pensioner can travel into the nearest town to meet friends in a cafe, his lifeline to company and the highlight he builds his whole week around. In a suburb of one of our great cities, the young professional takes the bus into town; it's faster along the bus lane than it is in a car saving time; and the fact this professional doesn't need a car, adds up towards the cost of a holiday.

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The Government's new 'Bus Back Better' strategy was published in March 2021, detailing how the UK's buses will bounce back post covid.

Students are travelling across Tyne and Wear to college, linking them to apprenticeships and skills which will tee them up for life. Were it not for the bus, they wouldn't be able to access the course they need to. They can't afford cars, it's too far to cycle, and their parents can't drop them at course times. In County Durham, Nana is taking the grandchildren to Beamish Museum. It will be a great day out which the kids will remember fondly for their whole lives.

Just a few of almost 450 thousand stories which are lived out on our region's network each day. If the network wasn't there, how would those stories end; and could they even be written?

Our vision for buses in the North East is simple: it is to grow bus patronage, and welcome as many people on board as we can. So many great things can flow from that. Firstly, a significant shift to bus will cut congestion on our roads. From that we can enjoy cleaner air and more reliable journeys for essential road trips for which there is no alternative to the car. It allows different choices over how we use space in our towns, villages and cities for a better and healthier standard of living and more prosperous communities. Attractive, sustainable journey options help our communities too. Family expenditure tied into a car reduces the opportunity to spend on other things. Some families have to drive to foodbanks, imagine there was an alternative so they didn't need to meet the cost of running a vehicle.

An integrated, simple, affordable bus network is essential to prevent a car-dominated recovery

Better buses will create a virtuous cycle, offering more people greater connectivity. More people can travel further to jobs and training; and the opportunity to get out and enjoy our region will be enhanced, helping our local economy and securing the mental and physical health benefits which life in a specular region such as ours can offer.

To achieve these things we need to make bus a more attractive and sustainable transport option. In this vision, bus will move to be the centrepiece of our region's transport network. It will become the network of choice because it is greener, healthier and more accessible. It will be a network that our region can be proud of.

Now is the time to act to secure the benefits of a better bus network. The Government has announced 'Bus Back Better' – a big fund to improve bus services dramatically. Through this, we can win funding. The main condition of the Government funding is that we work in collaboration with the bus operators and that they work together. We've been doing that in the North East for some time, turning round the old commercial-versus-public-sector split to improve services for people who live and work here and for visitors. Now is the time to agree and deliver an enhanced Network for greener travel choices, a more equal society, economic growth and a healthier North East.

Tell us Your Vision for Buses

That Vision for Buses should be Your Vision. You'll see at the side ten solutions that we have worked up from what you told us in 'The Big Transport Conversation' that let to our North East Transport Plan. Now it's time for 'The Big Bus Conversation'. Can you do our 'Ten Solutions Challenge'? And have we missed anything? What else is important to you? Please complete our [survey](#) or email us at buses@transportnortheast.gov.uk. And please keep an eye out for public events in your area. We want Your ideas to create Your Vision for Buses.

Ten Solutions Challenge: Can you make difficult choices?

Assume we can only do some of this. What's most important to improve? Rank the 5 most important of these to you. Give the most important a rank of 1, the next most important a rank of 2 and so on down to 5.

 **An enhanced network that is simple and easy to understand**

 **Faster and more reliable journey times**

 **A simple and flexible fares structure**

 **Better integration between modes**

 **More early morning and evening services**

 **Clear and consistent information that is easy to access**

 **Improved safety and security**

 **Cleaner and greener vehicles**

 **Improved connectivity beyond our boundaries**

 **A first-class customer experience**

What do you think?

People are passionate about buses – the cost of a ticket, what time it arrives, how you find out bus information and everything in between.

As part of the Big Bus Conversation, we want to hear from people across the North East on how the bus network works or doesn't work for them, and what we need to do to make buses even better. We want you to tell us what will get you out of the car and onto our bus network, helping to reduce pollution and congestion on our region's roads and increase the use of green public transport. This is just a small selection of what people have to say...

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"I used to use the Q2 and Q3 all the time when I lived on the Quayside because of the lack of parking spaces in the city centre. Now we both work from home we hardly use any public transport. When we do go out it's by car. Overall the buses in the North East could be updated, more electric vehicles would be great!"



Maoge Hou, translator, Newcastle

"I don't get the bus until it is an absolute last resort. I find it difficult to know where and when to get one, depending on where I need to go. I find driving and the Metro much easier. Getting a bus usually takes a lot longer to travel indirect routes."



Emma Staw, teaching assistant, South Shields

"I haven't used a bus for some years now. Opting more to use the car purely for convenience. I live around 5 minutes' walk from a bus stop but don't have the slightest idea about frequency or cost. I would consider using the bus more if I had this information readily available – maybe even an Uber style tracker of buses, that way you can gauge if you have time to make the bus or not. I feel protection for passengers could also be addressed."



Kevin Sung, marketing professional, North Tyneside

"Living out in Corbridge I always opt for the train. I know where the station is at both ends. With the bus it's always hard to know which stop to use and where you'll end up. I know there's an express route between Corbridge and Newcastle but I never use it. Same with going to Hexham, I always use the car. The bus is ridiculously expensive for the short distance travelled. The cost used to infuriate me when my kids where young adults and needed cheap reliable public transport."



Ros Haverson, designer, Corbridge

"Buses in Durham are reasonably frequent, reliable and very affordable - even more so now with the wrinkly pass!"



Eric Sampson, retired, Durham

"The buses I use are lovely and comfortable and the drivers are helpful and chatty. My journeys are fairly pleasant but are impacted by the behaviour of other passengers, particularly those not wearing masks correctly. I use the Metro for part of my journey and connections are easy and reliable."



Hannah Storey, Digital Marketer, Chester-le-Street

"As a commuter living in County Durham and travelling to Heaton, my journey by bus is too slow and would increase my journey time from 30 minutes to over an hour. The perfect system for me would be a super-fast bus service from my local village to the heart of Newcastle, that carries my bicycle, and that is achievable with minimal investment. The extensive network of bus lanes through our region's population centres has already improved bus journey times, but the service needs to change to further speed up the journey times so that commuter habits will change."



John Davidson, optician, Durham

"If we are going out for a meal and drinks in town, we use a bus as it is much cheaper than a taxi and almost as convenient - we just live a short walk from a bus stop. As a family of five, a taxi can be tricky as we don't all fit in one 'normal' taxi and I love the ease and cost of being able to buy one family ticket."



Sam Rickelton, blogger, Cramlington

"I enjoy getting the bus into Newcastle. It is much easier than trying to find a parking space and I don't really like the experience of driving in town nowadays. The bus is cheaper than parking which is a bonus. The 22 is a good service in my area, fast and reliable."



Sonia Graham, retired, Walkergate

"I really like the buses I use. They're reliable, accessible and get me where I need to be. I use the key card and really like that it's easy to use. I can top up by card and don't have to use cash. The frequency is spot on and is really handy."



Claire, community midwife, Washington

"I use my car not the bus, it's the convenience of going door to door for me. Being elderly and having walking difficulties, I need to get as close to a place as possible. I used to love going about on the buses using my pass but it's not just doable anymore."



Raymond Wylie, retired, Whickham

"Some hours when I finish work I would have two minutes to catch a bus and others I'd have 20 minutes to wait, that's why I got my motorbike as it makes being a shift worker easier. Buses need to be cheaper."



Robert Hinds, rail employee, Gateshead

Buses – the heart of our network

North East England – Our region

Home to almost two million people, our region is distinct and diverse. It consists of urban and rural communities all with a rich history and positive people who want to contribute to moving our country forward.

Our cities, towns, villages and countryside are home to a wide range of leisure, cultural, sporting and historical attractions, including two UNESCO World Heritage sites (Hadrian's Wall and Durham Cathedral and Castle). The region also boasts miles of unspoilt coastline as well as Northumberland National Park. **All of these assets are supported by our bus network run by many operators.**

This mixture of urban, suburban and rural communities results in a range of transport challenges, from rural isolation in more remote areas to poor air quality and congestion in parts of our cities, along with pockets of 'transport poverty' across the entire region.

Buses already play a key role in alleviating these problems. This is because they are at the heart of our well-established public and sustainable transport system. Buses are our most used form of public transport and make a real difference to people's everyday lives, allowing them to get to work, to visit friends and family, to the shops, get to essential services such as schools and hospitals, onward national transport and more.

Buses reach and connect communities where other types of transport can't – providing a lifeline for people across the North East in both rural and urban areas.

However, the bus network varies across our region; in large towns and cities it is much sparser at night-time and on Sundays than during the

162.4 million bus passenger journeys in 2018/19

making buses our region's most-used form of public transport.

75% of North East public transport trips are by bus

daytime, while many smaller towns have fewer buses and our smallest rural villages have infrequent or no service.

Customer facilities range widely from high quality Interchanges in both rural and urban areas such as Hexham bus station and South Shields interchange, to bus stops in both urban and rural areas with no timetable, signpost or road markings. All this combined shows that we have a significant opportunity to build on our strong existing assets.

From mid 2018/19 to the end of 2019/20 there was an increase of

1 million passenger journeys

We are facing significant challenges

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a cause for reflection and also a call to action. We need solutions to live with, recover and renew from the pandemic, while restoring faith in our bus network and improving it further. We know there is room for improvement, and we are going to do this by working collaboratively in partnership.

We want to deliver a bus network where buses are more frequent, more reliable, easier to understand and use, better coordinated and cheaper, providing a fully integrated service with simple, multi-modal tickets, more bus priority measures, high-quality information for all passengers in more places, and better turn-up-and-go frequencies that keep running into the evenings and at weekends.

Delivering high quality, sustainable public transport is a shared responsibility between operators, Local Authorities and government.

As part of our Enhanced Partnership, Local Highway Authorities in the region will also need to bring forward infrastructure to help buses such as prioritised traffic signals and bus lanes.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, bus operators have adapted well by introducing emergency timetables to ensure that key workers can get to work, introducing extra cleaning, including the use of hospital grade products, and on board hand sanitisers to make buses clean and safe.

Go North East introduced one of the UK's first dedicated vaccination shuttle bus services, serving the NHS Nightingale Hospital North East in Sunderland. The service was arranged with just two working days' notice by the operator following dialogue with the local NHS Trust and Nexus. Stagecoach also worked with NHS Newcastle to shuttle patients from doctors surgeries predominantly in the East of Newcastle

to the vaccination centres. This shows what can be achieved by partnership working.

Now North East bus operators are playing a key role in our recovery by helping to reconnect our towns, cities and local communities by running full timetables and supporting the region's night-time economy with promotional fare offers to encourage even more people back onto buses.

Co-operation between our local and combined authorities and bus operators has been constructive and positive throughout the pandemic. Along with the establishment of NEbus – the bus operators' association – we want to build upon this close co-operation to help all partners transform and develop the region's transport network as we begin our recovery and look towards the future.

We want buses to play an even greater part in enabling economic growth, achieving better and more equal outcomes for communities, and contributing to healthy and vibrant places to live and work in our region.

With the National Bus Strategy and the North East Transport Plan now in place, this document sets out our vision for buses as we look towards improving bus travel and attracting people back and getting more people to use buses. And it asks you to tell us Your Vision for Buses.

We will now use these opportunities to start delivering, helping buses to play an even greater part in enabling economic growth, achieving better and more equal outcomes for communities and contributing to healthy and vibrant places to live and work in our region by moving towards an Enhanced Partnership.

Strong foundations of development

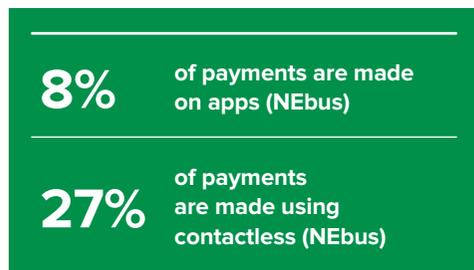
The North East Transport Plan makes clear that we will embrace new technologies to meet our transport objectives and set innovation challenges to industry creating new opportunities with our network as the testbed.

Our region, well placed through its academic, clean energy and advance manufacturing sectors, can influence this evolution, potentially using its transport assets as a test bed.

Continuous change in customer preferences, transport technology and development mean we need to adopt the best innovations available elsewhere and develop new transport products and services of our own to improve our transport network.

We have a very strong platform as a base line for the customer experience which we can work together to improve further.

The majority of buses in the region accept contactless payments:



Every bus in the North East has been fitted with an ITSO (the international ticketing standard) smartcard enabled ticket machine for a number of years now and most of these machines have

GPS telematics to help improve road safety performance and provide live tracking data to provide live service information at bus stops. All operators' services can be tracked online and on mobile devices to provide up to the minute journey time information.

3rd Party free apps, such as CityMapper, are already being used in the region. These display transport options between any two locations, usually with live timing. They integrate data for all forms of transport, so show how bus links to other transport as a network.

There are already all operator tickets in the region through the SmartZone products and the Network One ticket provides an any bus, Metro and Ferry integrated travel solution. All major operators provide ticketing options direct to customer's mobile phones and today's modern buses are fitted with USB charging points, free Wi-Fi and next stop audio visual customer information systems.

We all share the ambition for funding to upgrade our existing assets to help take tickets like the existing Network One Tyne and Wear integrated bus, metro and rail product to the next level of modernisation and ease of use for more and more passengers, through greater integration.

Integration

Our region currently has the basis of a fully integrated public transport network. Presently, our ticketing offer does include some products that allow interchange between different operators and types of transport.

An integrated, simple, affordable bus network is essential to prevent a car-dominated recovery.

We do know that there are problems. The complex range of brands, fare offers, and timetables has significant limitations – for example not all the tickets valid on different forms of public transport in Tyne and Wear currently extend across the whole of our region in Durham and Northumberland.

In addition, some types of ticket still exist only in paper versions rather than using smarter forms of payment, while there is room for improvement at many interchange points.

Progress is being made. In June 2021, Network One season tickets were moved to a digital format allowing travel on bus, Metro, rail, and ferry trips, including in Tyne and Wear, Northumberland and County Durham.

The new ticket option 'All Zones Plus' can be bought on any mobile app of the region's main bus companies, Go North East, Stagecoach and Arriva, for travel on bus and Metro services – and the Shields Ferry. At the same time, existing Tyne and Wear Network One 'All Zones' tickets can now be purchased on a Pop smartcard which means that people can use one smartcard for multi-modal travel across the region regardless of which operators they are travelling with.

This significant development is one example of what can be achieved as a direct result of close partnership working between the North East Joint Transport Committee and local bus operators.

This could be just the start of what the Partnership can achieve. We will look to further modernise and expand ticketing offers into the future, with contactless bankcard ticketing now available on all of the region's main bus operators. 'Tap on Tap off' bankcard ticketing is now in trial operation on three local bus routes.

New technology has also helped make clear information more easily available, but it could be provided in more places. We want to create a



North Shields Ferry Landing



Quaylink - Newcastle Central Station

properly integrated and efficient public transport network across the whole of our region, including simpler ticketing and payment, easily available and accurate travel information and seamless interchange between different forms of transport.

This won't be just limited to some transport types, **our ambition is to create one, total network approach**, aligning different types of transport together. We want to create a transport network where walking, cycling, bus, ferry, taxi, rail and Metro are integrated to better connect all our communities.

How people travel now

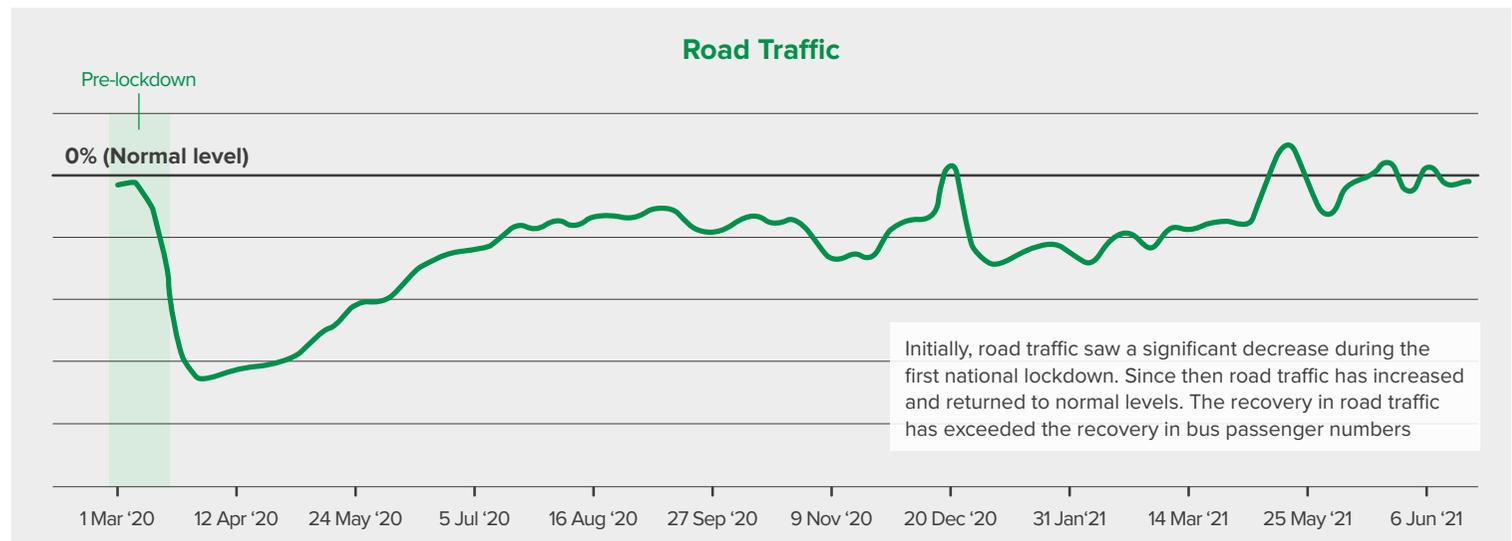
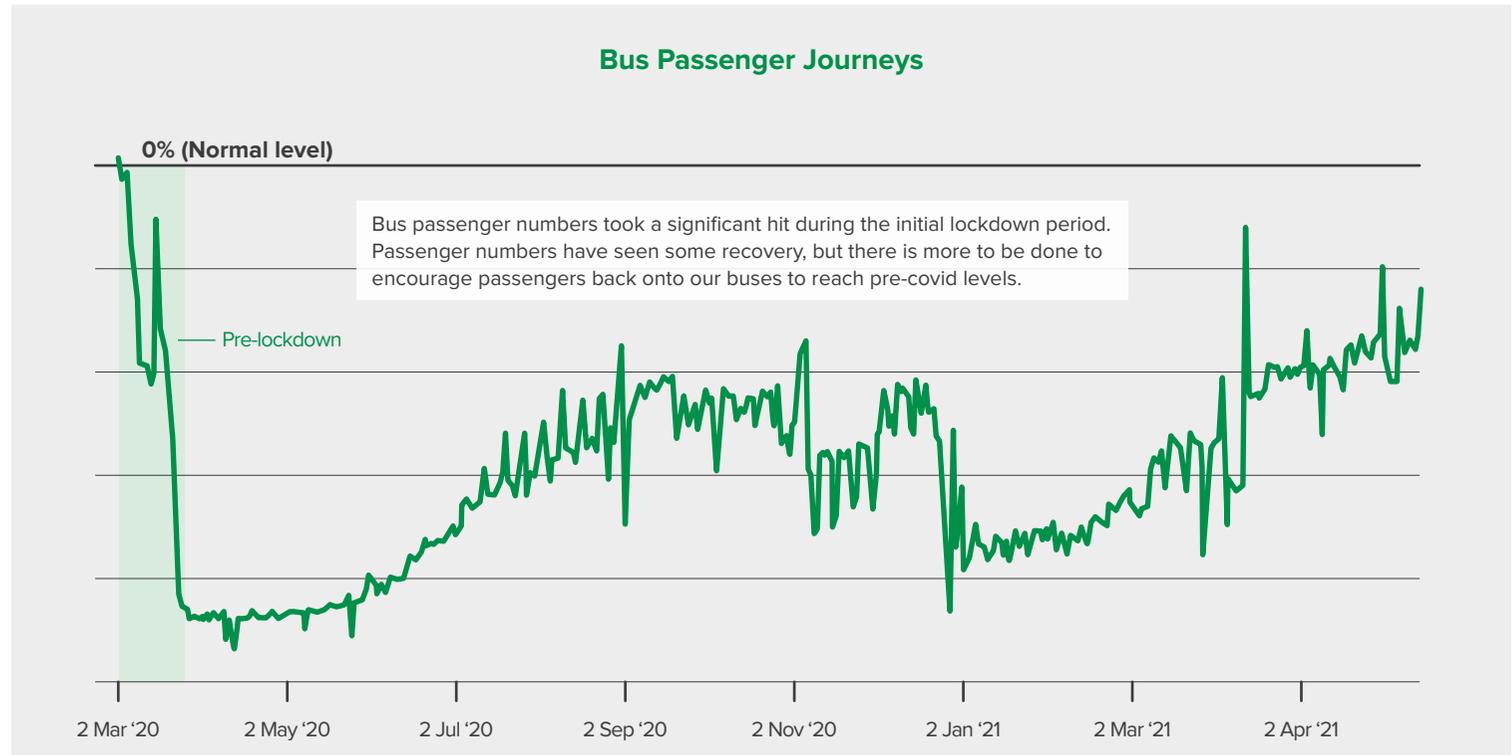
Getting passengers back on the network is our first priority

Transport North East and NE bus can draw on a range of data sources to identify and understand the challenges and opportunities for bus in our region. Analysis of bus patronage data, when viewed along road use, shows that the recovery of bus passenger numbers is slower than the recovery of road traffic levels. Whilst bus passenger levels have recovered to 66% of pre-Covid levels in June 2021, we need to encourage more people onto public transport, driving a green, sustainable recovery from the impact of the pandemic.

In order to avoid a car dominated recovery from Covid and to increase bus passenger numbers, it is important to look at the reasons why people are choosing not to use buses. A Transport Focus Bus passenger survey highlighted journey satisfaction levels in the North East exceeding those for England.

89% overall journey satisfaction with buses in the North East

3% higher than England overall
(Transport Focus – Bus Passenger Survey 2019, North East LA7 area)



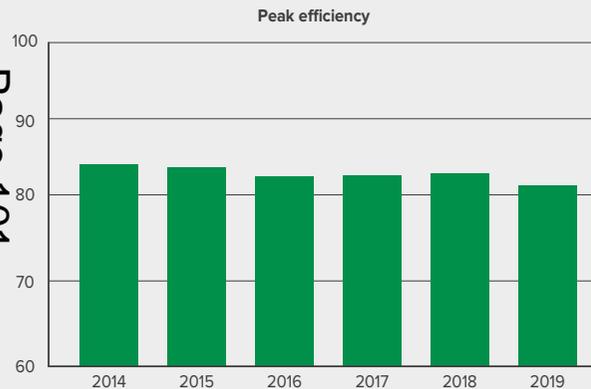
Barriers to Bus Use

We know that in order to increase bus use in the North East, we need to overcome barriers to using buses. Recent research from Transport Focus has found that in 2021 cleanliness and maintenance is now much more important for both bus users and non-users as a result of Covid-19. A 2019 Nexus Insight Panel Survey found these were the top 3 barriers to using buses:

“Buses take too long” Stated by 46%

Road congestion in North East

Efficiency is the speed of traffic during peak hours compared in compared to free flow speed. Efficient movement of buses is key to reliable timetables and journey times.

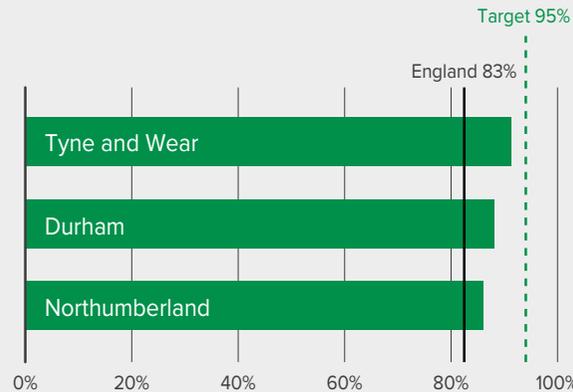


“Buses are unreliable” Stated by 37%

Bus punctuality

Punctual bus services are essential in providing a reliable passenger experience. Punctuality in our region is better than the average for England but we need to do better to reach the target of 95%

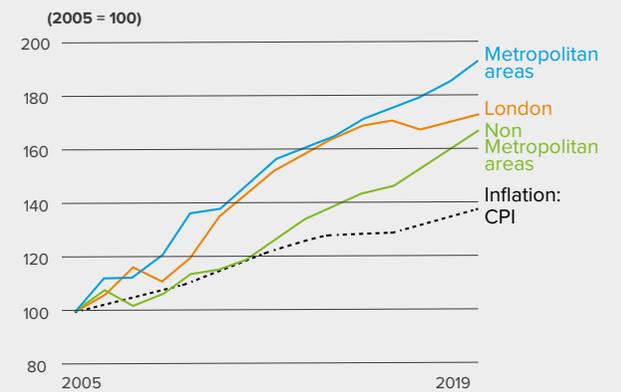
(Punctual = between 1 minute early and 5:59 late)



“Buses cost too much” Stated by 34%

Bus fares index

Nationally, bus fares have risen above inflation. An affordable network tackles transport poverty and provides an equity of opportunity to travel, connecting people to essential services, employment and leisure.



In addition to these three key barriers, non-users and lapsed users also highlighted the following barriers to using buses:



Buses not running at the right times



Behaviour of other passengers



Not enough information



Buses not going to the right places



Not enough frequency



Covid-19

1 in 5 people who are avoiding public transport are doing so because they don't feel safe to use it at the moment. Cleanliness and maintenance are much more important now and are likely to be legacies of Covid with increased user expectations in these areas.

Transport Focus - Travel during Covid-19

Shaping a green recovery

Buses play a central role in helping us achieve our wider regional objectives of working to create and sustain 100,000 more and better jobs in a growing and decarbonised economy, where social and health inequalities in our distinctive and unique region are greatly reduced.

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An integrated, simple, affordable bus network is essential in preventing a car-dominated recovery.

The North East Local Enterprise Partnership's (LEP) Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) identifies four areas of strategic importance, where our region has a distinct opportunity to improve its economic competitiveness. Buses can play a key role in connecting communities to these opportunities at employment sites and business parks: Digital; Advanced manufacturing; Health and life sciences; and Offshore, subsea and energy technology.

Buses are better placed than other modes of transport to adapt quickly to revised commuting patterns. For example, bus timetables have been revised for routes serving business parks like Cobalt and Quorum in North Tyneside.

Jobs

Our region's bus and coach sector employs around 8,000 people, which makes a further vital contribution to our economy. The region's major bus operators all have successful apprenticeship training programmes.

We need to deliver greater access to opportunities, enabling people in all parts of our region to have a fair chance to access opportunities for employment, skills, and higher value jobs, which would increase our region's productivity. This will help to move people off Universal Credit and into gainful employment, education and training. Buses also allow college students can get to their place of education cheaply and safely.

In total, just over 313,000 people in the North East LEP area have been furloughed at some point since March 2020.

In 2020, about 53,000 people mainly worked at home, about 5.6% of workers, less than the England level of 8.7%, In total, 243,000 worked from home at some point in their main job (26.8%), down from the England percentage of 38%.

In May 2021 6.5% of the North East's working age population was claiming Universal Credit, compared to 5.7% across England excluding London. High levels universal credit claims are evidence that our workforce and young people will be seeking opportunities. Buses help people reach further education and training across the North East, preventing, a car-dominated recovery.

Leisure and Tourism

This is an area where buses can really assist our clean recovery. The Leisure market was the quickest to bounce back from the first COVID-19 lockdown.

High-quality and integrated transport links can also help promote and strengthen tourism, leisure and regional development. Buses and coaches can also strengthen the region's visitor and tourism offer. Alnwick has a coach friendly accreditation from the Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT). Beamish, the Living Museum of the North in County Durham also has this accreditation. NEbus member operators also provide bus services to key tourism destinations as well as seasonal staycation services such as the AD122 route along UNESCO World Heritage Site, Hadrian's Wall.



Arriva X18 Northumberland Coast and Castles sightseeing bus. Photo credit: Gavin Duthie

Case Study – Boosting Leisure Travel along the North Northumberland Coast

Northumberland County Council has worked with Arriva, Travelsure and other stakeholders for several years to encourage more leisure travel by bus along the North Northumberland coast.

The work is part of a drive towards more sustainable tourism and has delivered simple and easy to understand routes, co-ordinated schedules for both the summer and winter seasons, joint marketing using a common 'Coast and Castles' brand and a unique multi-operator Travelcard scheme covering a dedicated range of tickets. There is also regular liaison with customers, tourism groups and representatives from the North Northumberland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) to ensure that services continue to meet local needs.

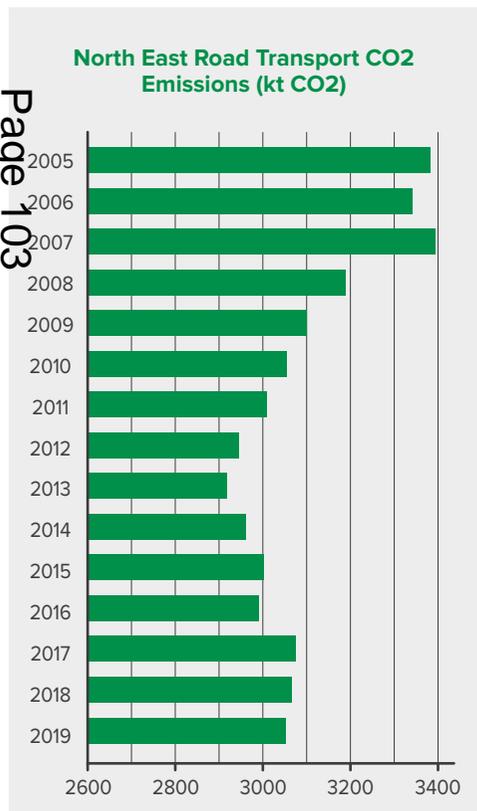
Before the organisations started working together, services and tickets were very complicated and passenger numbers were in long-term decline. However, pre-COVID the bus operators were consistently recording growth of 1-2% per annum, allowing investment in new or refurbished vehicles and more journeys to be added to timetables (especially on Sundays and Bank Holidays).

Experience here shows that people will leave their cars behind for leisure trips if the product is right, and this type of partnership can be used as a blueprint for other parts of our region.

Decarbonisation

In June 2019 the UK Government became the first major global economy to pass a law that requires the UK to achieve 'net zero' greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2050.

Reducing road transport emissions is key to improving the quality of our air. Bus travel has a low carbon footprint by its very nature due to efficient use of road space and the numbers of passengers they carry.



Bus operators are working to bring lower emissions to the region. Go North East has introduced fully electric buses, and all major operators in the region are rolling out Euro 6 vehicles. However, so much more can be achieved as only around 32% of the commercial bus fleet in our region had the latest "Euro 6" standard engines at the end of 2020.

The single largest source of energy consumption in the North East is road transport. In the transition to clean growth and low emission road transport.

Road transport contributes
37% to the North East's carbon emissions
– the most out of any sector.

Whilst we have a number of assets in this area, including the Government's Ultra-Low Emission Bus Scheme which has helped support Go North East's £2m electric bus investment, we must continue to develop and deliver on our plans to improve in this area.

Key insight
A journey from Chester-le-Street to Newcastle (around 14 miles) with Go North East would save 2,665g of CO2 compared to driving – that's the equivalent of keeping a light bulb on for 250 hours.

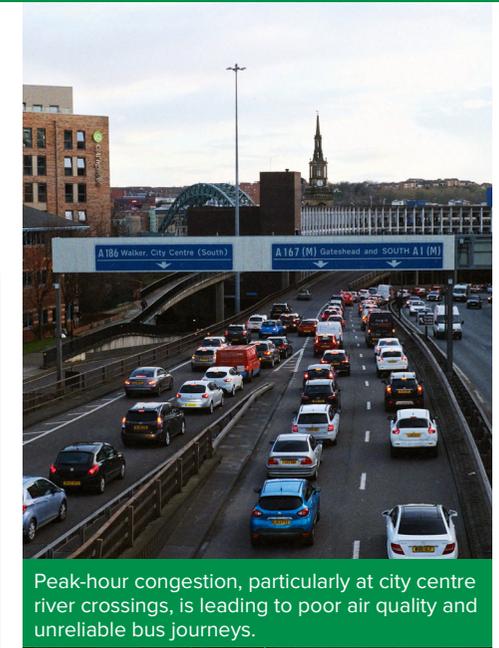
An increase in the uptake of electric cars will not enable us to achieve our objectives alone, as it will not fully resolve health impacts, make efficient use of road space

We need to increase the volume and proportion of journeys made by low-carbon, sustainable transport types. However, a major barrier to greater bus use is congestion. Peak-hour congestion, particularly at city centre river crossings, is leading to poor air quality and unreliable bus journeys. This can impact on the reliability and therefore attractiveness of bus services.

Key insight
While 28% of households in the North East do not own a car – the highest proportion outside of London – this has shrunk from 37% in 2002/3. The proportion of households owning two or more cars has increased from 20% to 32% over the same period.

As with the rest of the UK, recent decades have seen rising levels of car use and ownership in the North East, albeit in our region it remains lower than elsewhere.

Demand for higher levels of car ownership in the coming years suggests increased future traffic congestion. We therefore need to ease passage of the buses to further improve the dependability of services, and playing an important part in tackling the climate emergency by providing more low carbon journeys which will help improve air quality, enabling the region to play its role in meeting the UK's net zero greenhouse gas emissions targets by 2050.



Peak-hour congestion, particularly at city centre river crossings, is leading to poor air quality and unreliable bus journeys.

Fares and Tickets

Fares and Tickets are key area where buses can contribute to the recovery. Working with employers to support sustainable travel for shift working and night-time employment will also enable bus services to be even more aligned with the local economy. Fares reform could also enable fares to be set at levels relevant to local economies and the post-Covid recovery.

Case Study
Working in partnership is key to realising the potential of buses in the North East. For example, in recent years, the NHS has worked closely with Arriva and Go North East on staff transport, which has also helped to improve the overall bus network. The recent introduction of carnet tickets by Go North East and Stagecoach are recent examples of what can be done to respond to revised work patterns post-Covid.

North East Transport Plan - our guiding objectives

In March 2021, the North East Transport Plan was formally adopted by the leaders of our 7 local authorities. The Plan provides the strategic framework to enable us to deliver an improved, more seamless, co-ordinated and integrated transport system across the region.

The overarching vision of the Transport Plan is:

Moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East’.

The five key objectives of the Transport Plan are:

-  **Carbon-neutral transport**
-  **Overcome inequality and grow our economy**
-  **Healthier North East**
-  **Appealing, sustainable transport choices**
-  **Safe, secure network**

The vision and objectives for the Transport Plan set the standard of what we want to achieve and where we want our region to be by 2035. Buses have a central role to play in helping us achieve our vision and objectives. The Plan identifies the immediate task of securing the survival of the region’s bus network through financial support from government and local authorities as the UK emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Beyond this, it sets out the need to make buses more attractive and more efficient by helping them to travel faster and more reliably around the region, through tackling pinch points in our towns and cities. As part of our Enhanced Bus Partnership, Local Highway Authorities in the region will also need to bring forward infrastructure to help buses such as prioritised traffic signals and bus lanes.

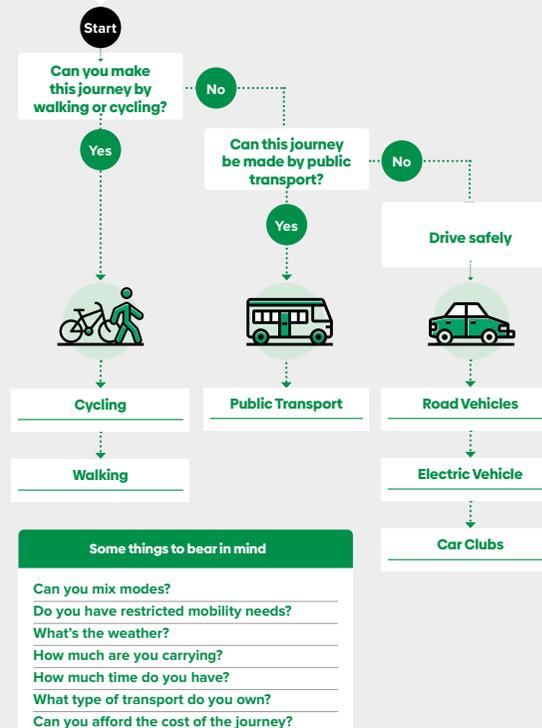
A Transport Plan for our regions' diverse geography

Our Transport Plan includes initiatives to support all of our region’s communities including those in rural settings. Your Vision for Buses needs to consider how we support rural communities too. During the forthcoming Big Bus Conversation, we will be reaching out to as many people in the region as we can; and keen to hear how an enhanced bus network can support people and businesses in rural areas.



Buses reach and connect communities where other types of transport can't – providing a lifeline for people across the North East in both rural and urban areas.

How to make the right travel choice



Our transport plans' overarching policy is about "Making the right travel choice"

We will enable people to make greener and healthier travel choices whenever they can and ensure our sustainable network takes everyone where they need to go at a price they can afford. We must ensure all our actions improve transport across the region and deliver to the objectives of this Plan so we are greener, more inclusive, healthier, safer and our economy thrives

The following section sets out how an Enhanced Partnership could enable buses to achieve our 5 Transport Plan objectives:



Creating a Carbon Neutral North East

Buses have a central role to play in helping the region to become greener and healthier.

Most current vehicles on our roads significantly contribute to carbon emissions. Dominance of the private car for commuting trips is a big problem for the region that we must address.

We want to ensure that bus use grows to help prevent increased road traffic levels as part of the post-pandemic recovery, reducing emissions and general congestion levels as a result.

Reduced reliance on cars will lead to lower congestion, fewer road traffic accidents and reduced air pollution across the region, making the region a greener and healthier place to live, work and visit.

Problems we face

Congestion

Our region has significant road congestion problems. High proportions of car use in the region is continuing to result in road corridors into the centres of Durham, Newcastle, Gateshead and Sunderland being regularly congested, especially at peak times and particularly at city centre river crossings. This is leading to poor air quality and unreliable bus journeys, so urgent action is needed.

Car use

Car use is continuing to rise and remains the most common mode of transport for commuting. As with the rest of the UK, recent decades have seen rising levels of car use and ownership in the North East. Commuting to workplaces is dominated by car travel, which causes congestion and increases vehicle emissions.

Commuting data suggests that rural residents

are more dependent on a car than people living in urban areas and make less use of buses, largely as a result of service provision and levels of density.

Demand for higher levels of car ownership in the coming years suggests increased future traffic congestion and poorer air quality if we do not take action.

Air Quality

As a result of car use and congestion, our region has hotspots of poor air quality in cities and towns. We face environmental directions from Government to improve air quality in parts of the region as soon as possible to reduce excessive pollution levels to within legal limits.

Although 92% of days were classed as 'low emissions' on the Air Quality Index in the North East in 2019, it is estimated that poor air quality is responsible for around 360 deaths each year in Central Tyneside alone.

A key theme from the 2019 Tyneside Air Quality Public Consultation was that improvements to public transport and walking and cycling routes are needed before many people, who said they rely on their cars for essential journeys, would feel able to change their travel behaviour.



The Voltra buses serving Gateshead and Newcastle are fully electric and the electricity used to power them comes from zero emissions sources like solar, wind and hydro power.

How can bus contribute?

Our aim is to grow bus patronage and reduce reliance on private car use. Greener travel through modal shift will enable long-term decarbonisation.

Buses are a leading solution in helping to tackle the climate emergency declared by our two Combined and seven Local Authorities, addressing our air quality challenges, and helping to achieve the UK's net zero by 2050 commitment.

With 56% of commuting trips under 10km and 37% under 5km, there is a significant opportunity to encourage greater use of buses across the region, particularly in urban areas.

Bus operators in the North East continue to renew or retrofit their fleet with greater levels of technology and reduced emissions. Recent successes include the deployment of biomethane operated buses in Sunderland by Stagecoach, and Go North East launching the region's first fully electric bus fleet in the North East, which are capable of all-day service with a single overnight charge. Bus monitoring systems can track driver performance and also reduce engine idling and improve miles per gallon (MPG).

Over £80m

invested in new North East buses since 2015

(NEbus Successful buses for a successful region 2019)

We need to continue working in partnership with operators on emission standards for buses and to further enable the use of cleaner vehicles. We will therefore seek and support continued investment in zero and low-emission vehicles, as well as other traction technology such as battery, hydrogen, and Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) where appropriate.

The region also has an established Park and Ride offer with our current sites providing over 4,300 spaces. Park and Ride provision removes car traffic from town and city centres and residential areas where congestion and pollution are highest. We want to upgrade and improve our Park and Ride offer and increase the use of existing facilities in our region to encourage more people to continue their journeys by bus.

As buses take up less space than cars, there is the opportunity to free up road capacity for essential trips, making junctions and pinch points flow better and reducing emissions associated with car engines idling in congestion.

Our Enhanced Partnership could enable us to deliver targeted improvements to network efficiency through investing in a series of measures on our roads by working together. For example, introducing new rapid bus corridors can improve bus travel and attract more passengers. They will change how road space is used to help buses move more quickly.

An Enhanced Bus Partnership could enable improved rural connectivity. Using buses to target journey types and specific markets which cars are used for, such as home to school, commuting trips, and leisure trips, as well as working with employers could further ensure buses improve air quality.



Overcoming inequality and growing our economy

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, many of our regions' longstanding economic inequalities and challenges have now re-emerged. It took until 2016 for North East employment to return to 2008 levels following the last recession.

Challenges

Our economy is performing below the national average. In 2018, the GVA per head of the North East was £20,617 – well below the GVA per head of England excluding London (£25,346).

Productivity

Average productivity in our region remains 16% per head below the output for England. (GVA terms). Reducing road congestion and journey times by bus could help to increase productivity

Economic inactivity

23.4% of the North East's working age population (16-64) were not in work or actively seeking employment in the year to June 2020. This was above the England outside London rate of 20.2

Furlough

About 39% of eligible North East workers had been furloughed at some point as of April 2021. Each of the North East's 22 Parliamentary constituency areas had 3,200 or more furloughed employments at the end of March 2021, showing that the effects of COVID-19 have been felt right across the region.

Universal Credit (UC)

In May 2021 in the North East LEP area, just over 81,000 people were claiming UC. This is the lowest total since before the pandemic began in March 2020, suggesting that the recovery has already begun. The North East LEP area total was 6.5% of the 16-64 population, compared to 5.7% across England excluding London.

Low levels of working from home

Home working in the North East has been significantly lower than nationally. In total around 243,000 people worked at home at some point (North East 26.8%, England 38.0%). The fact that people in the North East are or have been working at home far less than other regions in England means that we must ensure that bus travel is attractive and feasible for journeys to work.

Deprivation and Inequality

Our mix of urban, suburban and rural landscapes results in complex demands for travel and is reflected in our varied transport challenges, from rural isolation in our remoter areas to poor air quality and congestion in parts of our cities. Transport and socio-economic inequality are linked. Inequalities in the provision of transport services are strongly linked with where people live, and the associated differences in access to employment, healthcare, education, and local shops. A social marketing profile of Tyne and Wear bus users found that 57% of bus users are in 'financial hardship' or 'urban adversity'.

How will Bus contribute?

Achieving our 100,000 'more and better jobs' target as set out in the North East LEP's Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) will rely on better accessibility and connectivity levels an improved and expanded transport network will bring, helping improve access to labour markets, new education and skills.

Buses enable easier access to education, skills, and higher value jobs. New and improved connectivity in both urban and rural areas will allow people to access more and better jobs, stimulate increased inward investment, bring businesses closer together and can help promote social inclusion if targeted in deprived areas.

In order to overcome inequality, increasing the coverage of the bus network through greater use

of "on demand" services could offer alternatives for more isolated communities. Working with employers to support sustainable travel for shift working and night-time employment will also enable bus services to be even more aligned with the local economy.

We also recognise that the North East bus industry itself employs several thousand people across the region and can create direct job opportunities in the transport and infrastructure sectors.

**Every £1 invested
in bus infrastructure
can generate more than
£8 of economic benefit**

(Greener Journeys)

Supporting our region's key employment sectors as set out in the SEP are critical to harnessing future growth, and our bus network has a role to play in facilitating that potential, connecting people to them.

Buses will play a key role in enabling the recovery and growth of the region's tourism sector. We will also work with partners to explore ticketing initiatives and work with transport operators and tourism venues to promote sustainable travel. We will consider future schemes which could improve interchange and integration between bus and coaches and other modes of transport linking tourism assets.

Approximately 110,00 new homes are planned in the region by 2036. Transport investment can be transformational in the way that people choose to live and work across the region.

The North East Transport Plan states that we will increase the proportion of people within 25 minutes of key employment and education sites, reducing journey times and increasing productivity.

Excellent accessibility to an integrated public transport network that enhances employment and education opportunities is vital in the Covid-19 recovery.



Arriva Quorum Shuttle Bus

Buses Contribute to Economic Growth at Quorum Park

Quorum Park (developed as part of the North Tyneside Enterprise Zone) merits buses as having been key to its growth. The park entrance is served by frequent buses to Newcastle, Killingworth, Cramlington, Blyth and many other places in Tyne & Wear and South Northumberland. Quorum also part funds the 'Quorum Shuttle' service, which is run by Arriva and provides a dedicated 'peak time' link between Four Lane Ends Metro Interchange and all areas of the park.

The park has a dedicated Tenant and Travel Advisor who works in partnership with bus operators Arriva, Go North East and Stagecoach to provide free travel planning services, a central hub for ticket sales and discounts through the Quorum Qcard (which is a bespoke scheme for employees).

Over the last ten years, Quorum has seen up to 25% of people using buses to travel to work and many services have been enhanced on a commercial basis to cater for traffic to/from the park, especially in the early morning and evening. Sustainability is a cornerstone of operations at Quorum and the current bus partnership model can be used to stimulate further growth.



Buses for a healthier North East

The North East currently has the lowest life expectancy of all the English regions. Our vision for buses is to ensure that they play their part in helping us achieve better health outcomes for everyone in the region.

By working in partnership to deliver schemes and initiatives which encourage bus travel and getting people to travel by more sustainably will improve local air quality, will all help our region move towards attaining health levels at least equal to other regions in the UK.

Challenges

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Life expectancy at birth for both men and women is about one year lower in the region compared with England. Similarly, healthy life expectancy is about four years lower.



Two million people



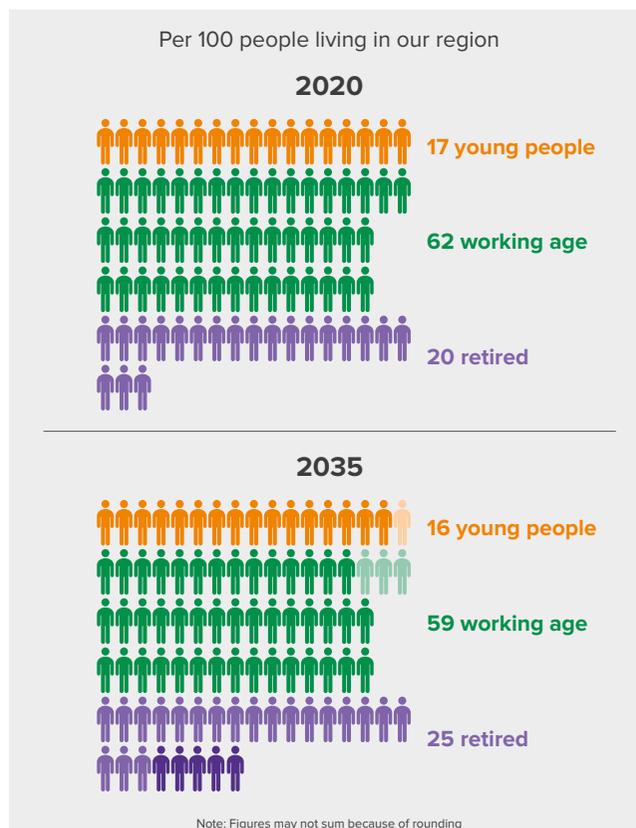
Diverse urban / rural mix



Ageing population

Age profile

We have a larger proportion of our population aged 50 to 64 and 65+ and a smaller proportion of people aged 0 to 15 and 25 to 49 compared to the national average. By 2035 more of our residents are expected to be of retirement age and fewer will be of working age.



Disability

The incidence of disability is higher in the North East region than England, with 28% of the North East population having a disability in 2018/19, compared to 21% across England.

How will Buses contribute?

Greater bus use can help improve health and wellbeing outcomes for local people, enabling the North East to attain health levels at least equal to other regions in the UK.

More people travelling by Bus in the region could result in personal health and fitness benefits resulting from increased exercise levels relative to car use. Fewer car journeys could make roads safer and less congested.

Buses reach and connect communities where other types of transport can't – providing a lifeline for people across the North East in both rural and urban areas. Improved connectivity can help promote social inclusion, reduce loneliness and social isolation.

Using buses is more social, bringing people into direct contact with their neighbours and their local community.

The region's bus operators have achieved a number of accolades through connecting communities with mobility, health and wellbeing benefits that include helping combat loneliness. In 2018 Go North East won Silver in the Inclusive Tourism category at the North East England Tourism Awards for initiatives such as 'Dementia Friends'. Stagecoach North East won Bronze in the 'Bus and the Community' category at the 2018 UK Bus Awards, following successful fundraising efforts.

Working alongside stakeholders such as disability groups across the region will ensure that the region's bus services and information continues to be made even more accessible, regardless of people's age and mobility.

Buses are the solution to enable an ageing society to be more independent for longer by connecting people to the essential services they need such as health and social care and access to outdoor spaces, if and when access to a private vehicle is no longer possible.

The North East Transport Plan makes clear that ensuring our transport network leaves no one behind by being accessible to all is a key priority, through working with stakeholders to address accessibility issues.

If we do not address our carbon emissions from transport, then the locations of emission exceedance in several urban communities will continue to have a significant detrimental impact not only on the environment but on the health of the people living and working in our region.



Appealing, Sustainable Choices

The region must introduce further measures which make sustainable travel (including bus travel) a more attractive, convenient and easy alternative to getting around by car.

Challenges

Punctuality

In 2019, overall journey satisfaction for buses in the North East was high at 89%. However, punctuality scored much lower (73%).

2021 Transport Focus 'getting passengers back on bus' survey from current and lapsed users found that **although COVID-19 measures are important, ensuring punctuality of buses is crucial to ensure higher use.**

Barriers

Affordability

Pricing and affordability can also be a barrier to sustainable transport. People may consider that the cost of a ticket on public transport is too expensive or may own a car and want to get maximum use out of it and cannot afford not to use it.

Transport poverty

Transport poverty refers to households and individuals who struggle or are unable to make the journeys that they need. This can be the result of low income, poor availability of public transport and needing a long time to access essential services. The impacts of transport poverty are worst for disadvantaged people in rural areas according to a recent Evidence Review for the Department for Transport.

Barriers to use in Tyne and Wear

48% of bus users say there are not enough bus lanes. Car users are split on whether there are too many or too few.

49% of bus users find the different ticket options difficult to understand, increasing to 69% among non-users.

Nexus Insight Panel, 2019
– barriers to use in Tyne and Wear

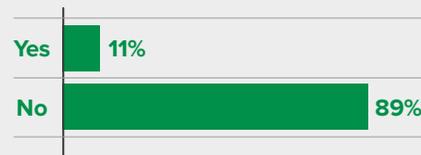
'Design a Bus'

80% want to be able to pay contactless card/phone

50% want to be able to pay with a smartcard with capping

Nexus – Insight Panel Survey
'Design a Bus' – April 2021

Bus passenger car availability Tyne and Wear



Nexus Continuous Monitoring Surveys, Bus Passenger Profile 2018/19 'Design a Bus' – April 2021

How will Buses contribute?

We need to make buses more attractive by making them faster and more reliable throughout our region and beyond for both existing and potential users.

The introduction of appropriate COVID-19 safety measures is the starting point for getting people back on buses. 2021 Research from Transport Focus found that proof of deep cleaning of the buses/new hygiene measures would have a significant effect on lapsed users if it can be evidenced.

The National Bus Strategy highlights the important role of local highway authorities in the delivery of infrastructure measures needed to speed buses through congested areas.

In recent years, North East bus operator investment has seen new vehicles that feature emissions controls, dynamic and digital onboard information announcements, wi-fi and charging sockets, and new depot facilities to ensure effective, up to date maintenance. Continuing this will make bus use more appealing.

Around a third of respondents to the 2019 Nexus Insight Panel said they used the internet while travelling on the bus, showing the importance of making sure transport is digitally connected.

Integrated multi-operator and multi-modal ticketing needs to be available for passengers across the whole of the region. Better information, joined up real-time and journey planning systems can support bus use and help to encourage car users away from their vehicles.

Partnership working to deal with anti-social behaviour and reviewing security for buses and stops could also make use more appealing.

Working closely with Local Highway Authorities to bring forward infrastructure to help buses such as prioritised traffic signals and bus lanes will make buses faster and more appealing.

We also know there are parts of our region with little or no access to a bus so we need to look at increasing the coverage of the bus network through greater use of "on demand" services, which could offer alternatives for more isolated communities, enabling improved rural connectivity.

We must also work to understand and address attitudinal reasons for non-use in the region. 2016 research from Transport Focus found that a main reason why current non users don't use buses was the failure to provide services when people want to travel (such as for work or a night out).

Central to the North East Transport Plan is our ambition to provide solutions to help people make greener travel choices where it is appropriate to do so and at a price they can afford.

Case Study

Go North East has improved bus access to Nissan Motor Manufacturing UK in Sunderland, offering later journeys after the last shift finishes. This makes sure that people aren't cut off from job opportunities because their shift ends before the last bus.



Safe and Secure Public Transport

For the region to deliver on this objective, we need to continue improving both actual and perceived of safety and security on buses, at stations, interchanges and stops and on walking routes. This will be achieved by ensuring people are confident and reassured whilst travelling by bus around the North East.

Current situation

Perceptions of safety on buses in our region is high. 88% of bus passengers are very or fairly satisfied with their personal safety when on a bus. This is higher than the national figure of 81%.

The region's main bus operators have invested in safety measures including onboard CCTV and a vehicle location system using mobile technology also used on many buses which immediately pinpoints the location of any bus or incident in real time, improving response times and passenger support.

All major North East bus operators, including nearly all independent operators' fleets are fitted with CCTV cameras inside and out to provide a safe and secure environment and operators continue to invest as CCTV technology improves.

The 2019 Nexus Insight Panel found that 17% of people surveyed said that the behaviour of other passengers on a bus was a barrier to bus travel.

Major operators in the region have fitted buses with ITSO (the international ticketing standard) smartcard enabled ticket machines for a number of years now and most of these machines have GPS telematics to help improve road safety performance.

COVID-19

Passenger confidence in safety on board the bus has never been more important than during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In October 2020, North East's bus operators, working with the local authorities, established 'Face Covering Awareness Week' to highlight the importance of wearing a face covering on public transport. Random sampling of 671 bus passengers found that 93% were wearing a face covering and of those that were not, 70% had a valid exemption and were carrying an exemption card.

Measures that keep passengers safe and maintain their confidence in the service are crucial in ensuring that bus use recovers and grows.

Case Study

Go North East have recently launched 24-hour services on three key routes, which operate seven days a week. These buses are vital for encouraging people to use public transport again and avoid taking the car. 24-hour services can add extra reassurance of getting home safely and securely after a shift.

Case Study

In October 2017 Nexus, Gateshead Council and Go North East signed an agreement to form a new East Gateshead Bus Alliance in order to demonstrate a commitment to providing quality bus services and information. Together they made a number of commitments, such as improving safety and security.

How will Bus contribute?

We must always work to improve safety and security. An Enhanced Partnership could look at how the safety and security, and perceptions of our region's transport system can be improved,

so our residents are confident that wherever, whenever and how often they travel they can do so without fear.

Our forthcoming Bus Service Improvement Plan and Enhanced Partnership could address issues of safety and security to ensure that bus services are safe and perceived to be safe by all.

We will review safety and security such as lighting and CCTV, around bus stops, interchange points, as well as Park and Ride locations, ensuring that people feel safe at all times of day or night. This could also enable greater uptake and use of Park and Ride sites.

We aim to grow the proportion of people travelling using sustainable modes, to improve road safety, to reduce traffic congestion, and to meet climate change targets. Continuing investment in transport connectivity is required such as upgrading bus corridors and providing a total transport Network.



We want more people using the bus network around the North East and for them to travel by bus confidently and feel reassured that they are safe and will have a pleasant journey.

Buses are Key to Delivering our Transport Ambitions

Our Vision

Create a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East.

Our Aims and Objectives

The North East Transport Plan, published in 2021, reflects this vision. It sets out clear aims and objectives, and buses are integral to achieving them.



Carbon-neutral North East

We will initiate actions to make travel in the North East net carbon zero, addressing our air quality challenges and helping to tackle the climate emergency.



Overcome inequality and grow our economy

We will return the region to pre COVID-19 levels of employment and Gross Domestic Product (GDP), then move forward in pursuit of the ambitions set out in the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP).



Healthier North East

We will encourage active and sustainable travel to help our region attain health levels that are at least equal to other parts of the UK.



Appealing, sustainable transport choices

We will introduce measures that make sustainable modes of transport more attractive and an easy alternative for getting around the North East



Safe, secure network

We will ensure that people are confident about their safety and security when travelling around the North East.

Our Plan for Buses

Our plan will create a network that can take everyone where they need to go for work, education, healthcare, shopping and leisure activities at a price they can afford. Our proposals are designed to ensure that buses are safe and reliable, and work alongside Metro, National Rail and Ferry services to create an integrated system where people can transfer easily between modes. Our plans also encompass the whole of our diverse region, from the pre-dominantly urban centre of Tyne & Wear to the most rural parts of County Durham and Northumberland. We propose ten key solutions, based on market analysis, feedback from customers, lessons learnt in our region and best practice from elsewhere.



An enhanced network that is simple and easy to understand



Faster and more reliable journey times



A simple and flexible fares structure



Better integration between modes



More early morning, evening and weekend services



Clear and consistent information that is easy to access



Improved safety and security



Cleaner and greener vehicles



Improved connectivity beyond our boundaries



A first-class customer experience

An enhanced network that is simple and easy to understand

We will enhance the network and make it simpler and easier to understand. We will segment the network by route and area to provide minimum standards of frequency and length of operating day, so everyone knows what to expect from their service. Buses will run to 'standard pattern timetables' with no variations to routes in the evening and/or on Sundays.

Category	Monday to Saturday Daytime	Monday to Saturday Evening	Sunday Daytime	Sunday Evening	Example Areas
Urban 'Super Core'	5	15	7-8	15	Coast Road, North Tyneside Old Durham Road, Gateshead
Urban 'Core'	10	30	15	30	Great North Road, Newcastle Sunderland – South Shields Durham – Arnison Centre
Interurban 'Express'	15	30	30	30	Newcastle – Morpeth Newcastle – Consett
Interurban 'Connect'	30	60	60	60	South East Northumberland Bishop Auckland – Crook
Rural	60-120		120		Crook – Stanhope Morpeth – Rothbury – Thropton
Deep Rural	DRT, Special		DRT, Special		Kielder, Coquetdale, Upper Teesdale and Weardale

Urban 'Super Core'

The most frequent services with buses running at least every five minutes on Monday to Saturday daytimes allowing customers to simply 'turn up and go'. Some high frequency corridors currently have several overlapping services, and we will look to simplify these to better meet customers' needs and free up resources to invest in other parts of the network.

Urban 'Core'

The backbone of the network in urban areas, with buses running at least every ten minutes on Monday to Saturday daytimes, every 15 minutes on Sunday daytimes and every 30 minutes in the evening.

Interurban 'Express'

Fast links into our cities from the surrounding towns and villages. Buses run up to every 15 minutes on Monday to Saturday daytimes and every 30 minutes in the evening and on Sundays. They operate on a limited stop basis in the city regions to minimise journey times, complementing the Metro and National Rail networks.

Interurban 'Connect'

Links between the towns in our region, complementing Metro, National Rail and Interurban 'Express' services. Buses run at least every 30 minutes on Monday to Saturday daytimes, hourly in the evening and on Sundays.

Rural

A network of routes, tailored to the specific requirements of the communities they serve, with buses running at least every two hours on Monday to Saturday daytimes. In some places it may be possible to provide a better level of service, for example where there is seasonal demand or an innovative way of delivering enhancements.

Deep Rural

We will explore the potential for Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) in areas where it might be feasible to invest in dedicated resources. We will consider special measures for other places, including community-based solutions and better utilising vehicles that are already deployed at 'commuter' times on 'home to school' transport.

Urban 'Super Core' Example

Newcastle Coast Road

Arriva and Go North East currently run five services along the Coast Road, which together provide up to 17 buses per hour on Monday to Saturday daytimes between Newcastle City Centre, Sandyford, Cradlewell, Heaton and Battle Hill. Services then extend to Hadrian Park, North Shields, Tynemouth, Whitley Bay and/or Blyth up to every 15 minutes. However, the times are not co-ordinated anywhere on the route.

Our aim is to streamline this network, and we would work with the bus operators to create a simple co-ordinated high frequency 'turn up and go' service between Newcastle City Centre, Sandyford, Cradlewell, Heaton and Battle Hill. Buses would then extend less frequently to Hadrian Park, North Shields, Tynemouth, Whitley Bay and/or Blyth, forming co-ordinated headways where the routes overlap.

This work would be part of a wider joint network planning exercise on high frequency routes to provide a simpler service to customers and better match capacity with post-COVID demand. Any resources released by doing this would fund improvements to other services.

Interurban 'Connect' Example

South Northumberland Superbus Network

The National Bus Strategy identifies South Northumberland as a possible Superbus network because of its demographics and its patchwork of small industrial towns and large villages, including Ashington, Bedlington, Bedlington Station, Blyth, Cramlington and Morpeth.

The area already has good bus links, as many of the towns and villages lie on frequent interurban express routes to/from Newcastle. However, our aim is to link all of them with services that run at least every 30 minutes on Monday to Saturday daytimes and hourly in the evening and on Sundays. This would be a big improvement in some places, not least between Cramlington and Morpeth where buses only run hourly on Monday to Saturday daytimes and there is no service at all in the evening or on Sundays.

The enhanced network would complement existing National Rail services at Cramlington and Morpeth as well as the proposed Northumberland Line, and would improve access to work, education and leisure facilities across the area.

Faster and more reliable journey times

We know that journey time and reliability are the biggest barriers to bus travel. Reducing journey times will not only increase the attractiveness of services and drive up demand, but also improve efficiency and help bus operators to reduce costs.

At a network planning level, we will ensure that all Interurban 'Express' services follow direct routes and run on a truly limited stop basis, minimising journey times between our towns and cities. We will also increase limited stop 'express' services where alternative local buses are available. This will build on positive experience from the Arriva 'MAX' and Go North East 'X Lines' networks, where direct routes and faster journey times have helped to re-invigorate a range of inter-urban services across our region and attract new passengers.

We will also change how road space is used to allow buses to move more quickly, particularly in city centres.

From 2018 to 2020, bus operators and local authorities worked with AECOM to identify opportunities for improving bus speeds and reliability in corridors across our region through capital investment in physical priority measures and technology. The study took a data led approach, tempered by local knowledge and experiences of the operators, and produced a package of 91 possible interventions to benefit buses, which together had a combined benefit to cost ratio of 1.93.

We will build on this by working with local highway authorities to deliver infrastructure improvements that will create a network of highly visual 'rapid bus corridors'. These will



We will build on the success of Network One to create simple zone-based multi-journey tickets for the whole region.

feature continuous 'through route' bus lanes and priority at traffic signals, supported by clear road markings, red routes and better parking controls (including powers to issue penalties, for example where vehicles block yellow boxes). They will also complement existing walking and cycling schemes.

Our region is fortunate to have an Urban Traffic Management Control (UTMC) overseeing our roads. We will enhance the role of the UTMC to better manage buses and make them more reliable for users. Through improved road network management, the UTMC will also co-ordinate diversionary routes, produce information and protect the interests of passengers whenever there is disruption caused by highway works.

Our initial target is to bring 'peak' bus operating speeds and journey times into line with 'off-peak' periods, making services more attractive for commuting to work, school or college. We will then look to improve on this to deliver benefits throughout the day, ensuring that 95% of all buses run on time (which is the target set by the Traffic Commissioner). We will monitor performance with bus operators and highway authorities to optimise schedules and inform decisions about future investment.

A simple and flexible fares structure

We know that simple fares and low ticket prices attract passengers. We will make ticket options easier to understand and improve the affordability of bus travel across the region, but we need to do it in a way that grows demand without undermining the viability of services.

Network One already offers a range of multi-journey tickets covering all operators and modes of transport across five zones in Tyne & Wear. This was extended at the beginning of 2021 to include a regionwide weekly bus ticket, but it is the only option that exists for multi-operator journeys in many places outside of Tyne & Wear. Network One effectively caps individual operators' fares, and prices are agreed by a Board that is compliant with the Competition Act.

We will build on the success of Network One to create simple zone-based multi-journey tickets for the whole region. A simple range of 'bus only' tickets will replace the current plethora of individual operators' products, ensuring more consistency in fares levels between different places. We will expand the current range of multi-modal tickets to fully integrate buses with the Metro, National Rail and Ferry services across the region, ensuring that people can always choose the best option for their journey. There will be dedicated tickets for children, young people and adults, as well as flexible options for commuters and tourists.

We recognise that not everyone is a frequent bus user, so we will explore the potential for simple flat fares in our towns and cities. These will make it easier for current and new users to find out the price of their journey, improve value for money



We will also change how road space is used to allow buses to move more quickly, particularly in city centres.

and help to reduce boarding times. We will review other inter-urban and long-distance fares to make them more consistent, so for example a journey of 15 miles in one area will be priced the same as a similar trip elsewhere.

Most buses in our region are already fitted with smart ticket machines that accept contactless payments. We will complete the roll out of this technology, embracing the growing popularity of contactless transactions, but we will retain cash payment facilities for those who need or prefer them. We will also bring Metro, Rail and Ferry services up to the same standard to enable inter-operability of smart, digital and contactless ticketing, with a pathway to a shared back office for regionwide 'capping' of prices.

Better integration between modes

Two-way integration between Bus, Metro, National Rail and Ferry services is key to getting people to choose public transport for their whole journey. This doesn't simply mean diverting buses to serve railway stations, and we will take a pragmatic approach to do what is right for different places across our region.

Our fares plan will deliver fully integrated tickets, so we will start here by working with partners to overhaul infrastructure in city centres, town centres and other interchanges to deliver better waiting facilities, signage and information. In rural areas, where services run less frequently, we will look to optimise connection times so that buses meet trains. This will build on positive experience from places like Alnmouth, where timed connections and clear signage have helped grow the number of people accessing the station by bus.

We will also explore the potential for more Park & Ride schemes, building on the success of the three sites at Belmont, Howlands and Sniperley in Durham. Our initial focus will be on Newcastle, as Park & Ride could help reduce traffic

congestion on key routes around the city centre, which would also have a positive impact on conventional bus services.

More early morning, evening and weekend services

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated changes in travel patterns, especially for work and leisure, and this will continue in the future. There will be more early morning, evening and weekend buses, creating a more consistent length of operating day for services across the region. Saturdays will have the same service level as Mondays to Fridays and routes that run half-hourly or more frequently during the daytime will have buses at least hourly in the evening and on Sundays. We will also explore the potential for more night services, building on recent improvements by Go North East in Tyne & Wear.

Clear and consistent information that is easy to access

Accurate, high quality and easy to access information is critical to attracting new people to buses and retaining the

confidence of existing users. We will create a single identity for buses across the region, covering all aspects of their operation and complementing other modes of transport so that people know they are part of an integrated network. This will not be a 'one size fits all' colour scheme for buses, as we know that local and route-specific branding helps promote services and generate demand. We will introduce a standard design for all publicity (including timetables, maps and posters) and create a single website and Mobile App for buying tickets and planning multi-operator and multi-modal journeys. We will also invest in a new Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) system to feed all digital outputs.

Improved safety and security

We know that safety and security doesn't start and finish when people get on and off buses. We will therefore invest in modern, comfortable, secure and well-connected waiting facilities, more staff will be on hand at key places across the network (for longer every day) and vehicles will be fitted with CCTV as standard.

Better integration between modes Buses meet Trains in Alnmouth

In 2015, Arriva worked with Northumberland County Council to improve the bus service between Amble, Warkworth, Alnmouth and Alnwick from hourly to half-hourly on Monday to Saturday daytimes. Adding an hourly X20 to the already hourly X18 created a dedicated link for Alnmouth railway station and allowed buses to be timed to meet trains. Since then, the number of people using buses to access the station has more than trebled, reducing traffic congestion at the station and helping to make the enhanced bus service more sustainable.



More early morning, evening and weekend services Go North East 24-Hour Services

Go North East runs daily 24-hour services on three routes from Newcastle to Chester-le-Street, Durham, Washington and Sunderland, and from Sunderland to Ryhope and Seaham. Most of the night-time journeys mirror established daytime services, using the same numbers and following the same routes to assist marketing and avoid confusion amongst customers. They have been very successful, improving access to jobs that involve shift work and supporting the night-time economy by giving people a safe way of getting home after work or going out with friends. There have been similar experiences in other cities with much bigger night-time networks (for example, Liverpool and Edinburgh) suggesting there is scope for growth in our region.



Buses are Key to Delivering our Transport Ambitions

A first-class customer experience

We will offer a first-class customer experience, built on seamless 'single source' real time information and delivered by well trained staff using vehicles that are fitted with comfortable seats, Wi-Fi, charging points and next stop announcements as standard. A customers' charter will tell people what they can expect and what to do when things go wrong.

Cleaner and greener buses

We will invest in new or modified vehicles to help achieve our target for net zero emission transport and tackle the climate emergency declared by our two combined and seven local authorities. The COVID-19 pandemic has reduced the amount of capital available to many bus operators for new vehicles, so we will work with them to speed up fleet replacement programmes. This will focus on maximising the use of zero emission technology and replacing the most polluting buses as quickly as possible.

Improved connectivity beyond our boundaries

Our region already has strong transport links with neighbouring areas and other parts of the UK. Many are provided by National Rail services and our plan to better integrate all modes of transport will make it easier to access railway stations by bus. However, we also have important cross-boundary bus routes linking our region with places in Cumbria, North Yorkshire, the Scottish Borders and the Tees Valley. We will work with local authorities and bus operators outside of our region to strengthen these links, many of which have unique challenges associated with the boundaries they cross. Recent work on the Cross Pennine route shows that cross-boundary partnerships can help turn around the fortunes of services like this.



Cleaner and greener buses

Go North East Voltra, Zero Emission Electric Buses for Gateshead and Newcastle

In 2020, Go North East introduced a fleet of seven zero emission electric buses to its service between Newcastle, Gateshead and Saltwell Park. The vehicles were partly funded by the Ultra Low Emission Bus Scheme and are powered by electricity from zero emission sources, including solar, wind and hydro. They have been very popular with passengers too, as they have Wi-Fi, USB charging points, air conditioning and next stop announcements as well as departure boards for Metro services. The project will also provide valuable data on the performance, range, efficiency and maintenance needs of zero emission electric vehicles, as we look to invest in more equipment like this for the future.

Our route map for delivery

The North East Joint Transport Committee (JTC) and NEbus are coming together in partnership to create a better bus network in the North East as we look to recover and grow from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Co-operation between our local and combined authorities and bus operators has been constructive and positive throughout the pandemic. We want to build upon this close co-operation to help all partners transform and develop the region's transport network as we begin our recovery and look towards the future.

Buses provide a solution to many of our region's long-standing challenges and will help us meet our regional objectives of working to create and sustain 100,000 more and better jobs in a growing and carbonised economy, where social and health inequalities in our distinctive and unique region are greatly reduced, as set out in our Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) and Transport Plan.

It took until 2016 for North East employment to return to 2008 levels following the last recession – the speed of this recovery must be faster, and buses will need to play a significant role.

An integrated, simple, affordable bus network is essential in preventing a car-dominated recovery.

With a National Bus Strategy for England now in place and the North East Transport Plan, the region has major opportunity to receive funding to improve bus travel getting more people to use buses.

The National Bus Strategy states that from the beginning of July 2021, only local authorities and bus operators who have committed to work in an Enhanced Partnership (EP) will continue to receive Coronavirus Bus Service Support Grant (CBSSG) or any financial support from the new £3 billion budget.



In June 2021, we agreed to enter an 'Enhanced Partnership' As part of this, we have to meet the following key milestones:

Date	Milestone	Status
June 2021	JTC and Bus operator confirmation submitted to government to develop an Enhanced Partnership (EP) in line with the National Bus Strategy requirements.	✓
July – September 2021	Working with operators and other stakeholders, and listening to people across the region to develop our plans	
October 2021	North East Bus Service Improvement Plan submitted to Government	
November 2021	Heads of Terms of Enhanced Partnership Agreed	
December 2021	Draft Enhanced Partnership Agreed for Public Consultation	
March 2022	Enhanced Partnership is officially signed	
April 2022	Enhanced Partnership begins	

We need your feedback

As we continue to develop our Enhanced Bus Partnership, we want to hear from people across the region who use and don't use buses to ensure that everyone is able to have a real say on how things should be improved.

Please get in touch and help us shape and deliver our vision for buses: info@transportnortheast.gov.uk

Delivery

Now is the time to act and secure the benefits of a better bus network. 'Bus back better' the Government's bus strategy offers us the opportunity to secure funding and the operational structures to deliver.

Under an Enhanced Partnership (EP), North East authorities will work closely with regional bus operators to deliver many developments for customers, such as simpler ticketing and network improvements.

However, all options are still on the table for the longer-term to get the very best bus system for our region. The EP is a highly complex project and the North East Joint Transport Committee will continue to work closely with bus operators to deliver the very best solution for the region.

We have developed ten key solutions, based on market analysis, feedback from customers, lessons learnt in our region and best practice from elsewhere:

-  **An enhanced network that is simple and easy to understand**
-  **Faster and more reliable journey times**
-  **A simple and flexible fares structure**
-  **Better integration between modes**
-  **More early morning and evening services**
-  **Clear and consistent information that is easy to access**
-  **Improved safety and security**
-  **Cleaner and greener vehicles**
-  **Improved connectivity beyond our boundaries**
-  **A first-class customer experience**

What do you think? Are these the right priorities? Join in the Big Bus Conversation to tell us Your Vision for Buses

We're on a mission to make buses better
for the people of the North East.

transportnortheast.gov.uk



Transport North East



North East Joint Transport Committee

Date: 13 July 2021

Subject: East Coast Main Line – May 2022 Timetable Consultation Response

Report of: Managing Director, Transport North East

Executive Summary

Train operators led by LNER are consulting on the introduction of a new East Coast Main Line (ECML) timetable for introduction in May 2022.

Regrettably no action has been taken to increase the capacity of the East Coast Main Line in the North East, despite many years of campaigning by business groups and local authorities. Consequently, all parties are now being put in the unwelcome position of having to make trade-offs between services and train operators.

The proposed changes have significant connectivity impacts for the North East, including a reduction in services to Manchester in order to accommodate growth in services to London, as well as a number of other negative impacts.

The proposed timetable is the result of a lengthy industry process and although members of the Joint Transport Committee have known about the outline proposals for some time and aired their concerns, this is now the opportunity to formally respond to the public consultation.

The recommended response to the consultation is for the timetable changes to be put on hold, and for a taskforce to be established to urgently progress options to improve the capacity of the rail infrastructure to allow growth in services.

Recommendations

The Joint Transport Committee is recommended to make the following requests to the government and the rail industry:

- i) That the timetable changes are put on hold;
- ii) That a “taskforce” be established by the government, led by an independent third party, to examine the capacity constraints and put forward options to resolve them both short- and long- term; and
- iii) That the taskforce should then put together a plan to introduce the timetable change slowly, aligned to the growth in capacity, and with no detriment to existing connectivity.

1. Background Information

- 1.1 The new ECML timetable proposed for May 2022 is part of long-standing government plans to improve the frequency and performance of East Coast services to London. As well as the introduction of the new Azuma train fleet, a complimentary £1.2bn programme of investment is currently underway mainly in the south of the route, including remodelling the approaches to Kings Cross Station and building a grade separated junction for freight at Werrington (near Peterborough).
- 1.2 The package of ECML investment was funded by a government business case, developed in 2014, that assumed a growth in passenger revenue driven by reduced journey times and an increase in frequencies. The extra revenue generated for LNER will help recoup the investment.
- 1.3 Businesses groups and local authorities in the North East have been campaigning for an increase in ECML capacity for many years (including the reopening of the Leamside Line to add in capacity). The key issue is that the route is a two-track railway from Northallerton to Newcastle, and from Newcastle to Berwick. This means that trains of differing speeds bunch together, and there is no resilience if the line becomes blocked. The route to the south of Newcastle can only accommodate 6 passenger trains and one freight train each hour in either direction.
- There are currently 2 passenger trains each hour to London (LNER), 2 to Birmingham (CrossCountry) and 2 to Manchester (TPE).
- The original government investment package planned for freight “by-pass” lines to be installed in the North East, but these were subsequently removed from the programme to save cost.
- Therefore, the limitation of 6 passenger trains per hour remains. If the train service is to be grown to one destination, it must inevitably be reduced to another to keep within the constraint.
- 1.4 Under the current system of allocating capacity (known as “paths”) on the rail network, operators make bids to Network Rail for access. When the plan to increase East Coast services to 3 trains per hour was first proposed in 2014 (in the Virgin Trains East Coast franchise bid) it was assumed that infrastructure investment would be made, and so Network Rail provided “firm rights” to Virgin Trains East Coast (which subsequently became LNER).
- Conversely when TransPennine Express applied to increase its services in 2016 to 2 trains per hour, it was already known that a) the infrastructure investment would not be made, and b) LNER had been given firm rights, and so Network Rail only provided “provisional rights” to TPE.
- Consequently, under existing rail industry rules LNER has the right to operate its third hourly service at the expense of TPE’s second hourly service.

2. The Consultation

- 2.1 Although LNER is leading on stakeholder engagement regarding the new

timetable, the other operators on the ECML (TransPennine Express, Cross Country and Northern) are also consulting on changes to their own timetables, along with two operators on the south of the line.

This has led to six separate consultation documents, with each operator describing the impact on their own timetable. This results in a very difficult process to engage with, and it is hard for consultees to understand the net effect on passengers and links between places.

The closing date for consultation responses is 5th August 2021.

The proposed May 2022 timetable changes are summarised below with respect to services travelling to, from and through the North East.

- 2.2 **LNER trains** – The two existing LNER services will be speeded up (by omitting some station stops for example Berwick, Morpeth, and Darlington), making Newcastle-London 10 min faster and Newcastle-Edinburgh 5 min faster.

LNER will introduce a third London to Newcastle service each hour. The new service will stop at many stations along the ECML, improving the North East's links to Peterborough, Stevenage, and Grantham.

There will be 50% more seats on LNER between Newcastle and London Monday-Saturday, and a smaller increase on Sundays. Durham will see a slight increase in LNER services to three trains every two hours.

LNER plan to remove of the once-daily direct LNER service between Sunderland and London due to low passenger numbers.

- 2.3 **TransPennine Express** – To free up capacity for the extra LNER train to travel north of York, the hourly TransPennine Express service from Newcastle/Durham/Darlington to Manchester Airport will no longer serve the North East, instead becoming a York to Manchester Victoria service.

The hourly TransPennine Express service from Edinburgh to Liverpool (via Berwick, Morpeth, Newcastle, and Manchester) will no longer serve Scotland nor Northumberland, instead becoming a Newcastle/Durham/Darlington to Manchester and Liverpool service. This service will be slightly slower as it will stop at more stations en-route.

The frequency of trains serving Chester-Le-Street will increase from one train every two hours to hourly.

- 2.4 **Cross Country Trains** – Service patterns are proposed to be changed to plug some but not all the gaps north of Newcastle (Morpeth, Alnmouth and Berwick) due to the loss of the TPE service.

- 2.5 **Northern Trains Ltd** – Northern is introducing shorter-length services within the North East to improve performance, resulting in more trains starting and ending their journeys at Newcastle Central Station rather than operating through it.

Northern was also due (Pre Covid-19) to introduce a semi fast second train per hour between Middlesbrough, Sunderland and Newcastle. This proposal has been delayed because the additional trains required to operate it are needed elsewhere on the network, to cater for resultant changes from the ECML Main Line timetable

in the Tees Valley.

2.6 Some other changes of note are:

Grand Central – Plan to increase the daily Sunderland to London service from 5 to 6 trains per day

East Coast Trains Limited – Later this year the new open access operator East Coast Trains Ltd will start a fast service 5 times each day between Edinburgh, Morpeth, Newcastle, and London. This service will continue in May 2022.

Northumberland Line – Passive provision has been made within the timetable to accommodate 2 trains per hour for the new Northumberland passenger service when it becomes operation following the delivery of the upgrade works.

2.7 The timing of trains around the clockface is also important. For example, 6 trains an hour to between York and Newcastle sounds reasonable but in reality, the four trains which call at most stations all depart in a 22-minute time period, with two Cross Country services only 5 minutes apart. Passengers at Durham and Darlington will often wait 38 minutes for the next northbound service.

2.8 The following table shows the net effect on the number of trains each day at NE stations:

ECML Station	Dec-19	May-22	Diff
Berwick upon Tweed	56	50	-6
Alnmouth	43	44	1
Morpeth	75	54	-21
Newcastle	172	171	-1
Chester-Le-Street	28	38	10
Durham	163	155	-8
Darlington	183	154	-29
Northallerton (to/from Ncle)	43	52	9

3. Proposals

3.1 It is proposed, in responding to the rail industry's consultation, that the Joint Transport Committee should make the following requests to the government and the rail industry:

- a) That the timetable changes are put on hold;
- b) That a "taskforce" be established by the government, led by an independent third party, to examine the capacity constraints and put forward options to resolve them both short- and long- term; and
- c) That the taskforce should then put together a plan to introduce the timetable change slowly, aligned to the growth in capacity, and with no detriment to existing connectivity.

3.2 It is proposed that the Joint Transport Committee makes these requests through direct representations to the Secretary of State for Transport.

- 3.3 At the meeting of Transport for the North's Rail North Committee on 23rd June 2021, Mayor Driscoll made these same points. The Committee agreed, and as a result Transport for the North will be writing to the Secretary of State for Transport to put forward its view that a taskforce should be established urgently.
- 3.4 A more detailed proposed response from the Joint Transport Committee to the rail operators who are carrying out the consultation is attached at Appendix 1. If approved, we propose to provide the same response to all four train operators.
- 3.5 It should be recognised that some timetable enhancements may need to be made sooner rather than later, such as the introduction of the Northumberland Line services and the new open access operator. However we do not believe that these improvements require trade-offs against other services.

4. Reasons for the Proposals

- 4.1 The North East Transport Plan places a high value on the existing very strong and high-quality rail links provided by LNER between the North East, London, and Scotland.

The Joint Transport Committee would therefore in principle be expected to welcome an increase in services to London because they support economic growth.

- 4.2 The region has been campaigning for an increase in the capacity of the ECML in the North East for many years, including the Chamber of Commerce's "Fast Track East Coast" Campaign, precisely in order for the line to be able to support a growth in passenger and freight services.

The North East Joint Transport Committee wrote to the Rail Minister in November 2020 warning that the situation now before us – of needing to make trade-offs on the ECML because of scarce capacity – was likely to arise. The letter suggested that the reinstatement of a short section of route called "Bensham Curve" might provide an opportunity to create capacity for seven passenger trains each hour thus allowing all services; it also suggested that this project could be a candidate for acceleration.

Regrettably no action has been taken to increase the capacity of the East Coast Main Line in the North East.

Consequently, all parties are now being put in the unwelcome position of having to make trade-offs between services and train operators.

- 4.3 We are concerned that original business case and associated decision to increase LNER's Azuma services to 3 trains per hour was taken seven years ago (2014) by the government when circumstances and the economic environment were very different. For example, Transport for the North did not exist, and its Strategic Transport Plan, which proposes to support economic growth by strengthening the transport links between the economic centre of the North, had not been written. Nor had the franchise been let for TransPennine Express which led to increased frequencies between the North East and Manchester.

The business case was built on the assumption that the ECML infrastructure would be improved to carry more trains – this turned out to be only partially true, and the infrastructure improvements in the North East did not occur.

Further, the recent changes to the economic appraisal of schemes means that ‘the Treasury Green Book’ places a greater emphasis on strategic societal improvements than previously.

Therefore, the full facts were never considered in the round, but the original decision to increase services to London is being progressed despite the infrastructure not being ready. We do not believe this is in the best economic interests of the region.

5. Alternative Options Available

5.1 Option 1 – The North East Joint Transport Committee may agree to the proposal to object to the proposed ECML timetable for May 2022 as outlined in section 3 above.

Option 2 – The North East Joint Transport Committee may accept the East Coast Main Line timetable changes proposed for May 2022 as outlined in section 2 above.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

6. Next Steps and Timetable for Implementation

6.1 The East Coast Main Line May 2022 consultation deadline is Thursday 5th August 2022. It is proposed to write to the Secretary of State for Transport to make the points outlined in section 3 above, and to respond to the train operators using the draft set out in Appendix 1.

7. Potential Impact on Objectives

7.1 The lack of investment in the capacity of the East Coast Main Line is hampering the delivery of key North East Transport Plan objectives, particularly around the ‘connecting beyond our boundaries’ theme.

8. Financial and Other Resources Implications

8.1 As this is a proposed response to an external consultation, there are no implications on financial or other resources.

9. Legal Implications

9.1 As this is a proposed response to an external consultation, there are no legal implications.

10. Key Risks

10.1 The lack of capacity on the East Coast Main Line between York and Newcastle is constraining economic growth, reducing access to future employment, training, and leisure opportunities, and further isolating the North East from the

other key Northern economic centres and Edinburgh.

- 10.2 There is a risk that the rail industry decides not to, or is not able to, agree to a deferment of the introduction of the new ECML timetable in May 2022, at which point the negative effects on connectivity described in section 2 will occur.

11. Equality and Diversity

- 11.1 There are no specific equality and diversity implications arising from this proposal.

12. Crime and Disorder

- 12.1 There are no crime and disorder implications arising from the proposal.

13. Consultation/Engagement

- 13.1 Heads of Transport and Transport Strategy Board have been consulted on the proposal.

14. Other Impact of the Proposals

- 14.1 The impacts of the rail industry's proposals are outlined elsewhere in this report.

15. Appendices

- 15.1 Appendix 1 – Draft Response to the East Coast Main Line – May 2022
Timetable Consultation
Appendix 2 – Draft Letter to Secretary of State for Transport

16. Background Papers

- 16.1 The various train operator Consultation links are:
- **LNER** – <https://lner.citizenspace.com/>
 - **TransPennine Express** – <https://www.tpexpress.co.uk/about-us/our-plan/east-coast-mainline-consultation>
 - **Cross Country** – <https://www.crosscountrytrains.co.uk/about-us/press/consultation-may-2022>
 - **Northern** – www.northernrailway.co.uk/eastcoast22

The link to the previous JTC paper on ECML is:

[\(Public Pack\)Agenda Document for North East Joint Transport Committee, 19/01/2021 14:30 \(northeastca.gov.uk\)](#)

17. Contact Officers

17.1 Tobyn Hughes, Managing Director, Transport North East
Email: tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk

18. Sign off

- The Proper Officer for Transport:
- Head of Paid Service:
- Monitoring Officer:
- Chief Finance Officer:

19. Glossary

Any acronyms or technical terms used are explained in the body of the report.

LNER – London North Eastern Railways

ECML – East Coast Main Line

JTC – North East Joint Transport Committee

DfT – Department for Transport

TfN – Transport for the North

TPE – TransPennine Express

VTEC – Virgin Trains East Coast.

Appendix 1

It is proposed to write covering letters to each of the train operators and the Secretary of State with the common response attached.

5th August 2021

Consultation Response: East Coast Main Line May 2022 Timetable Changes

Introduction

Transport North East have compiled this response to the East Coast Main Line (ECML) May 2022 Timetable Consultation on behalf of the North East Joint Transport Committee (JTC). The JTC has an overarching vision of moving to a green, healthy, dynamic, and thriving North East as set out in the North East Transport Plan.

The committee brings together the region's two Combined Authorities (North of Tyne Combined Authority covering Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland, and the North East Combined Authority covering Durham, Gateshead, Sunderland and South Tyneside) which have transport powers for the region.

We work closely with Nexus, the Passenger Transport Executive for Tyne and Wear and with the North East Local Enterprise Partnership, which covers all seven of the local authorities listed above. We are also a member of Transport for the North, working collaboratively to realise their goal for improvements in northern transport connectivity that will help to re-balance the national economy.

The North East Transport Plan

Where relevant, we have commented on how the proposals for **the ECML May 2022 Timetable changes** align or not with the agreed objectives of the North East Transport Plan. The Plan can be viewed [here](#). Between now and 2035, it aims to help support our region's wider goals of creating and sustaining 100,000 more and better jobs in a growing and decarbonised economy, where social and health inequalities are greatly reduced. The Plan has five objectives:

- Achieve a carbon-neutral North East
- Promote a healthier North East
- Deliver appealing sustainable transport choices
- Overcome inequality and grow our economy
- Provide a safe, secure network

Regional and National rail context

The North East's long-distance rail links, especially on the ECML are crucial to the region's economy and to the Transport Plan objective of reducing inequality and growing our economy. The line, which carried 15 million passengers from the North East each year prior to the COVID pandemic, is used by long distance, regional and local passenger trains, plus

freight services. However, with just two tracks in our region, the line suffers from limited capacity which affects the reliability of existing services and the potential to add further services.

The region has been campaigning for an increase in the capacity of the ECML in the North East for many years, including the Chamber of Commerce's "Fast Track East Coast" Campaign, precisely in order for the line to be able to support a growth in passenger and freight services

We support the plans for future investment in both the eastern leg of HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail and view High-Speed Rail as essential to unlocking the full economic potential of this region and supporting the regeneration of our towns and cities. To pave the way for the high speed network, the North East has long campaigned for enhanced capacity and resilience on the ECML in our region. All enhancement schemes need to be delivered in full and integrated in a way that secures maximum benefit and helps to unlock economic growth for the region and the wider North, as well as aiding the Transport Plan objective to decarbonise the economy.

We have previously called for the capacity upgrades of the ECML to form part of the Integrated Rail Plan for the North and Midlands. Furthermore, we believe that the economic benefits of HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail would be maximised if high-speed services run between the North of England and Scotland via the ECML.

There is a need to invest in the ECML, particularly between York and Newcastle to enable the improved services highlighted above to become a reality. Between now and the arrival of HS2 and NPR, any changes to the services on the line need to build towards these national, regional, and local priorities.

Response to the Consultation

Our responses, when not concerning the ECML in general, are predominately in relation to the proposed timetable changes for London North Eastern Railway (LNER), CrossCountry, TransPennine Express (TPE) and Northern Train services, proposed to be introduced from May 2022.

The overall conclusion to our consideration of the consultation is that, as detailed below, we do not consider that the proposed changes should go ahead as planned.

Instead, the Joint Transport Committee requests that the timetables changes are put on hold and that a "taskforce" be established by the government, led by an independent third party, to examine the capacity constraints and put forward options to resolve them both short- and long- term. It is also proposed that the taskforce should then put together a plan to introduce the timetable change slowly, aligned to the growth in capacity, and with no detriment to existing connectivity.

The Capacity issue and "trade-offs"

We place a high value on the existing very strong and high-quality rail links provided by LNER between the North East, London and Scotland, and would in principle welcome an increase in those services because it supports economic growth.

Equally we place a high value on the regional services provided by TPE between the North East, Scotland and key economic centres in the North including Leeds, Manchester and Liverpool.

However, as identified in the various consultation documents, the key issue is that the ECML is a two-track railway from Northallerton to Newcastle, and from Newcastle to Berwick. Therefore, despite the welcome investment in the line further south and the new Azuma Fleet, the North East is being asked to compromise its connectivity due to the local capacity constraint which have not being resolved.

The original government investment package for the ECML to enable an increased number of services did include plans for freight “by-pass” loops to be installed in the North East. These would allow faster trains to overtake freight and therefore increase capacity, but these were subsequently removed from the programme to save cost.

Therefore, the limitation of 6 passenger trains per hour remains. If the train service is to be grown to one destination, it must inevitably be reduced to another to keep within this limitation.

This issue highlights again the need to invest in the infrastructure in the North East (including the reopening of the Leamside Line) to provide the level of connectivity required to meet future forecast demand and ensure our economy is competitive with other UK regions.

The North East Joint Transport Committee wrote to the Rail Minister in November 2020 warning that the situation now before us – of needing to make trade-offs on the ECML because of scarce capacity – was likely to arise. The letter suggested that the reinstatement of a short section of route called “Bensham Curve” might provide an opportunity to create capacity for seven passenger trains each hour thus allowing all services; it also suggested that this project could be a candidate for acceleration.

Regrettably no action has been taken to increase the capacity of the East Coast Main Line in the North East.

Consequently, all parties are now being put in the unwelcome position of having to make trade-offs between services and train operators

The North East has made its view clear on this to Government, the Department for Transport, the train operators, and Network Rail. The North East does not wish to see the loss of our current East -West connectivity (i.e. reduced TPE services).

From an economic growth perspective, we do not believe that it makes strategic sense to half the number of trains to Leeds and Manchester in order to increase by a third the number of trains to London. Transport for the North supports this position.

In the longer term the two trains each hour to Manchester will become “Northern Powerhouse Rail” services, so it is counter-productive to shrink this market now when it needs to be nurtured and grown in the long-term.

Furthermore, Network Rail’s own long-term planning process (the “Continuous Modular Strategic Plan”) forecasts that TPE services to Leeds/Manchester will become ever more crowded, so future demand is there every bit as much as it is to London.

We feel that curtailing these services is contrary to the TfN’s Long Term Rail Strategy. This strategy contains the stated TfN aim of improving connectivity to the main Northern Economic centres through its flagship scheme Northern Powerhouse Rail. The NPR plan is to uplift from 2 trains per hour to 4 trains per hour. Thus, interim TPE services form the basis on which to build the improved connectivity and we should not be seeking to reduce them. The services are also part of the Trans Pennine Route upgrade scheme business case.

Analysis of the new timetable

In the consultation documents four key factors were highlighted as below. We have responded to each in turn, focussing more on the detail and impact of the various timetable changes.

For the development of this new timetable we have looked to:

***Balance frequency and reliability.** Passengers want a well-designed timetable with the frequency they need but which has enough space between services to avoid congestion and delays. As we increase the frequency of services on the East Coast we want to continue to deliver high reliability for our customers.*

Response:

The limitations on the capacity on the ECML in the North East means that service frequency in our region is **not increased** and unpalatable trade-offs are therefore proposed. The only measures of improved reliability seem to come about through skipping a number of stops on the ‘fast’ LNER services. We consider that the two track railway in the North East will continue to be a reliability risk.

We do however welcome the proposed increased frequency of trains serving Chester-Le-Street, from one train every two hours to hourly, noting this is something we have been advocating for many years.

As noted previously we do not support changes to the following services which would have the impact of reducing the frequency of trains to/from a number of key economic centres for North East passengers:

- The removal of the hourly TPE service from Newcastle / Durham / Darlington to Manchester Apt.
- The hourly TPE service from Edinburgh to Liverpool becoming a Newcastle / Durham / Darlington to Manchester and Liverpool service.
- The delay in the introduction of a second ‘semi fast’ train per hour along the Durham Coast connecting Newcastle, Sunderland, Hartlepool, and Middlesbrough.
- The removal of the once-daily direct LNER service between Sunderland and London.

As well as congestion the timing of trains around the clockface is critical. We feel the timetable proposals do not serve North East passengers well in this respect.

For example, 6 trains an hour to Newcastle from York sounds reasonable but in reality the four trains which call at most stations all depart in a 22 minute time period, with two Cross Country services only 5 minutes apart – as shown in the Timetable extract below.

Northbound	TPE	EC8	XC1	XC2
Darlington [a]		10:00		
Darlington [d]	09:50	10:02	10:08	10:12
Durham [a]		10:18		
Durham [d]	10:07	10:19	10:24	10:29
Chester-le-Street	10:14			
Newcastle Central [a]	10:23	10:35		10:42

As a result, at Durham and Darlington there are numerous examples of 38-minute gaps in the timetable until the next northbound service.

As noted in the consultation document congestion of services increases the risk of poor reliability and performance, especially in our area where there are limited opportunities for passing due to infrastructure constraints.

Balance connectivity and journey times. *The investment in upgraded infrastructure and new trains allows us to improve journey times and compete with other modes of transport. A key way to keep journey times down is to not over-serve stations. So we have balanced the need for fast journeys with serving all destinations.*

Response:

We recognise that faster journey times will be achieved by the LNER ‘fast’ trains but believe the cost paid in terms of lost service provision and reduced connectivity, both locally and nationally, is too high for the North East region.

- The two fast LNER services will “skip” some existing stops for example Berwick, Morpeth, and Darlington.

- The curtailed Liverpool to Edinburgh TPE service, as well as further reducing the level of services in Northumberland, has it's Northallerton stop withdrawn. It will also have an **increased** journey time of 5 minutes.
- As noted previously the introduction of a second 'semi fast' train per hour along the Durham Coast connecting Newcastle, Sunderland, Hartlepool, and Middlesbrough will be delayed by these proposals, so no journey time improvements there.
- Passengers from Sunderland who currently use the LNER services to/from London will now need to undertake a 28-minute Metro journey to/from Newcastle Central station.
- Connections between local, regional and national rails services are made worse under these proposals both northbound and southbound at numerous North East stations.

The proposed changes to Northern Train timetables also have a negative impact. Both ourselves and the operator have worked hard to incrementally improve these services over recent years in terms of connectivity with other services, we see this as a step backwards.

For example, passengers on the Bishop Line arriving into Darlington at 11:16 or those from Saltburn & Middlesbrough arriving at 11:17 hoping to travel to Durham, Newcastle or beyond face the following options northbound:

Northbound	EC6	EC4	TPE	XC2	EC8	XC1
Darlington [a]					12:00	
Darlington [d]			11:50	11:54	12:02	12:08
Durham [a]	11:44				12:18	
Durham [d]	11:46		12:07	12:11	12:19	12:24
Chester-le-Street			12:14			
Newcastle Central [a]	11:58	12:08	12:23	12:26	12:35	12:40
Newcastle Central [d]	12:02	12:10				

This is only one example of many. Passengers at numerous other stations in our area face increased overall journey times and poorer connectivity.

The following table shows the net effect on the number of trains each day at NE stations:

ECML Station	Dec-19	May-22	Diff
Berwick upon Tweed	56	50	-6
Alnmouth	43	44	1
Morpeth	75	54	-21
Newcastle	172	171	-1
Chester-le-Street	28	38	10
Durham	163	155	-8
Darlington	183	154	-29
Northallerton (to/from Ncle)	43	52	9

Passengers at Morpeth in particular will wonder what they have done to receive such a reduced service, especially given the significant investment and improvements undertaken at their local station recently. A station which recorded a 13.5% increase in patronage in 18/19 and a 6.6% increase in 19/20, based on the ORR estimates.

***Balance ambition with realism.** There has been significant investment in the East Coast, but we still need to remain realistic about both the opportunities and remaining constraints on the route. The timetable needs to work well in reality as well as on paper. This means some difficult trade-offs on parts of the route, including for some East to West journeys, have been necessary.*

Response:

As noted previously – the significant infrastructure investment has not taken place North of York. Whilst we acknowledge that investment in rolling stock and infrastructure elsewhere might improve some services, the net effect in our area will be negative. We believe we have also shown that the proposed timetable will not work well in our area in terms of frequency, connectivity or improved overall journey times for many passengers.

We cannot support the trade-offs proposed in our area, in particular the loss of East West connectivity. We would reiterate that from an economic growth perspective, we do not believe that it makes strategic sense to half the number of trains to Manchester in order to increase the number of trains to London.

***Deliver for the future.** The pandemic is likely to have a continuing impact on our lives, and the rail industry is no exception to this. But we are confident that demand to visit places, enjoy leisure and retail experience and meet colleagues, friends and family will remain. That means providing a timetable that will give the reliability and connectivity that passengers want for the long term.*

Response:

The core purpose of TfN is to reduce the productivity gap and grow the North's economy. This is even more relevant post Covid 19. For the North East to be part of this push for greater economic parity, it is essential that we retain and grow east -west connectivity. The proposed changes counter that approach.

Also, significant work is underway seeking to secure investment for both Trans Pennine Route upgrade and Northern Powerhouse Rail. Therefore, in order to 'deliver for the future', existing services should be built upon to strengthen these business cases not undermine them.

Our position

The proposed changes have significant connectivity impacts for the North East and do not align with the North East Transport Plan objectives, the Transport for the North strategies nor policies to rebalance the North's economies.

That is why the region has been campaigning for an increase in the capacity of the ECML in the North East for many years, including the North East Chamber of Commerce's "Fast Track East Coast" and ECMA's 'Invest East Coast' campaigns.

As highlighted above, the North East Joint Transport Committee wrote to the Rail Minister in November 2020 about this precise issue.

North East MP's have also raised the investment issue through the ECML APPG and various members questions in the House.

We think the proposed trade-offs as they stand represent the wrong approach. Thus, we can't support them.

In the consultation document it states:

“The timetable is based on a series of decisions about investment in infrastructure and train fleets, as well as access decisions made by the ORR. This means that the structure of the timetable for May 2022 as proposed, is fixed.”

Putting aside the question of 'why bother consulting if the proposal is fixed', we would highlight that we appear to be the victims of a combination of industry processes and unfortunate timing:

- The business case and associated decision to increase LNER's Azuma services to three each hour was taken way back in the past (2014), when circumstances and the economic environment were very different. For example, TfN did not exist and its Strategic Transport Plan had not been written;
- The decision was taken on the assumption that the ECML infrastructure would be improved to carry more trains – this turned out to be only partially true
- The decision was taken before anyone had even suggested increasing frequencies to Manchester and so the full facts were never considered in the round.
- Additionally rebalancing the economy was not a government policy of the day to consider, neither was the recent changes to the economic appraisal of schemes 'the Green Book' which is now has a greater emphasis on strategic societal improvements and finally the passenger forecasts that would predict the return on the investment are flawed due to the impacts of the Covid 19 pandemic.
- We wonder whether the business case has been reviewed to take account of the very different circumstances now present.

Due to the changing circumstances since the original business case and the subsequent impacts on East West connectivity, we therefore request that the timetable changes should be delayed, and a “taskforce” established.

Our Proposal

In conclusion we propose the following way forward:

- The planned May 2022 timetable changes should not be implemented as consulted but should be put on hold.
- A “taskforce” should be established by the government and led by an independent expert
- The taskforce should examine the capacity constraints and put forward options to resolve them both short- and long- term
- The taskforce should then put together a plan to introduce the timetable change slowly, aligned to the growth in capacity, and with no detriment to existing connectivity.

Only through these actions do the North East JTC believe that the fair and equitable solution can be derived to ensure the region gains maximum benefit from the past and future investment in the key economic artery, which is the East Coast Main Line.

We recognise that some timetable enhancements will need to be made sooner rather than later, such as the introduction of the Northumberland Line services and the new open access operator, but we do not believe that these improvements require trade-offs against other services.

Appendix 2 – Draft letter to Secretary of State for Transport

Please see attachment

NORTH EAST JOINT TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

The Rt. Hon. Grant Shapps MP
Secretary of State for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

Gateshead Council
Civic Centre
Regent Street
Gateshead
NE8 1HH

By email: DFT.Ministers@dft.gov.uk

2 July 2021

Dear Secretary of State

East Coast Main Line May 2022 timetable consultation

I write as Chair of the North East Transport Committee, which represents the North of Tyne Combined Authority and the North East Combined Authority's combined interests on transport matters.

I wish to raise our considerable concerns at the train service connectivity trade-offs proposed in the current consultation over a new timetable for the East Coast Main Line from May 2022, and to seek your assistance in resolving them.

To summarise the proposals being consulted upon:

- There will be more services each hour between Newcastle and London, and these will be made quicker than today by omitting some station stops, notably at Berwick and Darlington. A new open access operator will provide a further five fast services each day to London.
- The improved service to London will displace other train services in the North East because of insufficient track capacity, leading to a reduced frequency to Leeds and Manchester with a slower service, a net reduction in the overall number of services at almost all stations in the region, and other negative impacts on local rail services.

We place a high value on the existing very strong and high-quality rail links between the North East and London, Scotland, Yorkshire, Manchester and the Midlands, all of which rely on the East Coast Main Line in our region. We also understand and appreciate the significant investment that the government has made in the East Coast Main Line in recent years including investment in the new Azuma train fleet and capacity interventions at the southern end of the route.

But we do not believe that connectivity between major cities and towns in the North should be reduced in order to grow connectivity to London, and we therefore do not support the proposals. We will respond to the train operating companies accordingly, and ask them to put the timetable changes on hold.

Unfortunately, the underlying reason for this problem is that the route is heavily constrained by the two-track railway sections from Northallerton to Newcastle, and from Newcastle to Berwick Upon Tweed. This means that trains of differing speeds bunch together, and there is no resilience if the line becomes blocked. As a result there is a limit on the number of trains that the route can accommodate, and that limit was reached some time ago.

You will be aware that the region has been campaigning for an increase in the capacity of the East Coast Main Line in the North East for many years, including the Chamber of Commerce's "Fast Track East Coast" Campaign, precisely so that the line can support a growth in passenger and freight services with the economic benefits that would result.

We wrote to the Rail Minister in November 2020 warning that the situation now before us – of needing to make trade-offs on the route because of scarce capacity – was likely to arise. In the letter we suggested that the reinstatement of a short section of route called "Bensham Curve" might provide an opportunity to slightly increase capacity and so allow all planned services to run; it also suggested that this project could be a candidate for acceleration.

Along with other political and business leaders the North of Tyne Mayor Jamie Driscoll and I have repeatedly raised this matter at meetings of the Northern Transport Acceleration Council, Transport for the North, and numerous other forums. As well as the Bensham Curve we have highlighted that the long-term solution is the full re-opening of the mothballed Leamside Line because that will increase the capacity of the East Coast Main Line corridor in the North East by 50%.

Regrettably no action at all has been taken to increase the capacity of the East Coast Main Line in the North East. Consequently, all parties are now being put in the unwelcome position of having to make those trade-offs between services and train operators. If the train service is to be grown to one destination, it must inevitably be reduced to another to keep within the limit.

We would like to request your support in delaying the introduction of the new timetable until a way forward can be found, and further request your assistance in finding solutions that will urgently tackle the capacity problem. We propose that a "taskforce" be established, led by an independent third party, to examine the capacity constraints and put forward options to resolve them both short- and long- term. The taskforce should then put together a plan to introduce the timetable changes slowly, aligned to the growth in capacity, and with no detriment to existing connectivity.

We recognise that some timetable enhancements will need to be made sooner rather than later, such as the introduction of the Northumberland Line services and the new open access operator, but we do not believe that these improvements require trade-offs against other services.

We understand that Transport for the North will also be writing to you to put forward its view that a taskforce should be established urgently.

I hope you will give consideration to this request and we can work together to achieve a fairer and more equitable solution. We would welcome an opportunity to discuss the matter with you in person.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Gannon', with a horizontal line underneath.

Councillor Martin Gannon
Chair of the North East Joint Transport Committee

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North East Joint Transport Committee

Date: 13 July 2021

Subject: Appointment to Transport for the North, Rail North Committee

Report of: Managing Director, Transport North East

Executive Summary

A single member is required to represent the interests of both the North of Tyne Combined Authority and the North East Combined Authority at Transport for the North's Rail North Committee.

This report proposes that Mayor Jamie Driscoll is the main representative, and that Cllr Martin Gannon is the substitute representative for the LA7 area on Transport for the North's Rail North Committee.

Recommendations

The North East Joint Transport Committee is recommended to:

- i. Nominate Mayor Jamie Driscoll as Member, and Cllr Martin Gannon as Substitute Member to represent the regional group comprising NECA and NTCA on the Transport for the North, Rail North Committee.
- ii. Note that Transport for the North have stipulated that the Member and Substitute Member appointed to the Rail North Committee should be from amongst the current Members and Substitute Members representing both NECA and NTCA on the TfN Board.

1. Background Information

- 1.1 On 1 April 2018, Transport for the North (TfN) became a Sub-National Transport Body. It has a local government-type governance structure comprising a Board, Rail North Committee, Scrutiny Committee and Audit Committee. Whilst both NECA and NTCA are eligible to nominate their own representatives on the TfN Board and Scrutiny and Audit committees, the Rail North Committee has a different constitutional structure being a successor to the former Rail North Ltd.
- 1.2 When the forerunner of the Rail North Committee (then known as Rail North Limited) was created, geographical groupings were used to appoint a committee of 11 members from the then 25 authorities that make up the area covered by the Northern and TransPennine Express rail franchises. This structure was carried forward into TfN's governance arrangements for the rail franchises when it was established. Thus, the creation of the NTCA does not affect the provision of a single member to represent the rail franchise interests of the LA7 area.
- 1.3 We have been advised by TfN that both NECA and NTCA attract separate voting rights as set out in the Transport for the North Regulations. In relation to rail franchise matters, votes are weighted on the basis of rail passenger miles taken on the relevant franchised railway operations within the constituent authority's area. Using this methodology NECA is allocated fourteen votes, and the NTCA is allocated fifty-one votes. As NECA has fewer than thirty-two weighted votes (which is the threshold for having its own separate representation), it is expected to form a regional group with NTCA covering the North East (LA7) area, with one representative on the Rail North Committee who will be entitled to cast combined votes on behalf of the two Combined Authorities.
- 1.4 Part of the TfN constitution recognises the existence of the North East Rail Management Unit (NERMU) (administered through Transport North East), which has some delegated responsibilities for contract matters in the wider North East Rail geography. Through NERMU, officers across the LA7 authorities and Tees Valley Combined Authority are working together to maximise the benefits to North East England through contractual commitments and the longer future rail planning processes.
- 1.5 Rail North has produced a Long-Term Rail Strategy which is being used to inform a North East Rail and Metro Strategy as part of the North East Transport Plan process. The North East Rail and Metro Strategy is planned to be complete early 2022.

2. Proposals

- 2.1 The Joint Transport Committee is invited to nominate Mayor Jamie Driscoll as Member, and Cllr Martin Gannon as Substitute Member to represent the regional group comprising NECA and NTCA on the Transport for the North, Rail North Committee.
- 2.2 Mayor Jamie Driscoll and Cllr Martin Gannon have already been nominated as lead representatives on the main Transport for the North Board by their respective

Combined Authorities.

3. Reasons for the Proposals

3.1 The proposals will enable NECA and NTCA to participate in the Transport for the North Rail North Committee.

4. Alternative Options Available

4.1 No alternatives are presented, as nomination of a single representative is a requirement for NECA and NTCA to participate in the Transport for the North Rail North Committee.

5. Next Steps and Timetable for Implementation

5.1 The appointments will be effective from the date they are made. The Monitoring Officer will communicate the appointments to Transport for the North.

6. Potential Impact on Objectives

6.1 The appointments will enable NECA and NTCA to properly discharge their functions, thereby assisting in the delivery of their objectives.

7. Financial and Other Resources Implications

7.1 There is no specific provision in the budgets to support expenses associated with membership of outside bodies and it is anticipated that these will be met by the constituent authorities.

8. Legal Implications

8.1 Functions of Transport for the North Rail North Committee are set out in the Subnational Transport Body (Transport for the North) Regulations 2018. The proposals in this report ensure that NECA and NTCA continue to contribute to the development and implementation of rail strategies and rail contract management in the North with the objective that economic growth in the area continues to be enhanced.

9. Key Risks

9.1 There are no specific risk management implications arising from this report.

10. Equality and Diversity

10.1 There are no specific equality and diversity implications arising from this report, however, the Joint Transport Committee will be mindful of the advantages of gender balance on boards and committees.

11. Crime and Disorder

11.1 There are no specific crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

12. Consultation/Engagement

12.1 None

13. Other Impact of the Proposals

13.1 None

14. Appendices

14.1 None

15. Background Papers

15.1 None

16. Contact Officers

16.1 Derek Gittins, Head of Heavy Rail, Transport North East
Derek.gittins@transportnortheast.gov.uk

17. Sign off

- The Proper Officer for Transport:
- Head of Paid Service:
- Monitoring Officer:
- Chief Finance Officer:

18. Glossary

NECA – North East Combined Authority

NTCA – North of Tyne Combined Authority

TfN – Transport for the North

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of the Local Government Act 1972.

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of the Local Government Act 1972.

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of the Local Government Act 1972.

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