



North East Joint Transport Committee

Tuesday, 9th June, 2020 at 2.00 pm

Meeting to be held in a Meeting to be held virtually using Microsoft Teams

AGENDA

	Page No
1. Apologies	
2. Declarations of Interests	
Please remember to declare any personal interest where appropriate both verbally and by recording it on the relevant form. Please also remember to leave the meeting where any personal interest requires this.	
3. Minutes of the last meeting held on 21 January 2020	3 - 6
4. Funding Recovery of the Bus Industry in the North East	7 - 12
5. National Infrastructure Commission Rail Needs Assessment	13 - 48
6. Boosting Walking and Cycling in the North East	49 - 52
7. North East Response to the Transport Select Committee Inquiry into Coronavirus: implications for transport	53 - 60
8. North East Transport Plan Update	61 - 68
9. Delegations to the Proper Officer for Transport	69 - 74
10. Programme of Committee Meetings for 2020-21 Municipal Year	75 - 80
11. Exclusion of the Press and Public	

The North East Joint Transport Committee may wish to exclude the press and public from the meeting during consideration of the following item on the grounds indicated:

Items 12 and 13: By virtue of paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972

- | | | |
|-----|--|-----------------|
| 12. | Minutes of the Confidential Meeting held on 21 January 2020 | 81 - 96 |
| 13. | TT2 Supplier Relief | 97 - 126 |

Contact Officer: Emma Reynard
Tel: 0191 4332280
E-mail: emmareynard@gateshead.gov.uk



NORTH EAST JOINT TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

DRAFT MINUTES FOR APPROVAL

DATE: 21 January 2020

Meeting held: Reception Room, South Shields Town Hall

Present:

Councillor: M Gannon (Chair)

Councillors: P Jackson, C Johnson, C Marshall, J McCarty, G Miller and M Walsh

In attendance:

Statutory Officers: M Barker (Deputy Monitoring Officer), J Hewitt (S73 Officer) and T Hughes (Managing Director, Transport North East).

Officers: M Jackson, G Mansbridge, P Meikle, R O'Farrell, S Ramsey, E Reynard, J Sparkes, R Forsyth-Ward and A White.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Mayor J Driscoll, Councillor I Malcolm and Mayor N Redfearn.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 19 NOVEMBER 2019

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a correct record.

4. REGIONAL TRANSPORT UPDATE

The Committee received a report outlining progress in relation to various regional transport issues. It is hoped that Nexus will be in a position to announce the preferred bidder for the fleet replacement programme by the end of January.

Cllr Marshall also provided the Committee with a verbal update from Transport for the North.

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

5. NORTH EAST ELECTRIC VEHICLE INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATE

The Committee received a report outlining progress with Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure in the North East, in terms of new installations and updating the existing network.

The Committee were advised that funding for the programme will end in March 2020, but next steps have been identified should more funding become available.

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

6. NORTH EAST TRANSPORT PLAN – UPDATE AND TIMESCALES

The Committee considered a report outlining the proposed timescales for the Transport Plan. It is proposed that public consultation will commence in July 2020, and the Plan will be formally endorsed and published in November 2020.

RESOLVED: The North East Joint Transport Committee endorsed the milestones outlined in the report.

7. TRANSPORT BUDGET AND LEVIES 2020/21

The Committee considered a report setting out the 2020/21 Transport Revenue Budget and associated levies. The report also set out the revenue resources planned to be used in 2020/21 to deliver the objectives of the Joint Transport Committee.

RESOLVED: The North East Joint Transport Committee:

- (i) Noted the position of the Transport budget in 2019/20 and approved the revised estimates for the year;
- (ii) Agreed a Transport net revenue budget for 2020/21 of £82.800m;
- (iii) Agreed the following Transport Levies for 2020/21:
 - a. Durham County Council £15,466,000
 - b. Northumberland County Council £ 6,234,000
 - c. Tyne and Wear Councils £61,100,00
- (iv) Agreed a transport revenue grant to Durham County Council for the delivery of transport services of £15,456,000;

- (v) Agreed a transport revenue grant to Northumberland County Council for the delivery of transport services of £6,224,000;
- (vi) Agreed a transport revenue grant to Nexus for the delivery of transport services in Tyne and Wear of £59,000,000;
- (vii) Approved the budget for the Tyne Tunnels as set out in section 2.47 of the report, which includes a recommended increase in the Tyne Tunnels tolls for inflation which was approved by the Tyne and Wear Sub-Committee on 16 January 2020;
- (viii) Approved the budget for the Transport Strategy Unit as set out in section 2.40 of the report;
- (ix) Noted the forecast level of reserves at section 2.50 of the report.

8. TRANSPORT CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2020/21

The Committee considered a report which provided an updated forecast capital outturn for 2019/20 and presented the initial 2020/21 capital programme.

RESOLVED: The North East Joint Transport Committee:

- (i) Noted the latest position in respect of the 2019/20 capital programme as set out in the report;
- (ii) Approved the proposed initial capital programme for 2020/21 which amounts to £81.883m.

9. NORTH EAST JOINT TRANSPORT COMMITTEE POLICY ON THE EAST COAST MAINLINE TIMETABLE

The Committee considered a report which sought views on the strategic connective priorities for the North East which are dependent on rail services using the East Coast Main Line (ECML).

Currently the ECML between Northallerton, Newcastle and Berwick consists of two tracks – one in each direction – which limits the number of passenger trains that can run within any given hour to six. This currently means two trains to London, two trains to Manchester and two trains to Birmingham.

As part of the original business case for the new Azuma trains, additional services were planned from 2021, with three trains each hour between London and Newcastle. Additional infrastructure was planned to enable the third London train; however, this scheme was dropped by the Government on cost grounds. As a consequence, if a third train is introduced, it is likely that other services will be reduced to accommodate the additional train.

Cllr Gannon commented that there is no doubt that there is demand for increased services to London, but also to Manchester and Birmingham. He stated investment is needed to increase the capacity of the ECML following years of underinvestment in the North East's rail infrastructure. The line needs to be upgraded from two tracks north of York.

Cllr Walsh agreed with Cllr Gannon's comments.

RESOLVED: The North East Joint Transport Committee agreed that should there be consultation on timetable amendments by the rail industry that the Committee will stand by the retention of the current rail connectivity pattern (two to London, two to Birmingham and two to Manchester) rather than introduce a third train service to London at the expense of trains to either Birmingham or Manchester.

10. DEVELOPING OUR REGION'S BUS POLICY IN THE CONTEXT OF OUR TRANSPORT PLAN

The Committee received a report which focussed on a range of potential models to deliver bus services as part of the development of the Transport Plan.

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

11. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: The North East Joint Transport Committee agreed to exclude the press and public from the meeting during consideration of item 12 by virtue of paragraphs 2,3 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on 17 March 2020 at 2pm at Gateshead Civic Centre.

North East Joint Transport Committee, Tyne and Wear Sub-Committee

Date: 9 June 2020

Subject: Support for the bus network during the Covid-19 pandemic

Report of: Managing Director, Transport North East

Executive Summary

The Covid-19 pandemic has severely reduced the number of people using bus services in the North East. Social distancing guidelines will mean that reduced capacity on buses will persist for many months.

Local authorities and central government have provided emergency funding to bus operators that has allowed them to maintain a basic level of service during the lockdown period. Further funding is being provided to help restore services during the restart phase.

This report sets out the difficulties affecting the bus sector and considers how longer-term issues may be managed.

Recommendations

The Joint Transport Committee is recommended to:

- i. Note the financial assistance provided to the local bus market to sustain it during the crisis brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic;
- ii. Note the wider work being undertaken on the development of potential conditions that could be applied to concessionary fare and tendered bus service payments, that are being made to bus operators at pre-pandemic levels at the request of the government, and that further details will be reported to a future meeting; and
- iii. Consider the development of longer-term options to align development of the bus network with the JTC's objectives in the post-Covid-19 environment.

1. Background Information

1.1 The bus network in the North East is a vital element of our transport system. It provides transport links that help fuel the regional economy by providing access to jobs, workforces and customers. It allows socially important connections to be maintained for visiting relatives and friends, and accessing leisure and shopping destinations. It helps to tackle the environmental and congestion problems caused by the private car. For most of our region, which is not served by heavy rail or Metro links, it is the only alternative for people who wish to make longer journeys and cannot or choose not to drive a car.

1.2 In total, budgets in the North East are around £70m for secured bus services and concessions during 2020/21. This covers payments made by Nexus, Northumberland County Council and Durham County Council.

Impact of lockdown due to Covid-19

1.3 The Covid-19 pandemic has caused a financial crisis in the bus industry. The message during lockdown for all but essential workers to stay at home led to an immediate and profound reduction in ridership, up to around 90%, and along with it an almost total loss of commercial income.

Nevertheless the bus network has continued to play an important role throughout the lockdown period in getting key workers to their places of employment and facilitating essential shopping trips albeit on networks with much reduced frequencies.

It was recognised at an early stage that in order to facilitate this, and to prevent the long-term collapse of the industry, urgent financial assistance to operators was required in order for them to be able to keep bus services operating.

1.4 This financial assistance has taken the following forms:

- Continued payment by the government of the Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG) to bus operators for commercial services and to local authorities for tendered services at the rate operating prior to the pandemic.
- The government has also asked local government to maintain concessionary fare and tendered bus service payments to bus operators at the value that was being paid immediately before the emergency. Nexus, Northumberland County Council and Durham County Council have all complied with this request. These payments amount to around £1.35m per week in total.
- An emergency Covid-19 Bus Service Support Grant (CBSSG) from the government which provides bus operators with short term supplementary funding which has enabled them to cover the financial gap between operating a route network for key workers (up to 50% of previous mileage), and the funding already available to them.
- Local Transport Authorities have also received a version of CBSSG aimed at funding the shortfall in fares revenue on bus contracts where they take the revenue risk; and
- Local Transport Authorities awarded additional funds for bus services through the government's recent 'Better Deal For Bus Users' fund are able to utilise this funding to support bus services during the emergency and the ensuing recovery period.

1.5 The effect of the emergency financial assistance has been to skew the sources of

bus industry funding in the UK (outside London) such that almost all funding now comes from the public sector in one form or another. Prior to the Covid-19 crisis, 61% of funding came from passenger fares, 33% from local authorities and 6% from central government. Since the emergency funding measures were put in place, only 5% comes from passenger fares, 54% from local authorities and 42% from central government.

- 1.6 Co-operation between local authority officers and bus operators has been constructive and positive throughout the pandemic, and performance levels have been high.

Restart phase

- 1.7 Through the restart phase, major financial challenges for the bus network remain:
- As the economy will reopen slowly in different phases, demand will naturally remain depressed;
 - Some former bus passengers may be unable or unwilling to use public transport for a variety of reasons for some time to come; and
 - Social distancing measures have a dramatic impact on the number of people that can be carried on any given vehicle, with up to 80-85% less capacity available. It will also impact on waiting arrangements at bus stops and interchanges.

Nevertheless given the vital role that buses play in the local economy and society, it is important that bus networks can be quickly reinstated to levels as near as possible to those seen before the crisis began.

- 1.8 The government has recently confirmed that it will continue to pay CBSSG (but without any limitation in the mileage operated) and BSOG. This is intended to assist bus operators in increasing the number of services they provide to close to pre-pandemic levels. At the time of writing the future of the Local Authority version of CBSSG is unclear; It is understood that this will be reviewed by the government at the end of June.

- 1.9 The government has also repeated its request to local government to maintain concessionary fare and tendered bus service payments to bus operators at pre-pandemic levels. Whilst Nexus, Northumberland County Council and Durham County Council continue to do so, there are some concerns as to the open-ended nature of this request, and over the mechanism being used. It may be that this is addressed by attaching certain conditions to future payments in order to address these concerns, which could include, for example, open-book accounting and joint working on network development.

- 1.10 As with all public expenditure, It is important that there is transparency over these payments and accountability for the outcomes achieved. Work is underway with other Combined Authorities across the country to develop a common set of conditions intended to achieve this. Further discussions will take place with the JTC when this work has been concluded with a view to considering how this is to be taken forward and reflecting local conditions. Any conditions attached to the funding will need to be separately agreed by Durham, Northumberland and Nexus.

- 1.11 Public transport demand will be affected by many uncertainties for a long time in the future. These include the longevity of social distancing measures; the speed at which the economy recovers; whether a ‘second wave’ of Covid-19 causes a future repeat of lockdown; confidence in public transport; and long-term changes to working conditions and social habits.
- 1.12 It seems highly probable, therefore, that bus networks will continue to need additional public funding support for many months to come, if not years. The long-term future of exceptional government support is also uncertain at this point in time.
- 1.13 However the need to sustain a high quality bus network remains. Not only do many people in the North East rely wholly on the bus for their transport; but it is also imperative that when the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic have passed, that the bus system remains intact so that it can continue its role in moving large numbers of people around in an efficient and environmentally-friendly way. It is also worth noting that the bus industry employs several thousand people in the North East.
- 1.14 It is therefore proposed that the JTC and its constituent authorities continue to make the case for financial support to the bus industry from central government for as long as the effects of Covid-19 continue to have a negative impact. This may be directly through existing contacts with government and through Members of Parliament; through membership groups such as the Urban Transport Group, M9, and the Local Government Association; and jointly with the bus companies.

Longer term

- 1.15 On 1st May 2020 the Council Leaders and Elected Mayors in North East England wrote to the Prime Minister in relation to transport funding to assist with economic recovery. As well as seeking an urgent commitment to funding to help restore public transport to pre-Covid levels, the letter also said that “a new model for public transport is urgently needed in the North East (...) supported by a long-term devolved funding settlement from central government”.
- 1.16 A separate letter to the Secretary of State for Transport, signed by the Chair of the JTC along with transport political leads from other combined authorities across the UK made a “proposal for funding for buses which would simplify and devolve funding for buses during the recovery phase by routing bus funding to transport authorities”.
- 1.17 It is proposed that further work be carried out into future models of bus service funding and provision, to ensure that the development of the local bus network post-Covid-19 meets the long-term aims of the JTC and the needs of local communities.
- 1.18 This work is likely to involve close co-operation with local bus operators as well as the development of options jointly with other areas of the country which are faced with similar challenges, and with the government. Options will be provided to the JTC in due course when they are sufficiently developed.

2. Proposals

- 2.1 It is proposed that the JTC and its constituent authorities continue to make the case for financial support to the bus sector from central government for as long as the effects of Covid-19 continue to have a negative impact.
- 2.2 It is also proposed that work be carried out into future models of bus service funding and provision, jointly with relevant partners, to ensure that the development of the local bus network post-Covid-19 meets the long-term aims of the JTC.

3. Reasons for the Proposals

- 3.1 The proposals are intended to secure the ongoing provision of local bus services in the longer term.

4. Alternative Options Available

4.1 Option 1:

The JTC may choose to adopt the recommendations in this report

Option 2:

The JTC may choose not to adopt the recommendations in this report

Option 1 is recommended.

5. Next Steps and Timetable for Implementation

- 5.1 Should members endorse the recommendations in this report, further work will be carried out both into making the case for future funding, and in developing future models of public transport provision. Updates will be provided to the JTC as information becomes available.

6. Potential Impact on Objectives

- 6.1 As set out in paragraph 1.2, bus services are vital to our transport and wider economic, social and environmental objectives in the North East. The recommendations of this report will ensure that these services are sustained during the recovery from Covid-19.

7. Financial and Other Resources Implications

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications for the JTC arising from this report.
- 7.2 The report does however refer to financial implications for Nexus, Northumberland County Council and Durham County Council in relation to payments to bus operators, and these will be managed through the appropriate governance processes of each body.

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 The relevant powers under the Transport Act 1985 relating to the financial support from local authorities to bus operators referred to in this report have been delegated by the JTC to the county councils for their respective areas. Nexus, the Passenger Transport Executive holds similar powers under the Transport Act 1968. There are therefore no direct legal implications for the JTC arising from this report.

9. Key Risks

- 9.1 The key risk is that insufficient funding is made available to secure the ongoing provision of local bus services in the short or long-term. This report is intended to explore ways to mitigate against that risk.

10. Equality and Diversity

- 10.1 A good bus service network will ensure a public transport option is available to people across the North East. The specific needs of people with mobility

problems is enshrined within regulations regarding buses and steps will be taken to ensure all people with particular needs can be accommodated on buses during the period of social distancing.

11. Crime and Disorder

11.1 At this stage there are no specific crime and disorder issues identified with this proposal.

12. Consultation/Engagement

12.1 Consultation has been conducted with the Transport Strategy Board, and with Nexus, Northumberland County Council and Durham County Council.

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 Tobyn Hughes, Managing Director, Transport North East
Email: tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk
Tel: 0191 203 3246

17. Sign off

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

18. Glossary

DfT – Department for Transport

ENCTS – English National Concessionary Travel Scheme for older people and people with disabilities

BSOG – Bus service Operator Grant, a rebate on fuel duty paid to bus operators by Government

CBSSG – Coronavirus Bus Service Support Grant, the current grant arrangements put in place by Government to support bus operators' finances

North East Joint Transport Committee

Date: 9 June 2020

Subject: National Infrastructure Commission: Rail Needs Assessment

Report of: Managing Director, Transport North East

Executive Summary

The National Infrastructure Commission are undertaking a 'Rail Needs Assessment for the Midlands and North'. This will assist the government in creating the 'Integrated Rail Plan' which will identify the most effective sequencing and integration of HS2, Northern Powerhouse Rail and other major rail investments.

Our response to the call for evidence is therefore based around the need for the government to commit to provide funding to enable the East Coast Main Line corridor between York and Newcastle to 'HS2/ NPR-ready' by the 2030's, and to also eventually enable HS2 trains to continue to Scotland.

Recommendations

The Joint Transport Committee is recommended to note and endorse the North East response to the National Infrastructure Commission's call for evidence for the Rail Needs Assessment for the North and Midlands.

1. Background Information

- 1.1 In August 2019, the UK Government commissioned an independent review (The Oakervee Review) 'on how and whether to progress with the entire High Speed 2 rail project', based on all existing evidence.

Whilst the review did not make a public call for evidence, the JTC sent a letter to the Chair of the review setting out our region's viewpoint in September 2019.

We stated that we believe that HS2 has the potential to either help the North East's fragile economy to develop and grow through significant investment and transformed rail links, or to create new barriers that will hold the North East back while other parts of the country benefit. We outlined that the positive scenario will only occur if:

- HS2 Phase 2b is committed to and fully funded by the government; and
- The East Coast Main Line corridor between York and Newcastle receives significant investment in the years leading up to HS2's introduction to make it 'HS2-ready' and to enable HS2 trains to continue to Scotland.

- 1.2 In February 2020, the review concluded recommending that the Government commit to building HS2 in full. However, it also recommended that more needs to be done to ensure the North gets improved rail services ahead of the (now delayed) planned opening of HS2 Phase 2b in 2035-40.

1.3 The Integrated Rail Plan

At the same time, the government announced its intention to draw up an Integrated Rail Plan (IRP) for the North and Midlands, to identify the most effective sequencing of relevant investments and how to integrate HS2, Northern Powerhouse Rail and other rail investments.

A new dedicated High Speed 2 Minister, Andrew Stephenson MP was appointed, with responsibility of developing the IRP, with input from the National Infrastructure Commission (NIC).

The government wants to ensure that Phase 2b of HS2 and other planned rail investments in the Midlands and the north are scoped and delivered in an integrated way, including with the wider rail network, 'whilst driving down unnecessary costs and over-specification.'

2. Proposals

2.1 National Infrastructure Commission - Rail Needs Assessment for the North and Midlands

In March 2020, the NIC launched a call for evidence in order to provide 'a robust assessment' of the rail needs of the North and Midlands. According to the NIC, the call for evidence 'is a first step to building this evidence base and will be supported by broader analysis and stakeholder engagement over the course of the assessment', which will feed into the IRP. The Commission will operate independently, at arms length from government.

Our response to the call for evidence is based around the need for the government

to commit to provide funding to enable the East Coast Main Line corridor between York and Newcastle to 'HS2/ NPR-ready' by the 2030's, and to also eventually enable HS2 trains to continue to Scotland.

We have also input the same ask into the Transport for the North draft response.

See Appendix 1 for the draft cover letter response and Appendix 2 for the draft of our main response to the questions.

It is recommended that members of this committee note and endorse the North East response to the call for evidence.

3. Reasons for the Proposals

- 3.1 Better connectivity by rail is an essential enabler for the region's economic growth and environmental improvement plans. The ECML (supported by HS2 and NPR) is the key route connecting the region with the rest of the UK both for passengers and freight. Thus, investment in the ECML to cater for predicted growth is vital to the future well-being of the North East. Interventions are starting to emerge from studies and the case for investment is being made by the regions political and business leaders.

Continued efforts must therefore be made to secure the funding to design and then deliver the essential improvements required for the ECML over the next 10 to 15 years in an incremental and coordinated way.

4. Alternative Options Available

- 4.1 Option 1 – The North East Joint Transport Committee may accept the recommendation set out in paragraph 2.1 above.

Option 2 – The North East Joint Transport Committee may not accept the recommendations set out in paragraph 2.1 above and choose not to respond to the NIC call for evidence.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

5. Next Steps and Timetable for Implementation

- 5.1 The NIC's call for evidence deadline is Friday 29th May 2020, however we have been granted an extension until the 12th June. The IRP is due to be ready by end of this calendar year. We will continue to maintain dialogue with both the government and the NIC.

Further reports will be brought back as developments become known.

6. Potential Impact on Objectives

- 6.1 The delivery of improved rail services in the North East will assist in delivering the region's key objectives for economic growth, greater opportunities and reduction of transport-based carbon emissions.

7. Financial and Other Resources Implications

- 7.1 There are no financial and other resources implications

8. Legal Implications

8.1 None

9. Key Risks

9.1 Constraints on economic growth economic growth, future opportunities and reduction of transport-based carbon emissions and loss of connectivity are key risks if increased service frequency and reduced journey times are not enabled through increasing the capacity of the ECML between York and Newcastle and the full HS2 and NPR services reaching the North East.

10. Equality and Diversity

10.1 There are no equality and diversity implications arising from the proposal.

11. Crime and Disorder

11.1 There are no crime and disorder implications arising from the proposal.

12. Consultation/Engagement

12.1 Heads of Transport and Transport Strategy Board have been consulted on the proposal.

13. Other Impact of the Proposals

13.1 No specific implications

14. Appendices

14.1 Appendix 1 – Cover letter to the NIC outlining our response
Appendix 2 – Proposed NE JTC submission to the NIC call for evidence

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

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

18. Glossary

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



Sir John Armitt
National Infrastructure Commission
Finlaison House
15-17 Furnival Street
London
EC4A 1AB

By email: railneedsassessment@nic.gov.uk

Xx May 2020

Dear Sir John

Rail Needs Assessment for the Midlands and the North

Summary of our position

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in the National Infrastructure Commission's assessment of the rail needs of the Midlands and the North.

I am responding on behalf of the seven Local Authorities in the North East: Durham, Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside and Sunderland. This covering letter provides the thrust of the North East's response with a more detailed appendix providing more detailed answers the specific consultation questions.

Given the Commission's key role in shaping infrastructure investment policy and programmes over the long term, we are pleased to have a strong and collaborative relationship with yourselves in identifying opportunities, building on the 2018 National Infrastructure Assessment.

Now that the government has confirmed that High Speed 2 (HS2) will go ahead, we are eager to emphasise the vital investment that is needed to the East Coast Main Line (ECML) to make sure that the North East can fully benefit from the introduction of high-speed rail to the North.

The impact of Coronavirus on the North East economy has been hard and fast. Our rail network will need to play as a key enabler to economic growth and recovery. The railway's importance to the economic and social life of our region cannot be overstated. We therefore see the upgrading of the ECML between York and Newcastle, if configured correctly, can help us to achieve the North East's long-term economic growth plans.

We firmly believe that both HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) have the potential to help the North East's fragile economy to develop and grow through significant investment and transformed rail links. This belief is backed up by North East business with the North

East Chamber of Commerce having started a lobbying campaign '*Fast Track East Coast*'. The North East has consistently backed both the HS2 and NPR programmes and been strong advocates of the schemes.

As well as being crucial to the national economy, the ECML is our region's premier transport artery, as indicated by the fact that Newcastle, Durham and Sunderland stations together were used by some 12 million passengers in 2017/18, of which a very significant proportion travelled on trains that rely on the ECML somewhere on their journey.

However, the economic and social benefits will only occur if the ECML corridor between York and Newcastle receives significant investment in the years leading up to High Speed Rail's introduction to make it 'High Speed-ready' and to enable high speed trains to continue to Scotland.

We therefore see a significant upgrade to the York to Newcastle ECML corridor as an essential piece of the jigsaw and must be included as part of the Integrated Rail Plan (IRP). This is our region's key strategic rail priority and in this submission we will make the case for it to be included as part of the IRP.

Unless this section of the line is developed as one single commitment, part of the IRP, we are deeply concerned that High Speed Rail will not significantly benefit the North East and may in fact cause economic damage, as other regions become even better connected leaving the North East further isolated.

The East Coast Main Line (ECML)

The ECML is the vital rail artery that links the North East with the rest of the country. We rely on this line for all of our services to London, Scotland and the Midlands as well as to Leeds and Manchester. When Northern Powerhouse Rail and HS2 are built they will use the East Coast Main Line to get high speed trains to and from the North East.

There is a problem though. The East Coast Main Line in the North East does not have enough capacity for today's growth in traffic, let alone for the future. The line currently combines long distance, regional, local and freight traffic on the same two tracks. It also needs to be made faster and more resilient, having last seen major investment three decades ago.

For HS2 Phase 2b to succeed the East Coast Main Line between Newcastle and York must be significantly upgraded. Demand forecasts predict the need for an increase from 6 trains per hour at present to 9 trains per hour by the 2030's. This is every bit as important as building new stretches of route.

Our region has recently played an active role in a long term planning study recently undertaken by Network Rail on this stretch of line titled '*What is required to make the rail network between Church Fenton and Newcastle ready for the 2030s?*'.

The emerging conclusions recognise the need for significant investment to meet future demand and improve connectivity. Solutions have been identified and are in development through close working with TfN's NPR programme. To achieve the outcomes needed, funding requires to be committed over the period 2024-34 to deliver a four-track railway.

A four-track railway can be achieved through the reinstatement of the Leamside Line (mothballed in 1990, as part of the ECML electrification project) coupled with the upgrading of the existing East Coast Main Line itself.

Fortunately, it could be delivered relatively quickly because unlike new build it does not need new legislation (such as a Hybrid Bill), or the purchase of significant land and the majority can be built 'off network' minimising delay to existing passengers and freight during construction. Better still it would improve rail journeys for thousands of existing passengers each day, and its economic impact would be felt across England and Scotland.

Wider benefits

The Leamside Line, as well as solving the ECML freight and passenger capacity constraints, reopening the line has enormous opportunity to integrate our local railways and Tyne and Wear Metro system and provide significant improvements in connectivity for our residents and businesses. A failure to develop it will result in continued pressures on the ECML, poor access to jobs and economic under-activity.

We know that in the North East, Metro and Local Rail contribute up to £224m of Gross Value Added (GVA) to the economy each year. In a wider measure of GDP and welfare benefits, the overall contribution increases to up to £437m per annum.

Independent analysis also tells us that each journey on the Metro or local rail network in our region is worth £8.50 to this region's economy, and an expanded network will deliver at least £8.50 per additional passenger journey. HS2 Phase 2b coupled with investment on the ECML could facilitate enhanced links to national and regional airports.

HS2 to Scotland

We also believe that the economic benefits of HS2 Phase 2b can be significantly improved if HS2 services run on to Scotland via the North East, and if the 'touchpoints' between HS2 and NPR are delivered to strengthen connectivity between the North's major economic centres. This is because HS2 would provide fast links between major economic centres in the West and East Midlands, Yorkshire, Tees Valley and the North East with those in central Scotland.

Conclusion

We therefore expect that as the Commission compiles the rail needs assessment, credible, timely and properly funded plans to upgrade the East Coast Main Line between York and Newcastle are included to ensure our region is properly linked in to the high speed rail network as part of the Integrated Rail Plan.

If the NIC were to recommend that the government commit to developing this essential part of the North's high speed rail jigsaw, detailed planning work could begin immediately, and we believe that construction could start as one of the first elements of HS2 and NPR in the North.

This offers an early opportunity for the Government to show its commitment to 'level up' the UK's economy.

The United Kingdom cannot afford for the North East to be left behind as rail infrastructure investments are planned elsewhere, and we look forward to your assistance in helping our area to recover and grow.

We would of course be delighted to discuss these proposals with you along with our other plans to move our region forward.

Yours sincerely



Cllr Martin Gannon

Leader of Gateshead Council and Chair of the North East Joint Transport Committee
[on behalf of the 7 Local Authorities in the North East]



Andrew Hodgson

Chair of the North East Local Enterprise Partnership



Appendix 2 – Proposed NE JTC submission to the NIC call for evidence

Draft NE JTC submission – National Infrastructure Commission ‘Rail Needs Assessment’ Call for Evidence – May 2020

Executive Summary

Given the NIC’s key role in shaping infrastructure investment policy and programmes over the long term, partners in the North East are pleased to have a strong and collaborative relationship with the commission in identifying opportunities to work together to build practically on the 2018 National Infrastructure Assessment.

To summarise our position, we strongly believe that both HS2 Phase 2b and Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) are needed and will together have a very positive economic and social impact on the businesses and communities of the North East.

However, this will only be the case if the link from HS2 to the ECML is built, and the ECML between York and Newcastle receives a major upgrade between now and the opening date for HS2b/ NPR – if not delivered in full then we are concerned that a truncated HS2 Phase 2b may import negative economic impacts.

The East Coast Main Line north of York currently has no committed investment to grow its capacity and resilience, required to link the region to HS2 and new Northern Powerhouse rail routes. We are specifically calling for upgrades of the existing East Coast Main Line to be an integral part of the new Integrated Rail Plan for the North. We are specifically calling for this investment to be made over the period 2024-34.

We also believe that the economic benefits of HS2 Phase 2b and NPR can be significantly improved if these High-Speed services run on to Scotland via the North East, and if the ‘touchpoints’ between HS2 and NPR are delivered to strengthen connectivity between the North’s major economic centres.

Following the publication of the Oakervee HS2 Review, stakeholders in the North East are all pulling together in campaigning for the East Coast Main Line corridor between York and Newcastle to receive significant investment in the years leading up to the introduction of high speed services to make it ‘High Speed -ready’ and to also eventually enable HS2 trains to continue to Scotland.

Introduction

The North East Economy

The North East is a fast-growing economy offering a diverse and flexible location for business and an attractive place to live and learn. It is home to almost two million people and our economy generates over £40 billion each year, and jobs for 868,000 people, as of December 2019. **See Appendix 1** for a geographical map of the region.

The NELEP’s Strategic Economic Plan sets out that the economy holds the potential to grow further, and into different sectors, over the coming years. However, this growth will not happen on its own. It will rely on the better transport connectivity an improved and expanded network will bring to improve access to labour markets and new education and skills access.

Key parts of the North East economy have done very well. We have seen business and employment growth in our manufacturing sectors, UK-leading performance in employment in digital and technology businesses, and good performance in business services and education, as well as improvement in other sectors. Internationally, we continue to be a net exporting region, with growing levels of inward investment and strong science and cultural links. However, a particular challenge relates to the delivery of higher regional productivity where there is a widening gap with national performance. Economic exclusion in some parts of the region remains persistent and some of the jobs being generated are low paid and insecure.

The North East suffers from a productivity gap with the rest of the UK, and that gap is growing. To tackle that we need the best possible connectivity as a region, allowing people in the North East to access a wide range of employment and training opportunities, and giving confidence to business that its activities are supported by good transport links.

Our economy needs to continue to be future focused, agile and open to national and international investment. We need to retain and improve access to key trade and investment markets, to skilled labour and to research networks. There remains a strong commitment amongst our business and policy communities to secure more influence over our future through devolution.

Our airport and seaports collectively welcome millions of passengers and manage millions of tonnes of freight each year. They contribute significantly to the regional economy, supporting our export, tourism and education economy.

All of the above means the North East is therefore worth investing in. World class transport links at regional, national and international level are crucial to delivering our ambitions for growth and addressing our challenges around exclusion. Those transport links need to be fast, frequent, reliable, resilient, accessible and affordable, and to have the capacity we need.

The size of the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic are not yet known but are likely to hit the North East particularly hard. The need for a significantly improved, well-connected high-speed railway is even more important as we strive to recover and then further build our economy.

The North East's rail network

Regional and long-distance rail

The North East's strategic pan regional and national rail connections all use the East Coast Main Line (ECML) for all or part of the journey. This route is used for directly connecting the major town and cities of the North East to London, Birmingham (and the Midlands), Edinburgh (and North East Scotland), the South and South West as well as the major northern cities of Leeds, Manchester, Liverpool and Sheffield.

Although it may at first appear that the North East is well connected only 6^{1/2} trains per hour operate in a 2-2-2 pattern (2 to London, 2 to Birmingham and two to Yorkshire and the North West). Journeys are lengthy and unevenly spaced due to capacity constraints on the ECML in the region trains are flighted to fit them in.

Both TfN and Network Rail studies have shown that capacity increases are required to accommodate passenger growth by the early 2030's. HS2b and NPR would provide the additional capacity and significantly reduce journey times.

Local rail in the North East

As well as the frequent and fast pan-regional and long-distance services, it is important to connect in the local rail and Tyne and Wear Metro services to provide an integrated network and maximise the numbers of people and business that can benefit from better UK connections.

The Durham Coast line

The Durham Coast line (DCL) is another vital part of the North East railway network. It runs between Newcastle in the north and Northallerton/Middlesbrough in the south via Sunderland and Hartlepool. It forms a second north-south rail link running parallel to the East Coast Main Line. See **Appendix 2**.

Despite serving some of the largest centres of population in the north east, parts of the route have suffered from under-investment over the years so that a combination of low line speeds, a circuitous route in places and tight curvature mean that the end to end journey time from Newcastle to Middlesbrough is around 76 minutes.

A diverse group of markets is served by the Durham Coast. Operating over almost the entire length is the usually hourly Northern Rail service between Middlesbrough and Hexham via Newcastle. Additionally, there are five long distance high speed (LDHS) services per day operated by Grand Central from Sunderland southwards to London King's Cross, also calling at Hartlepool, Eaglescliffe, Northallerton, Thirsk, and York.

There is also a single LDHS service operated by London North Eastern Railway. Between South Hylton and Pelaw high frequency Tyne & Wear Metro services run. At Pelaw, the Metro trains leave Network Rail infrastructure and continue their journey on the Metro's own dedicated network. There is also considerable freight traffic.

Most local rail services in the North East only offer hourly services at best, are not timetabled to coordinate with onward journeys and are slow compared with the private car.

An hourly service is not conducive to the requirements of modern-day commuters or students with variable start and finish times nor does it offer flexibility when interchanging with other modes to complete door to door journeys.

The above factors all lead to an underutilisation of the local rail services in the North East. The lack of investment over the years and the lack of strong links to the local economic plans have led to the infrequent, slow and uncomfortable rail journeys passengers endure today. One strand the north East are pursuing is local rail devolution, which would give the region greater flexibility to tailor local services to meet local economic needs and provide integrated feeder services to and from the high speed, longer distance network.

1. What potential investments should be in scope of the Commission's assessment of the rail needs of the Midlands and the north?

– In answering this question, please consider the terms of reference for the Integrated Rail Plan, particularly that HS2 Phases 1 and 2a are out of scope.

High Speed 2 Phase 2b

Under current plans, the Phase 2b route will provide a high-speed line from Birmingham, via East Midlands Interchange, to Leeds and towards the North East via a connection to the existing ECML network south-west of York.

From just south of York (Church Fenton), HS2 services will continue on the existing ECML, calling at York and Darlington, Durham and terminating at Newcastle. **See Appendix 3.**

It is of the highest importance to our region that the whole HS2 route is built including the crucial connection between HS2 Phase 2b and the ECML. Without it there can be no through HS2 services to York, Tees Valley, North East England or Eastern Scotland. For the North East, the ECML is our way of being connected to the UK's high-speed rail network.

Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR)

Under current plans the NPR network links the 6 core cities of the North (Newcastle, Leeds, Sheffield, Manchester, Liverpool and Hull) providing improved frequency and reduced journey time, so the North as a whole can be transformed becoming more productive and closing the gap with other regions of the Country. **See Appendix 4.**

As one of the least connected centres it is vital that the NPR network in full is delivered to bolster the productivity of the whole North and ensure each region is able to play its part and gain the significant economic benefits envisaged in the outline business case so far developed.

We strongly believe that together HS2 Phase 2b and NPR delivered in full can have a very positive economic and social impact on the businesses and communities of the North East.

However this will only be the case if the last (or first) leg of the journey using, the ECML between York and Newcastle receives a major upgrade between now and the opening date for both HS2b and NPR – if not then we are concerned that a truncated HS2 Phase 2b or NPR would import negative economic impacts.

We also believe that the economic benefits of HS2 Phase 2b and NPR can be significantly improved if HS2 services run on to Scotland via the North East.

Our response therefore focuses on the section of the ECML between Church Fenton and Newcastle and the need for the upgrading of this section of the classic network to be an integral part of the Commission's assessment of the rail needs of the Midlands and the north and thus part of the Integrated Rail Plan.

The East Coast Main Line (ECML) – Vital to our region, in urgent need of investment

The ECML is the rail artery that links North East England with the rest of the country. The region relies solely on this line for all rail services to the rest of the UK. The route carries 15 million passengers from the region each year with many more passing through and this number is expected to grow over the next decade with the arrival of High Speed 2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail services running on the line in the 2030s.

ECML stations in our geographical boundary which are served by Long-distance high-speed trains are Durham, Chester-Le-Street, Newcastle, Morpeth, Alnmouth and Berwick.

The line currently carries London North Eastern Railway (LNER) services from King's Cross to Newcastle and Scotland, CrossCountry's Reading to Newcastle and Plymouth to Edinburgh trains, TransPennine's Liverpool and Manchester Airport to Edinburgh services, and some Northern trains running from Middlesbrough to Newcastle in the early morning, as well as a number of freight services.

However, between Northallerton and Newcastle there is only one track running north and one running south. This means that high speed inter-city and regional trains must compete with local services and slow-moving freight trains on this constrained section of the mainline.

As of December 2019, there are 6 passenger and 2 freight train paths per hour. Based on Network Rail's analysis this is at the limits of its capacity. From December 2021 there are too many train paths committed and unpalatable trade-offs may be necessary until the infrastructure is upgraded.

As well as capacity constraints, the line also suffers from reliability and resilience issues. The section of the ECML between Northallerton and Newcastle is particularly prone to suffering major incidents that cause the service to stop for long periods of time (with no diversionary route), often associated with the relative under-investment in the route.

This is most-often seen in major overhead line dewirement events but can also be associated with other issues such as signal and points failures. Punctuality has been steadily declining for the past five years, with hold-ups caused by other trains the biggest single cause of delay.

To add to the problems of today, when Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) and High Speed 2 (HS2) are built they will use the East Coast Main Line to get high speed trains to and from the North East.

Whilst we believe that HS2 and NPR together, if configured correctly, will be key enablers to achieve the North East's long-term economic growth plans, the ECML constraints must be addressed as part of these schemes, in an integrated and coordinated way.

Demand forecasts predict the need for an increase from 6 trains per hour at present to 9 trains per hour by the 2030's in order to accommodate NPR and HS2 trains between York and Newcastle.

If HS2 Phase 2b is built as envisaged and no further action is taken on the ECML between York and Newcastle, the result will be a high-quality, fast service on HS2 between London, the Midlands and the York area, followed by a very slow, winding and unreliable journey as the train heads north.

A failure to proceed with either the eastern leg of HS2 Phase 2b or the eastern part of the NPR network would simply reinforce the problem; transport links supporting productivity growth would be strengthened elsewhere in the country without the same opportunity being provided to the North East. The economic outcomes of this could only be negative for our area.

Any delays or reduced performance in the North East would inevitably have a knock on effect on the rest of the HS2/NPR network.

Unless this is tackled head-on the region runs the risk of falling behind other areas of the country, as economic inequalities continue to grow. The degree of physical separation that already exists between the North East and the rest of the UK will be exaggerated, all the more so because of the contrasting significant improvements in the ease and speed of travelling between other parts of the North, the Midlands and London by high speed rail.

Businesses may locate away from the North East in favour of places with better connections, and our communities will not only be unable to share in the economic benefits that HS2/ NPR can bring, but the productivity gulf could widen as the benefits felt elsewhere begin to take effect.

We therefore want to see a single plan developed that will upgrade the ECML corridor between York and Newcastle so that it is 'HS2/NPR-ready' prior to the opening of HS2 Phase 2b / NPR infrastructure. To achieve this, funding needs to be committed over the period 2024-34 to expand capacity by providing at least four tracks along the full length of the corridor between York and Newcastle.

2. Which set of rail investments do you believe would, together:

- a. best unlock capacity within the Midlands and the north?**
- b. best improves connectivity within the Midlands and the north?**

We believe that a single pipeline of investment is required. As previously mentioned, from a North East perspective, we want the Government to commit to provide funding to enable the ECML between York and Newcastle to 'HS2/ NPR-ready' by the 2030's.

We consider 'HS2/NPR ready' as being a broad issue that will require a series of infrastructure interventions and increased services relating to the improving frequency, capacity and journey times between York and Newcastle, as part on a high-speed network.

Heading north, at Northallerton the route reduces from four to two tracks, hampering capacity on a route where capacity is shared between fast passenger and slower freight trains. Addressing this is long term issues that will require a number of schemes with, for example the reopening of the Leamside Line being considered as an option. These issues are being considered in the development work on Northern Powerhouse Rail.

To achieve the desired outcome, funding needs to be committed over the period 2024-34 to expand capacity by providing at least four tracks along the full length of the corridor between Northallerton and Newcastle.

We therefore see the reinstatement Leamside line along with the use of the current freight only Stillington Branch line as a feasible option in achieving the four tracking, unlocking capacity and improving connectivity within the Midlands and the North.

This is supported by Network Rail's recent recommendation that '*feasibility of options to reopen the former Leamside line are progressed to Strategic Outline Business Case level maturity in order to deliver growth for the 2030s and beyond.*'¹

The working assumptions are that combining Stillington with a reopened Leamside for either freight only or a combination of freight and some high-speed long-distance services the quantum of services (9 trains per hour) needed to serve the North East can be accommodated.

The Leamside Line

The Leamside Line is a disused 21-mile rail alignment from TurSDale Junction south of Durham to Pelaw Junction east of Gateshead passing Bowburn, Belmont, Fencehouses and Washington, before connecting with the East Coast Main Line. See **Appendix 5**. Reopening the disused line has been a key long-term aspiration of the North East and is strongly supported by business and political leaders in the region. It has featured as a significant element of previous local and upcoming regional transport plans. As a result, local authorities have continued to protect the Leamside alignment from development.

The Leamside Line was mothballed by Network Rail in 1992 after a freight terminal on the line at Follingsby was closed. Prior to this, the line was used as a diversionary route on the ECML until the mid-1980s when the mainline was electrified and re-signalled. The local stations on the line were closed in 1964 following the recommendations in the 1963 Reshaping of British Railways (The Beeching report).

The main Leamside alignment and the formation remains free from obstruction as the line was mothballed rather than formally closed. It is in the ownership of Network Rail. All communication and control equipment must be installed, along with the majority of the permanent way. The line also has several at grade level crossings which will need to be addressed prior to re-opening.

¹ Network Rail Continuous Modular Strategic Planning (CMSP) *What is required to make the rail network between Church Fenton and Newcastle ready for the 2030s and beyond?* (April 2020)

As well as providing capacity for enhanced regional and UK wide connectivity, a reopened Leamside also has the potential to open up access to suburban rail services, for up to 1 million residents in County Durham and Tyne and Wear, connecting them to jobs, commerce and the wider transport network. Further potential for Park and Ride sites would allow rail to offer an attractive alternative to the congested road network south of Newcastle.

The Stillington Branch Line

The Stillington Branch runs for almost 11 miles from Norton Junction (just north of Stockton) to Ferryhill South Junction (on the ECML between Darlington and Durham). It connects the Tees Valley with the ECML at Ferryhill in County Durham. See **Appendix 6**. It has two tracks along its whole length and is currently used by freight services only. There are no stations or notable existing facilities along its length.

The line also leads into the Leamside Line at its northern end to form a potentially continuous freight route from Northallerton through to Newcastle avoiding the ECML over this length. To upgrade to passenger services the signalling and switches and crossing will need to be assessed and replaced where required.

The Northallerton to Stockton line

The final component of the 4-track railway to the North East is the use of the upgraded Northallerton to Stockton line (again part of the NPR development work.).

Together these three lines would enable the ability to use a separate Northallerton to Newcastle routing for freight and some long distance or regional services to increase the overall capacity to and from the North East to meet the forecast demand.

In summary, the North East needs additional tracks between York and Newcastle to:

1. Build capacity to accommodate the extra and faster trains envisaged by Transport for the North (TfN) through Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR)
2. Be "HS2 ready" by 2030's so that HS2 services can run along the ECML as reliably and at the same speeds as they will do on the dedicated HS2 network.
3. Be ready in the longer term to develop High Speed line from North East England towards Edinburgh.
4. Cope with growth in demand which is happening now - even without these major in infrastructure projects.

3. Within the set of investments you identified, which individual investment(s) should be the highest priority?

– Please explain your rationale for this and how this would affect the phasing and sequencing of the full set of investments you identified.

We support calls for a single pipeline of investment being drawn up as part of the Integrated Rail Plan.

We believe that this can be achieved by building and integrating all phases of HS2 along with the Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) network being proposed by Transport for the North (TfN), including upgrading the East Coast Main Line (ECML) to the North East so that it can form an integral part of the high speed rail network.

Our long-term preference would of course be for the dedicated high-speed network to extend to the North East; however, that debate is for another time. Our more immediate task is to make sure that the existing plans for HS2 Phase 2b and NPR provide the best possible economic outcomes for people and businesses in the North East.

We believe that there is a strong case for the construction of HS2 Phase 2b and NPR to be divided into smaller delivery phases, with the ECML connection and upgrades, described under question 2 above, being built at an early stage. When operating together this would provide immediate economic benefits by speeding up journeys from York, Tees Valley and the North East to other major economic centres across the North of England, Midlands and also to Scotland.

Fortunately, we believe it could be delivered relatively quickly because unlike new build it does not need new legislation (such as a Hybrid Bill), or the purchase of significant land and the majority can be built 'off network' minimising delay to existing passengers and freight during construction. Better still it would improve rail journeys for thousands of existing passengers each day, and its economic impact would be felt across England and Scotland.

4. What supporting policies need to be in place to deliver the benefits of the investments you identified? If there are any dependencies with other investments/policies, how confident are you that these supporting policies will be put in place?

We would like the Commission to recognise the importance of the ECML between York and Newcastle to the whole HS2 Phase 2b and NPR proposals. The upgrading of this section of the classic line is every bit as important as building new stretches of route.

Investment in HS2 Phase 2b and NPR complement each other; ECML investment is essential if a high-speed rail offer is to deliver its full potential.

The required capacity upgrade for the ECML between York and Newcastle are included in the Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) for NPR. The SOBC considers the problems outlined above and proposes that upgrading the ECML between York and Newcastle is considered a core part of the NPR project, and that it be carried out at an early stage of NPR delivery.

Below we have provided a summary of existing policies and strategies which support making the ECML 'HS2/ NPR-ready' and demonstrate the key relationship between the ECML, HS2 Phase 2b and NPR:

Emerging North East Transport Plan (due to publish 2021)

Solving the capacity problems on the ECML between York and Newcastle to enable HS2 and NPR trains to run to our region is a central element of the emerging North East Transport Plan. The Plan is due to be published early next year and will be a 15-year plan, setting out all of the transport interventions we need.

The delivery of HS2b and NPR as currently envisaged (including the reopening of the Leamside Line) would match the vision, principles, and objectives of the emerging North East Transport Plan. The vision for the Transport Plan is; 'Moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East'. The development of the Plan will be guided by the following key principles:

- One, total network;
- Look to the future;
- A great experience;
- North East pride and passion; and

- Sound evidence and commitment to deliver for the region.

The following objectives set out what the Transport Plan aims to achieve:

- Carbon Neutral Transport;
- Overcome inequality and grow our economy;
- Healthier North East;
- Appealing sustainable transport choices; and
- Safe, secure network.

There is a clear correlation between these objectives and the delivery of HS2b and NPR to the North East.

North East Transport Plan – Implementation Plan

The North East Transport Plan will be accompanied by an Implementation Plan which will set out a clear method and set of actions of how we will deliver against the vision, principles and objectives of this plan. This will amongst other things include a set of projects and programmes of investment on our regional and local rail networks and critically the contribution that each investment will make towards achieving our vision.

North East Local Enterprise Partnership’s Strategic Economic Plan (SEP)

The SEP sets out several activities and interventions to improve transport links, including working with Transport for the North (TfN) on Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) to identify the appropriate solutions to solve the capacity constraints on the ECML. NPR recognise the constraints between Leeds and Newcastle and has identified this as a key corridor to take forward in its development programme.

The plan recognises the challenge ‘of meeting North East residents and visitors to move around the region sustainably, via public transport’. The SEP also sets out activities to develop a future transport investment pipeline and delivering better connectivity through improved infrastructure.²

Local Transport Plans (anything on long distance and regional connectivity?)

The Tyne and Wear Local Transport Plan 3 (2011-21) and County Durham’s LTP 3 (2011-21) have policies supporting the reinstatement of the Leamside Line.

The Tyne and Wear LTP3 stated: ‘Partners will work with the Association of North East Councils, the North East Local Enterprise Partnership, Network Rail and the Department for Transport to build a strong business case for the future extension of High-Speed Rail (HSR) into the region. In the interim, we will work to secure continued investment in the East Coast Main Line.’³

The Stockton-on-Tees Local Transport Plan (LTP3) (2011-2016) references the Stillington Branch line as a critical rail infrastructure improvement and identified signalling and line speed improvements for Stillington that will benefit businesses and communities within the Tees Valley.

Northern Powerhouse Independent Economic Review (2016)

The report found that the North of England is home to 16m people (nearly one quarter of the UK population) and 7.2m jobs and generated an economic output of around £290bn of Gross Value Added (GVA) in 2015, about one fifth of the UK’s total.

² <https://www.northeastlep.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/nel404-sep-refresh-2018-web-new-final.pdf>

³ Tyne and Wear Local Transport Plan 3 Strategy 2011-21, p.174

The report stated that by 2050, some 850,000 additional jobs are projected in the North under the ‘transformational’ scenario by 2050. Central to achieving this growth will be through transformational improvements to the North’s rail transport connectivity.

Transport for the North (TfN): Northern Powerhouse Rail

TfN produced a Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) for Northern Powerhouse Rail. The potential to develop both the Stillington and Leamside Lines, are being considered as part of the NPR development programme. TfN also wants line upgrades such as the ECML to be sequenced by the government and Network Rail in Control Period 7 (CP7) 2024–2029 and Control Period 8 (CP8) 2029–2034. TfN’s February 2019 ‘At a glance... Northern Powerhouse Rail’ document states that: ‘15,000 extra businesses and 300,000 more people will be within 90 minutes of Newcastle. The network will operate with greater capacity and speed using the HS2 ECML connection south of York to Leeds.’⁴

Transport for the North (TfN): Strategic Transport Plan (2019)

In 2019 TfN published their Strategic Transport Plan (STP) which outlines all the transport interventions that will rebalance Northern England’s economy, with the ultimate goal of delivering nearly £100 billion more productivity and creating 850,000 jobs by 2050 as set out in the Northern Powerhouse Independent Economic Review.

The STP is divided into ‘Strategic Development Corridors’ (SDC), based around the need to connect the North’s economic assets and clusters. There is a specific ‘East Coast – Scotland’ development corridor. **See Appendix 7** for a map. The East Coast - Scotland SDC states: ‘strengthening rail connectivity and capacity along the East Coast Main Line and other key parallel rail lines, such as the Durham Coast Line, to provide enhanced strategic and local connectivity in the North of Tyne, the North East, Tees Valley, City of York, Sheffield City Region, and North Yorkshire.

Network Rail Continuous Modular Strategic Planning Document, 2020 – Church Fenton to Newcastle

In addressing the question of what is required to cater for growth on rail between Church Fenton and Newcastle up to 2030, Network Rail have proved the need for future capacity and line speed improvement and provided a number of options. The reinstatement of the Leamside Line is one of these. “One of the key constraints to delivering growth is between Newcastle and Tursdale Junction, where the railway reduces to two tracks in County Durham. Given the constraints of the Durham Coast Line as an alternative route to carry additional services, it is recommended that feasibility of options to reopen the former Leamside Line are progressed to Strategic Outline Business Case level maturity in order to deliver growth for the 2030s and beyond. This would provide an alternative route for freight services, a diversionary route for long-distance passenger services and potential local connectivity benefits for passenger services”⁵. **See Appendix 8.**

Network Rail – East Coast Route Study (2018)

This study provided “market analysis forecasts that passenger demand on long distance services from London on the York - Newcastle corridor will increase from 2017 levels by 27% by 2023 and 107% by 2043. Similarly, strong growth is forecast to the 2040s for cross-country travel (81%), trans-Pennine (72%), and suburban passenger journeys into Newcastle (72%). These growth rates

⁴ https://transportforthenorth.com/wp-content/uploads/TFTN_-_NPR_At_a_Glance.pdf

⁵ Network Rail Continuous Modular Strategic Planning (CMSP) *What is required to make the rail network between Church Fenton and Newcastle ready for the 2030s and beyond?* (April 2020)

were forecast excluding the impact of HS2”⁶ . Transport for the North have modelled a scenario which increases the number of trains per hour between York and Newcastle from the current 6 per hour, to 9 per hour. “The 9-trains-per-hour service specification on this section of the route would meet forecast demand for seating through to the 2040s. The main driver for such an increase in provision is to promote economic growth through providing better passenger connections and more journey opportunities for activities such as business, leisure and skills”⁷. This would require significant investment.

The East Coast Mainline Authorities (ECMA) Consortium

North East Joint Transport Committee members represent the region on ECMA. ECMA is an informal cross-party group of Councils, Combined Authorities and Regional Transport Partnerships throughout the area served by the ECML.

ECMA members have made it clear and repeatedly make the case to call on the government to future-proof and invest in the ECML, which will ensure all communities can benefit from major rail infrastructure projects, like HS2, Midlands Engine Rail and Northern Powerhouse Rail.

North East Chamber of Commerce’s ‘Fast Track East Coast’ Campaign

The North East Chamber of Commerce is leading on a ‘Fast Track East Coast’ campaign to secure investment in the ECML north of York. The campaign has strong business and political support from key stakeholders in the North East.⁸

Department for Transport’s ‘Restoring your Railway Fund’

In early 2020, the region’s MPs submitted bids for funding from the Government’s ‘Restoring your Railway Fund’ for the Leamside line and Stillington Branch lines. The bids were for a local service that enables the wider strategic context of solving the severe capacity issues on the ECML north of York in time for the arrival of HS2/ NPR.

5. What impact would the investments you identified have on greenhouse gas emissions? In particular, how would they affect the UK’s ability to meet its domestic and international targets, including the Paris Agreement and net-zero?

– In answering this question, it would be helpful if you could consider the expected decarbonisation of road transport, as set out in the Commission’s National Infrastructure Assessment and Freight Study.

Air quality is a national public health crisis; linked to 40,000 early deaths a year nationally. All of our Councils and Combined Authorities have declared Climate Emergencies over the past year. They are all committed to having a net zero carbon footprint by 2050 or before. The Local Authorities have made great strides in reducing CO2 emissions.

The switch of car journeys to other modes, particularly trains and light rail, will be both a consequence of the High-speed network and service measures and a vital element of the success in delivering the required reduction in NO2. The proposals we are supporting for a high-speed rail connection to the North East will help to address the local, regional and national Air Quality and climate change challenges.

⁶ <https://cdn.networkrail.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/East-Coast-Main-Line-Route-Study.pdf>

⁷ *ibid*

⁸ <https://www.neechamber.co.uk/fast-track-east-coast>

Between 1990 and 2018, there was relatively little overall change in the level of greenhouse gas emissions from the transport sector, becoming the largest emitting sector in 2016⁹.

The Department for Transport sets out the challenge in *Decarbonising Transport: Setting the Challenge*. The report calls for “significant coordinated investment in both infrastructure and rolling stock between now and 2050”¹⁰ for rail, to help to deliver decarbonisation.

Public transport should be prioritised to meet decarbonisation goals, as it states “An important aspect of reducing emissions from transport will be to use our cars less and be able to rely on convenient, cost-effective and coherent public transport network”¹⁰.

If the UK is to meet the targets established in domestic and international agreements, it is vital that improvements to the capacity and availability of the public transport network are made.

The introduction of high speed, frequent rail services (via HS2b and NPR), would provide improved to rail capacity assisting in the modal switch from private vehicles. Solving the capacity problems on the ECML between York and Newcastle by providing vital upgrades to existing infrastructure is a key to both schemes.

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) state in their most recently published *Greenhouse Gas Conversion Factors*¹¹, that domestic rail currently produces 41 gCO₂e/pass-km compared with 107 gCO₂e/pass-km in the average private car (based on the average occupancy of 1.6¹²).

The single largest source of energy consumption in the North East is road transport.¹³ Approximately 76% of trips are made by private vehicle in the North East¹⁴; by moving these journeys to rail, significant reductions in emissions could be achieved.

The reopening the disused Leamside Line, as well as providing capacity for the high-speed rail network would also provide opportunities for the extension of the Tyne and Wear Metro or local rail services. This would provide additional environment improvements. Light rail has been shown to be a particularly effective way of delivering modal switch from private vehicles in many cities, assisting in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Research by the Urban Transport Group (UTG) showed that approximately 20% of peak hour passengers on UK tram schemes previously travelled by car, with this increasing to 50% on the weekends¹⁵.

Road freight is a significant contributor (22%) of surface transport carbon emissions. Rail freight is more environmentally friendly than road, reducing carbon emissions by an estimated 76%; each freight train removes the equivalent of 25-76 heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) from the roads¹⁶. As part of a coordinate solution the Leamside line could provide additional capacity for the movement of

⁹ BEIS. (2020). *2018 UK greenhouse gas emissions: final figures – statistical release (online)*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/final-uk-greenhouse-gas-emissions-national-statistics-1990-2018>

¹⁰ Department for Transport. (2020). *Decarbonising Transport: Setting the Challenge*. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/878642/decarbonising-transport-setting-the-challenge.pdf

¹¹ BEIS. (2019). *Greenhouse gas reporting: conversion factors 2019*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/greenhouse-gas-reporting-conversion-factors-2019>

¹² Department for Transport. (2019). *NTS0905: Car occupancy, England: since 2002*. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/821510/nts0905.ods

¹³ LEP SEP p.44

¹⁴ Department for Transport. (2019). *NTS9903: Average number of trips (trip rates) by main mode, region and Rural-Urban Classification: England*. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/821444/nts9903.ods

¹⁵ Urban Transport Group. (2005). *What Light Rail Can Do for Cities*. Available at: http://www.urbantransportgroup.org/system/files/general-docs/WhatLightRailCanDoForCitiesMainText_0218.pdf

¹⁶ Arup. (2018). *Department for Transport. Future Potential for Modal Shift in the UK Rail Freight Market*. Available at: https://www.arup.com/-/media/arup/files/publications/f/future_potential_for_modal_shift_in_the_uk_rail_freight_market.pdf

freight via the rail network on the ECML, accelerating the reduction of UK freight emissions with modal switch from HGVs.

However, if additional rail capacity is not produced, rail freight may be replaced with passenger services due to increasing passenger demand, increasing emissions through increased HGV mileage.

The National Infrastructure Commission's report *Better Delivery: the challenge for freight* states that "Modal shift to rail [...] will continue to have a helpful role in managing air quality and carbon emissions from domestic freight transport while HGVs continue to use diesel."¹⁷

6. In addition to greenhouse gas emissions, what are the potential environmental effects (positive and negative) of the investments you identified?

In the past rail investment projects have proven to provide numerous environmental benefits, primarily driven by the strong modal shift from private vehicles.

A high-speed network incorporating HS2 and NPR (including a reintroduction of the Leamside Line, particularly with associated Park and Ride sites), offers the potential for mode switch from cars to train, thereby reducing road congestion on strategic and urban routes. This would improve air quality within those areas of key concern.

Congestion on the regional and national road network now and the future, notably on the city region approaches could be alleviated by the provision of high-speed rail connections right into the heart of the city regions. This linked to a local integrated local rail and metro system has the potential to significantly affect mode choice.

Air pollutants from transport include nitrogen oxides, particles, carbon monoxide and hydrocarbons amongst others. All have a damaging impact on the health of people, animals and vegetation locally. Many areas of the UK still fail to meet the health based national air quality objectives and European limit values – particularly for particulates and nitrogen dioxide. In town centres and alongside busy roads, vehicles are responsible for most local pollution. Although new technology and cleaner fuel formulations will continue to cut emissions of pollutants, the increasing number of vehicles on the road and miles driven is eroding these benefits. The high-speed rail network (tighter with locally integrated rail and metro) would provide additional rail capacity and resilience assisting in the modal switch from private vehicles.

Rail services also offer significant reductions in electricity demand, when compared with electric or internal combustion engine road vehicles, for both rail freight and passenger journeys. The rail sector carries 8% of the world's passengers and 7% of global freight transport but represents only 2% of total transport energy demand¹⁸.

7. Aside from those delivered by improved connectivity and greater capacity, what broader impacts on people's quality of life could the investments you identified have?

The North East has a number of challenges. The delivery of a high-speed rail network better connecting the region with other economic centres can significantly help address the following challenges.

North East Economic challenges:

¹⁷ National Infrastructure Commission. (2019). *Better Delivery: The Challenge for Freight*. Available at: <https://www.nic.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Better-Delivery-April-2019.pdf>

¹⁸ International Energy Agency. (2019). *The Future of Rail*. Available at: <https://www.iea.org/reports/the-future-of-rail>

- Our economy is underperforming, despite growth of 12.2% since 2014 the gap between the region and the rest of England excluding London remains 16% below the national average;
- Productivity levels remain challenging despite increases of 8.6% since 2014, but we can go further;
- Employment in the private sector remains below the national average with the gap widening over recent years, and growth in this sector in the North East (1.9%) is lower than growth achieved across England (3.3%);
- Economic activity rates continue to lag behind the rest of the country there remains a GVA gap between the North East city region and England excluding London of £3,843 per capita
- There are fewer businesses born in the North East LEP area than in England excluding London, with 44 business births per 10,000 adults in the North East LEP in 2017 compared to 65.1 in England excluding London.

The agglomeration benefits of transport investment in high speed rail can help to address these disparities.

People – Skills & Health challenges

- The region displays a mismatch between the skills and occupational profile of its people, and the requirements of the future economy. Qualification levels within the area are low and especially pronounced at older and younger age groupings. Some 38% of the working-age population is qualified to NVQ4+ in the region, but this reduces to 29% in the 50 to 64-year old sector and just 17% for 16 to 24-year olds. The North East also has the third highest proportion of working age adults with no qualifications. Residents with no or lower-level qualifications are more likely to be workless, reinforcing deprivation and inequality;
- Professional, associate professional and skilled trade roles are identified as the occupations with the highest rates of skills shortage vacancies;
- An issue for the North East is the need to attract skilled workers with the option of building a career in the region. A well-integrated and reliable transport network, that links pleasant places to live with a wide range of good quality job opportunities is an important driver to address this issue,
- School attainment in the region amongst 16-year olds is around the England average, however there is a relatively large fall in further education participants and apprenticeship starts compared to the England average. There appears to be significant difficulties in attracting employees and graduates from other UK regions, resulting in relying primarily on home-grown graduates. This is shown by the low proportion of graduates employed in the North East who did not either grow up or study here. Ultimately qualification levels need to improve to allow people across the region to share in the opportunities created by economic growth.
- Typically, levels of inactivity and the health problems they cause are higher in our area than elsewhere in the UK. Poor public health can have direct consequences on the productivity of the region. A systematic review examining public transportation use and physical activity found that use of public transport was associated with an additional 8 to 33 minutes of walking per day.

The benefits of transport investment in high speed rail can help to address these disparities.

Air Quality Challenges

- The North East has air quality hotspots in cities and towns. To compound this issue locally, people in the North East of England live shorter lives and have shorter healthy life expectancy. It is estimated that poor air quality is responsible for around 360 deaths each year in Central Tyneside alone.
- Transport is a significant contributor to air quality problems.
- As a region with a world-leading natural and historical environment it is our duty to protect it for future generations against harmful pollution levels. Providing a high-speed integrated rail network can assist as part of the overall plans leading to a more sustainable (and therefore healthier) way of life in the North East for our residents, commuters, and visitors.
- As previously mentioned, poor air quality has detrimental impacts on public health; leading to reduced lifespans due to the increased risks of cardiovascular disease, lung cancer and other respiratory diseases. Public Health England (PHE) has identified air pollution as a top priority for action, estimating that air pollution contributes to 28,000 to 36,000 deaths annually¹⁹. It's estimated that a 1 µg/m³ reduction in fine particulate air pollution in England could prevent around 50,900 cases of coronary heart disease, 16,500 strokes, 9,300 cases of asthma and 4,200 lung cancers over an 18-year period¹⁹.

Rail transport is generally considered to be a cleaner form of transport which makes a relatively small contribution to poor air quality (4 percent of NOx emissions and 1 percent of PM_{2.5} emissions, nationally), with overall emissions both less per passenger mile and tonne per km for freight when compared to other transport modes²⁰.

Investment in HS2b and NPR to the North East will provide the capacity to allow for additional journeys and freight to be made through a more sustainable means, thus reducing the reliance on private vehicles and HGVs; ultimately improving the air quality in the vicinity of the line.

National, Regional and Local Connectivity - quality of life improvements

A high proportion of communities and businesses in the North East do not have direct access to a high-speed rail services. Due to geography the North East is more isolated than other economic centres and as a result there are fewer opportunities for both individuals to access work and learning and also for businesses, educators and trainees to access labour and learner markets.

Lack of employment and training are key factors in poor health, wellbeing and poverty.

A concerted effort is needed to extend the pool of opportunities for residents and businesses as well as making the North East better connected, enabling more investment in the region which would drive raising life quality standards.

8. How would the costs and benefits of the investments you identified be distributed economically, socially and geographically?

East Coast Main Line Authorities (ECMA) Consortium – 2020 Research

Updated research commissioned by ECMA in May 2020 showed that:

¹⁹ Public Health England. (2018). *Health Matters: air pollution*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-matters-air-pollution/health-matters-air-pollution>

²⁰ Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs. (2018). *Clean Air Strategy 2018*. Available at: <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/environmental-quality/clean-air-strategy-consultation/>

In combination with the ECML timetable changes to be delivered from 2021, HS2 will deliver £9.8bn to the economies of the East Coast Main Line, whilst investment in complementary schemes to further improve access to the North East and Scotland will add a further £1.62bn.

The research also found that:

- HS2 Plus York – Newcastle investment would deliver an additional £493 million of GVA per annum over the existing service, this gives an aggregate value of £10.55 billion.
- HS2 Plus York – Edinburgh investment would deliver a total GVA per annum of £541 million over the existing service. The total impact on the wider economy is £11.42 billion.

East Coast Main Line Authorities (ECMA) Consortium – 2016 Research

Research commissioned by ECMA in 2016 showed that:

- The East Coast corridor is already an important driver of the UK economy
- Investment in the ECML, combined with the HS2 Phase 2 proposals would generate over £0.5bn per year of additional GDP. This would be worth £5bn-£9bn to the UK economy in 2016 value terms over 60 years.
- Of three investment scenarios (Bronze, Silver and Gold) considered in the research, the highest Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) was delivered by the Gold scenario, the only one of the three to comprise both ECML investment and delivery of HS2.

HS2 East – 2017 Research

The 2017 HS2East research showed similar findings, with the Eastern Leg of Phase 2b yielding benefits estimated in 2016 at £717 million per year when ECML upgrades are included, but only £604million for the Eastern Leg alone.

Transport for the North – Northern Powerhouse Rail

Newcastle - 15,000 extra businesses and 300,000 more people will be within 90 minutes of Newcastle. The network will operate with greater capacity and speed using the HS2 ECML connection south of York to Leeds.

Economic Value of Metro and Local Rail – 2018

This document produced strong evidence of the benefits of Metro and local rail to the North East economy. An extract summary of the findings is shown below.

The North East's economy is strong, diverse and it is growing. This, in part, is due to its Metro and Local Rail network. This report confirms that Metro and local rail plays a critical role as an economic enabler.

The headline figures are:

- Metro and Local Rail contribute up to £257 m of Gross Value Added (GVA) to the North East economy each year;
- In a wider measure of GDP and welfare benefits, the overall contribution increases to up to £437m per annum.

**9. Which set of investments would best improve rail connectivity with Scotland?
– If these are different to the investments you identified above, please explain why.**

There is an assumption in previous work that HS2 will serve Scotland by utilising the West Coast Main Line (WCML). We do not accept that assumption; work commissioned by HS2East in 2016 suggests that a journey time between Edinburgh and London as low as 3 hours could be achieved by HS2 services travelling on a combination of HS2 and an upgraded ECML.

We believe that strong economic benefits to the country will come from HS2 trains continuing north from Newcastle to Scotland (and some NPR trains). This is because a combination of HS2 & NPR would provide fast links between major economic centres in the West and East Midlands, Yorkshire, Tees Valley and the North East with those in central Scotland. We have described earlier why we are pressing for the ECML between York and Newcastle to receive major investment to make it 'HS2/NPR-ready' by 2034. The economic benefits of this investment would be further strengthened if it were to facilitate HS2 & NPR trains to Scotland.

This view is supported by TfN and numerous local authority partners across the footprint of the eastern leg of HS2 Phase 2b. Rail investment can help deliver the growth potential in the North East. By delivering High Speed links through HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail as well as conventional rail upgrades this could be worth an extra £45.6bn to the Northern economy. This is much needed investment to ensure easier faster more reliable links are available for all.

ECML between Newcastle and Edinburgh

North of Newcastle the ECML in our region extends for just under 70 miles to the Scottish Border, three miles north of Berwick-upon-Tweed station. **See Appendix 10.**

There are stations at Manors, Cramlington, Morpeth, Pegswood, Widdrington, Acklington, Alnmouth, Chathill and Berwick-upon-Tweed. However, only Morpeth, Alnmouth and Berwick are of sufficient length to accommodate long-distance high-speed trains, and these stations are served by infrequent calls. The remainder are served only by infrequent local stopping services.

Journey times between Newcastle and Edinburgh are currently constrained by the formation of the network on this section of the route. The section has a large number of tight curves which restricts the maximum speed of the line and causes services to have a lower average speed than the rest of the ECML. At locations such as Morpeth the speed restrictions due to curves are as low as 50mph.

In order to deliver the transformational journey time improvement between Newcastle and Edinburgh, infrastructure enhancements would need to be realised including a new alignment able to deliver journey times of 45 minutes between Edinburgh and Newcastle. This would require a new high-speed rail alignment north of Newcastle which would require major investment.

High Speed Scotland

In March 2016, the UK and Scottish Governments made a joint commitment to work together to identify options that could improve journey times, capacity, resilience and reliability on the rail routes between England and Scotland.

In 2017, Transport Scotland commissioned a feasibility study to look at options on both the East and West coast routes between Scotland and England. The findings of the study indicated that construction of a new high-speed rail alignment between Newcastle and Edinburgh was technically and environmentally feasible, providing a journey time of below 45 minutes.

10. What would be the impact of the investments you identified on connectivity between the Midlands and the north, and other parts of the UK?

– Please explain where and how impacts would occur.

The HS2 Eastern Leg will provide a genuinely transformational change in journey times across a number of key flows including to and from the North East.

Journey time reductions (HS2 Changing Britain document 2016)

- Newcastle to Birmingham – 2:02 (journey time saving of 50 minutes)
- Newcastle to London – 2:17 (journey time saving of 32 minutes)
- Durham to Birmingham – 1:47 (journey time saving of 52 minutes)

Similarly, NPR will provide substantial journey time reductions between the North East and Leeds, Manchester, Liverpool and Sheffield.

Journey times (NPR at a glance document 2019)

- Newcastle to Leeds 0:58 (journey time saving of 32 minutes)
- Newcastle to Manchester circa 1:28 (journey time saving of circa 59 minutes)
- Newcastle to Liverpool circa 1:59 (journey time saving of circa 1 hour and 21 minutes)

The combined journey time advantages of both HS2 and NPR will transform the connectivity of the North, the Midlands and the rest of the UK. Bringing the North East closer to other part of the UK will increase the size of the economy increasing the number of jobs, creating 'better' jobs. This will result in significant uplift in the UK's GDP.

HS2 Phase 2b and NPR can be the schemes that deliver the UK Governments key policy objective of the need to level-up communities across the country.

11. What would be the impact of the investments you identified on international connectivity across the Midlands and the north?

– Please consider the impact on both ports and airports.

Link to Newcastle International Airport

Investment in high speed services to the North East broaden the catchment area for our regional airports. For Newcastle international airport NPR will deliver an increase in population within 120 minutes of Newcastle Airport by 1,185,600.

In addition to NPR current scope of works there is an opportunity for a direct heavy rail link to Newcastle Airport from the ECML. The opportunity is to reinstate this rail link via the 'Benton Curve' between the north bound East Coast Main Line and the west facing Metro line, which could allow heavy rail services to travel directly to the Airport. This could significantly improve passenger convenience and journey times and open the Airport up to a larger catchment for rail travel. This is a key element of Newcastle Airport's 2035 Masterplan.

Catering for Freight

The ECML is used by a diverse range of freight services. Much of this traffic operates in the North East. The use of the two-track section between York and Northallerton and Newcastle by both passenger and freight significantly hamper growth of both sectors. A key part of NPR is to segregate the two differing characteristics of Freight and passenger services whilst maintaining the viability (and catering for future growth) of both.

Strong growth is forecast in the intermodal market via domestic and international container services. Biomass has in part replaced imported coal flows in the North East. These services also occupy capacity on the Durham Coast Line and create timetabling issues around Newcastle Central station either with services that have originated at the Port of Blyth and are heading south or trains from the Port of Tyne heading to Lynemouth Power Station.

North of Newcastle and into Scotland, freight flows mostly comprise a mix of container traffic, cement and nuclear cargos.

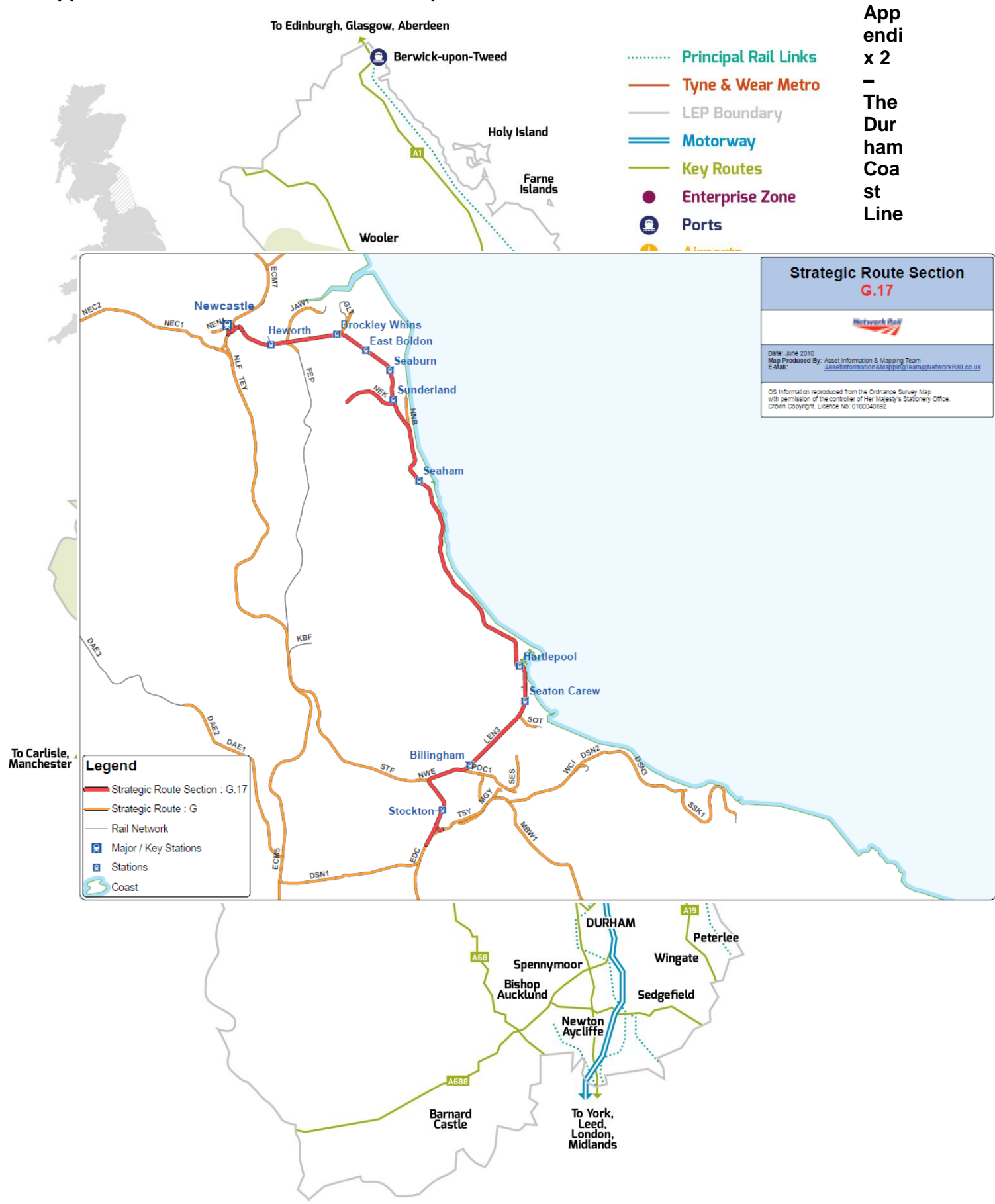
The potential for new and existing freight paths on the ECML is increasingly constrained without extra capacity. Creating additional capacity on the ECML North of York would allow for more freight trains to run. Providing links to freight routes to move goods across the country, and to labour markets to access a highly skilled workforce, is vital to support our manufacturing sector.

HS2 Phase 2b and NPR coupled with investment on the ECML can facilitate onward links to national and regional airports.

END

Appendix 1 – The North East LEP area map

Appendix 2 – The Durham Coast Line



Strategic Route Section G.17

Date: June 2010
 Map Produced By: Asset Information & Mapping Team
 E-Mail: AssetInformation&MappingTeam@NetworkRail.co.uk

OS Information reproduced from the Ordnance Survey Map with permission of the controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. Crown Copyright. Licence No: 0100040692

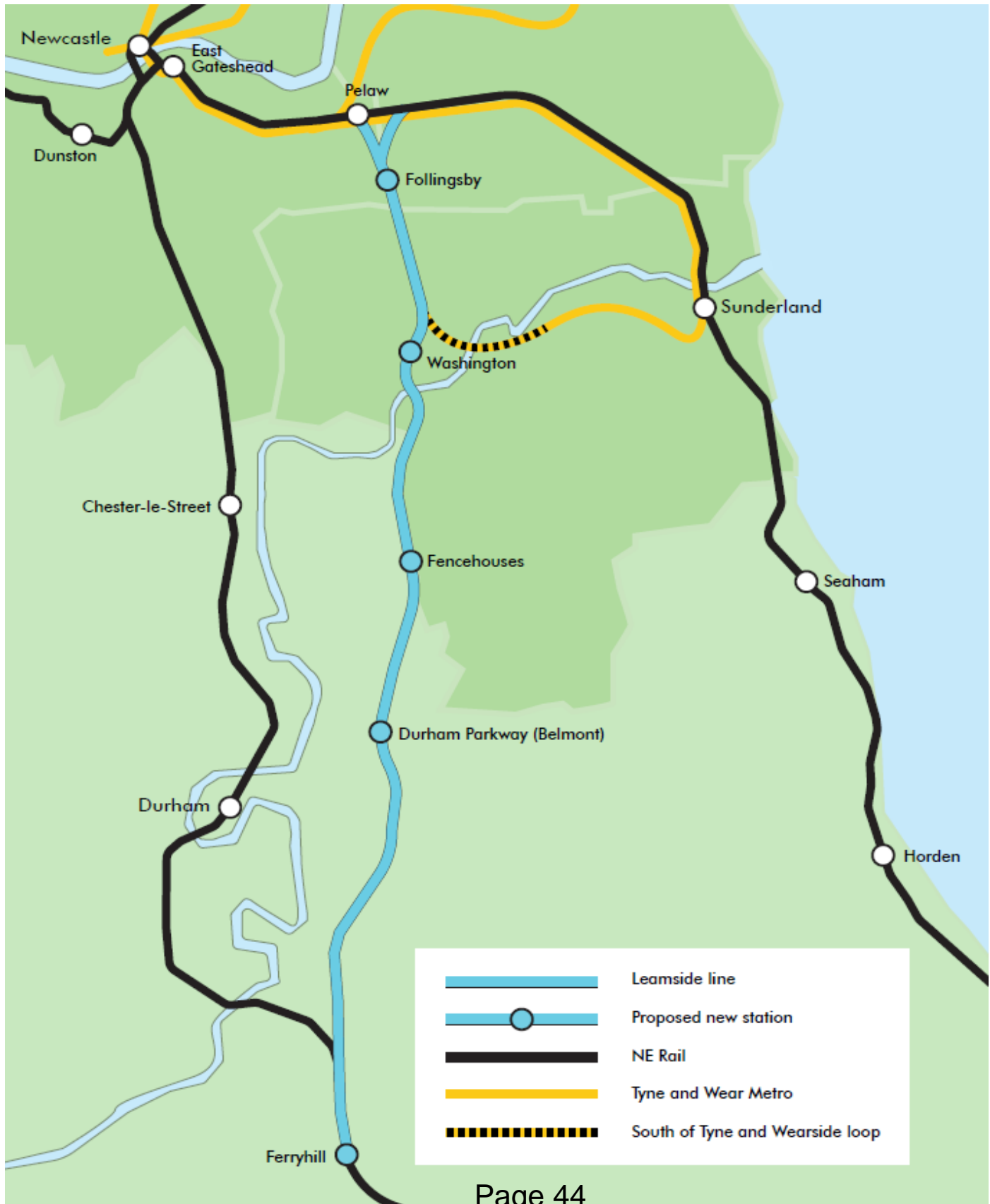
Legend

- Strategic Route Section : G.17
- Strategic Route : G
- Rail Network
- Major / Key Stations
- Stations
- Coast

Appendix 3 – HS2 route map



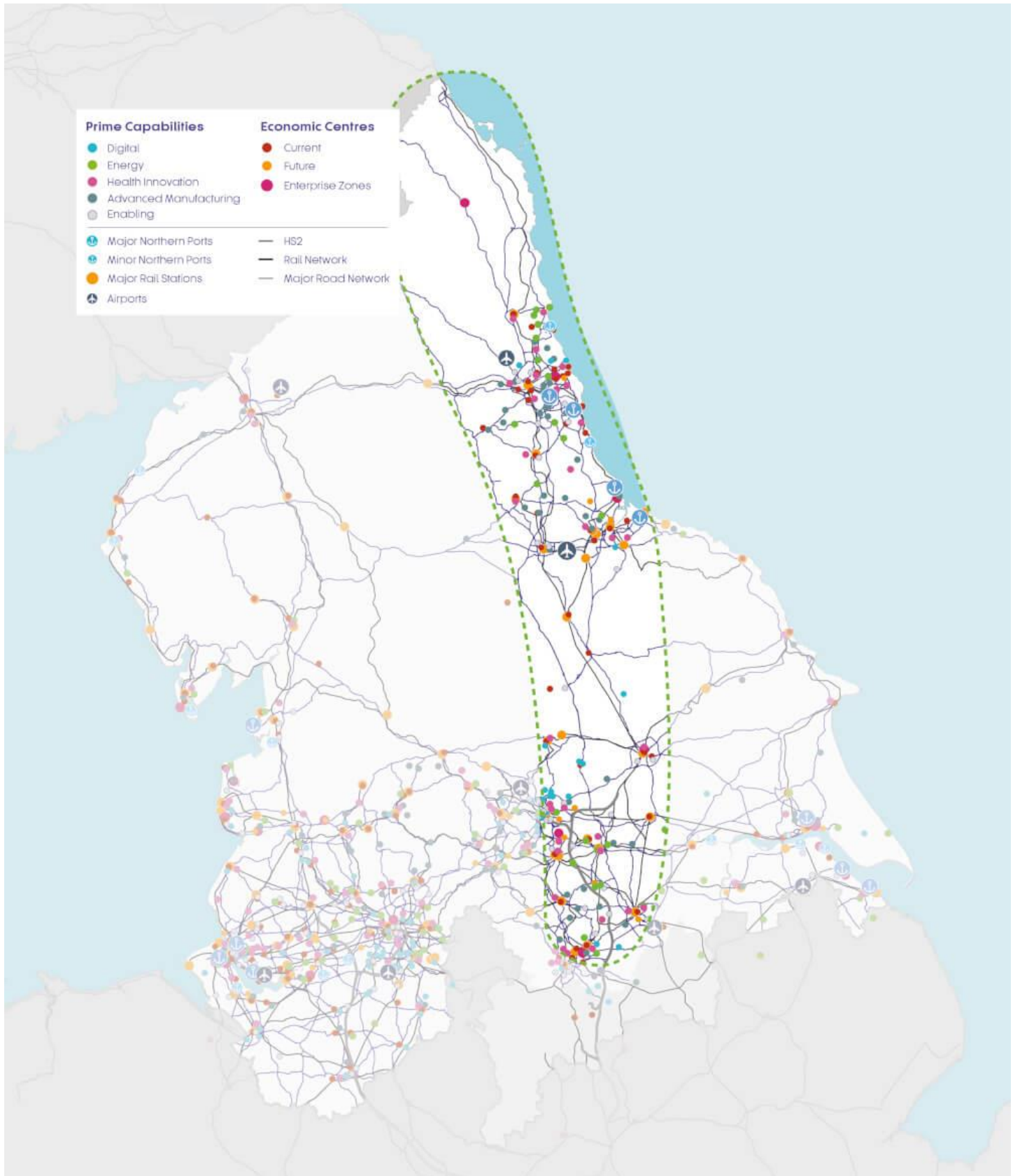
Appendix 5 – Leamside Line map



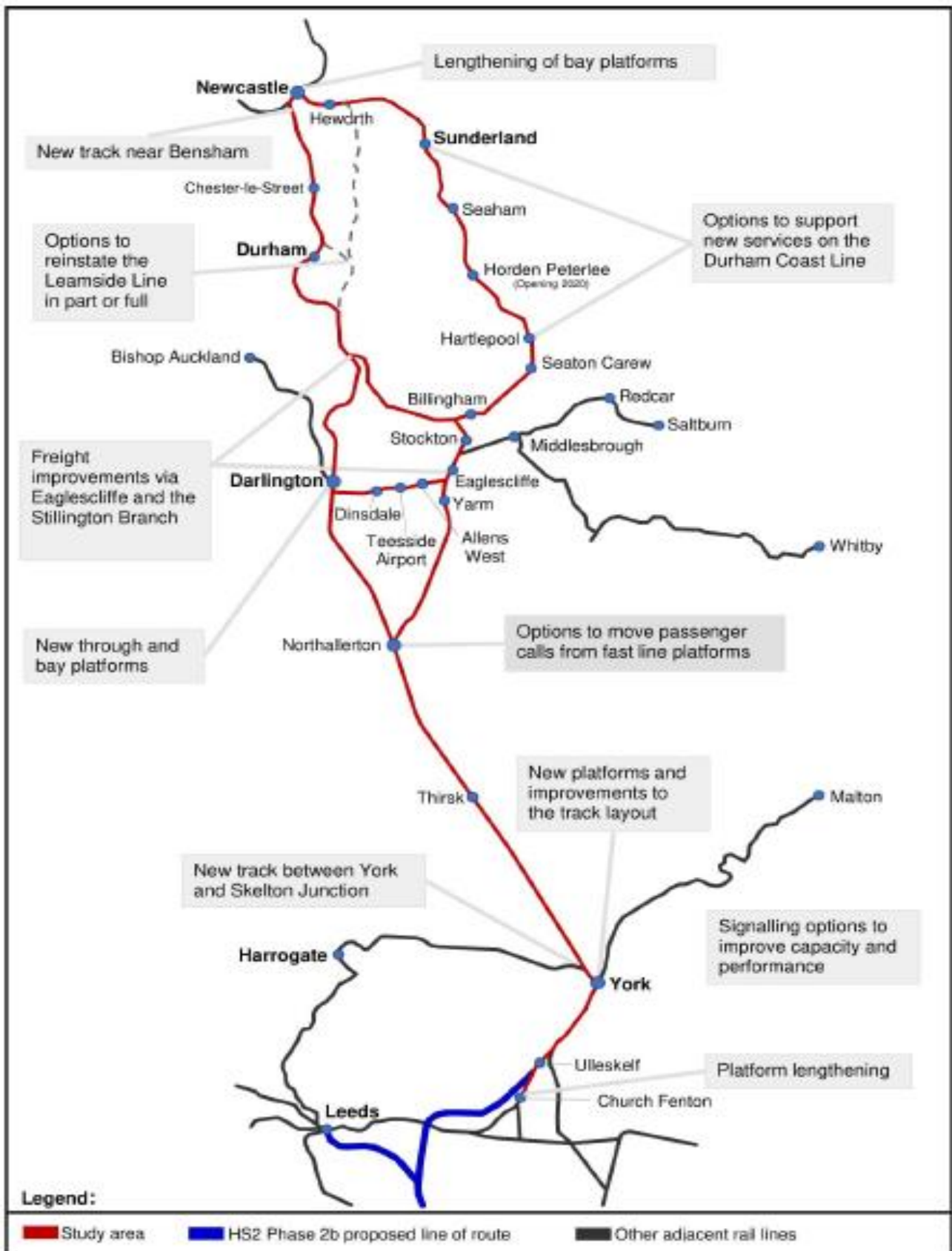
Appendix 6 – Stillington Branch Line map



Appendix 7 – TfN’s ‘East Coast – Scotland ‘Strategic Development Corridor’



Appendix 8 - Network Rail CMSP report, 2020 – Options to Reinstate Leamside Line and Stillington to solve ECML capacity constraints North of York.



Appendix 9 – ECML North of Newcastle to the Scottish Border



North East Joint Transport Committee

Date: 9 June 2020

Subject: Boosting Cycling and Walking in the North East

Report of: Managing Director, Transport North East

Executive Summary

The Department for Transport (DfT) has announced a £250 million emergency active travel fund which is to be used to provide pop-up measures to create a safer environment for walking and cycling in England. Approximately £2.62m is available to the North East Joint Transport Committee from Tranche 1 of the fund and is to be spent on schemes that are well developed and meaningfully alter the status quo on the road to allocate space to cyclists and pedestrians.

Tranche 1 schemes are required to start within four weeks of receiving the allocation and complete within eight weeks of starting. Clawback of funding is likely if these conditions aren't met and this will have an impact on the ability to secure any funding in Tranche 2.

In order to obtain apply for the Tranche 1 fund, a proforma was completed and submitted to the DfT on Friday 5th June. The proforma includes details of what the JTC will spend the funding on.

Once the Tranche 2 guidance is released the Transport Strategy Unit will develop a proposal for distributing funding. The proposal will be brought to a future meeting for discussion.

Recommendations

The North East Joint Transport Committee is recommended to;

- Note that a bid for funding from the Emergency Active Travel Fund was submitted to the DfT on 5th June.

1. Background Information

1.1 There has been a recent increase in the uptake of cycling and walking during the pandemic period and there is a growing need to enable people to maintain social distancing whilst walking and cycling. Increased cycling and walking in the North East supports our emerging Transport Plan's vision of 'Moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East,' and provides us with the opportunity to:

- avoid overcrowding our public transport network at a time when social distancing needs to be maintained;

- create a safer environment for walking and cycling; and
- encourage walking and cycling as parts of the economy begin to open up.

2 **Emergency Active Travel Funding**

2.1 On 9 May 2020 the Department for Transport announced a £250 million emergency active travel fund which is to be used to provide pop-up measures to create a safer environment for walking and cycling in England. This is part of the £5 billion in funding announced for cycling and buses in February.

2.2 £225 million will be provided directly to local transport authorities and London boroughs. The remaining £25 million will be used to help support cycle repair schemes.

3. **Distribution of Funding**

3.1 On 27 May the Department for Transport (DfT) announced that the funding will be released in two phases, Tranche 1 and Tranche 2, and will be allocated to combined and local authorities. In the North East's case the funding will be issued to the Joint Transport Committee. The first tranche of £45 million will be released as soon as possible, approximately £2.62m of which is available to the North East Joint Transport Committee.

3.2 Tranche 1 funding is:

- weighted towards areas which had high levels of public transport use prior to the pandemic;
- expected to be spent on closing roads to through traffic, installing segregated cycle lanes and widening pavements; and
- Emergency Traffic Orders can be used to introduce temporary measures quickly.

3.3 The DfT has written to combined and local authorities to set out the process for applying for funding and the criteria for schemes. The criteria is:

- schemes must be well developed and meaningfully alter the status quo on the road to allocate space to cyclists and pedestrians;
- promoters must demonstrate that schemes can be implemented quickly using temporary materials. More elaborate, costly materials will not be funded in Tranche 1;
- Scheme promoters should monitor and evaluate any temporary measures they install, particularly with a view to making them permanent;
- Funding cannot be spent on consultancy work;
- 20mph zones can form part of a package of measures but will not be sufficient on their own.

3.4 Tranche 1 schemes are required to start within four weeks of receiving the allocation and complete within eight weeks of starting. Clawback of funding is likely if these conditions aren't met and this will have an impact on the ability to secure any funding in Tranche 2.

4. **Proposed Approach**

4.1 In order to obtain funding for Tranche 1 the JTC was required to complete a proforma, providing details of what the funding will be spent on, and submit it to the DfT by

Friday 5th June. The completed proforma, which requests the full North East allocation of £2.62m, has been submitted.

- 4.3 Once the Tranche 2 guidance is released the Transport Strategy Unit will develop a proposal for distributing funding. The proposal will be brought to a future meeting for discussion.

5. Proposals

- 5.1 It is proposed that members note the contents of the report and that a bid for funding from Emergency Active Travel Fund Tranche 1 has been submitted to the Department for Transport.

6. Reasons for the Proposals

- 6.1 The Tranche 1 funding will enable pop up schemes to improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists to be introduced on a temporary basis.

7. Alternative Options Available

- 7.1 Option 1 – The North East Joint Transport Committee may accept the proposal set out in paragraph 5.1 above.

- 7.2 Option 2 – The North East Joint Transport Committee may not accept the proposal set out in paragraph 5.1 above.

- 7.3 Option 1 is the recommended option.

8. Next Steps and Timetable for Implementation

- 8.1 The proposal for the distribution of the Tranche 2 funding will be brought to a future meeting for discussion.

9. Potential Impact on Objectives

- 9.1 The application to the Emergency Active Travel Fund supports our emerging Transport Plan's vision of 'Moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East.'

10. Financial and Other Resources Implications

- 10.1 If the submission is successful the JTC will receive up to £2.62m to provide pop-up measures to create a safer environment for walking and cycling.

11. Legal Implications

- 11.1 Officers will ensure that the required safety assessments are carried out. There could be legal implications if safety measures are found to be unsatisfactory.

12 Key Risks

- 12.1 If the submission is unsuccessful the region will not receive funding to introduce pop up measures to improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists.

13. Equality and Diversity

- 13.1 The proposal will have a positive impact on equality and diversity by improving accessibility of cycle lanes and footpaths.

14. Crime and Disorder

- 14.1 There are no implications on crime and disorder.

15. Consultation/Engagement

15.1 LA7 Heads of Transport and Transport Strategy Board have been consulted on the proposals in this paper.

16. Other Impact of the Proposals

16.1 No specific impacts

17. Appendices

17.1 None

18. Background Papers

18.1 None

19. Contact Officers

19.1 Rachelle Forsyth-Ward, Strategic Transport Advisor, rachelle.forsyth-ward@northeastca.gov.uk

20. Sign off

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

21. Glossary

All terms are defined within the report.

North East Joint Transport Committee

Date: 9 June 2020

Subject: North East response to the Transport Select Committee inquiry into Coronavirus: implications for transport

Report of: Managing Director, Transport North East

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to inform the committee about the proposed North East written evidence submission response to the House of Commons Transport Select Committee's inquiry into Coronavirus: implications for transport.

Recommendations

The North East Joint Transport Committee is recommended to agree a response from the region to the Transport Select Committee's call for evidence into the implications of Coronavirus for transport in the North East.

1. Background Information

- 1.1 Following the outcome of the December 2019 UK General Election, Parliamentary Select Committees were re-established for the new Parliament in early 2020.

Select Committees reflect the membership of the House of Commons and following the result of the 2019 General Election result, Conservatives hold 16 chair positions, Labour have nine and the Scottish National Party take two.

Huw Merriman MP was elected Chair of the Transport Select Committee on 30 January 2020.

11 MPs make up the membership of the Committee, with Easington MP, Grahame Morris being the sole NE JTC area representation.

- 1.2 On 6 May 2020, the committee launched an inquiry into 'Coronavirus: implications for transport'.

As part of the inquiry, the Committee is asking transport workers, stakeholders and members of the public to write to them about the transport issues they face during the coronavirus outbreak.

MPs on the Committee will then will explore the impact felt by the industry, its workers and passengers in a rolling programme of work to monitor the impact of coronavirus on UK transport, sector by sector.

Virtual Committee meetings have been held throughout May 2020, primarily focusing on the Aviation sector, with external stakeholders also giving oral evidence.

It is expected that among subsequent sessions, MPs will look at rail, local transport and national infrastructure projects.

The deadline to respond to the call for evidence is Monday 29 June 2020.

2. Proposals

- 2.1 It is proposed that the NE JTC area respond to the call for evidence by submitting a response by the end of June deadline, outlining how our region's transport network has coped during the current crisis, along with out short, medium and long-term asks to central government.

The response primarily focuses on the impact on the region's bus industry, the impact on the Tyne and Wear Metro and Nexus, as well as the impact on the Tyne Tunnels.

We make the case that Local Government is simply not able to carry the burden of wholly new costs related to transport; it is struggling to manage the mounting costs of delivering social care and other essential community services and Central Government must address this.

The response also outlines a summary of our key asks to Central Government.

See **Appendix 1** for a copy of the proposed response.

3. Reasons for the Proposals

- 3.1 Providing evidence to the inquiry will help assist the committee in carrying out its scrutiny role of the UK government and the Department for Transport.

A North East response will allow the region's voice to be heard and our evidence will be incorporated into the report the committee will publish on the inquiry, along with recommendations for the government.

The government is expected to respond to any recommendations that are made. Any recommendations made could be made as a result could help achieve the North East's transport objectives.

4. Alternative Options Available

- 4.1 Option 1 – The North East Joint Transport Committee may accept the recommendation set out in paragraph 2 above.

Option 2 – The North East Joint Transport Committee may not accept the recommendations set out in paragraph 2 above and choose not to respond to the call for evidence.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

5. Next Steps and Timetable for Implementation

- 5.1 The region will continue to take a proactive response in responding to calls for evidence which will help achieve the North East's transport objectives.

6. Potential Impact on Objectives

- 6.1 None

7. Financial and Other Resources Implications

- 7.1 There are no financial and other resources implications

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 Evidence submitted as part of the inquiry may be published and submissions must make clear if it must remain confidential.

9. Key Risks

- 9.1 None

10. Equality and Diversity

- 10.1 There are no equality and diversity implications arising from the proposal.

11. Crime and Disorder

- 11.1 There are no crime and disorder implications arising from the proposal.

12. Consultation/Engagement

12.1 Heads of Transport and Transport Strategy Board have been consulted on the proposal.

13. Other Impact of the Proposals

13.1 No specific implications

14. Appendices

14.1 Appendix 1 – Proposed NE JTC submission to the call for evidence

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

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

18. Glossary

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



House of Commons – Transport Select Committee – Coronavirus: implications for transport **Written evidence submitted by the North East Joint Transport Committee (NE JTC)**

The NE JTC brings together the two Combined Authorities which have statutory transport powers for the area:

- The North East Combined Authority (Durham, Gateshead, Sunderland and South Tyneside),
- The North of Tyne Combined Authority (Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland).

Pre-Covid-19 situation

The North East is home to almost two million people. Before the Coronavirus crisis hit, our economy generated over £40 billion each year, and jobs for 868,000 people, as of December 2019.

Good public transport has always been incredibly important to the North East. Before Covid, people in our area used public transport more than most other parts of the country. Each working day around 450,000 people travelled by bus and another 100,000 on the Tyne and Wear Metro.

Present situation

- Public transport is for essential travel only, and so is currently between 7% (Metro) and 15% (bus) of normal daily trips in the region, although this is growing.
- Metro has returned to its weekday peak time frequency (every 3 minutes)
- Buses are currently operating a Sunday-like timetable, but there are plans to scale back up subject to funding.
- Traffic levels are rising fast. Early lockdown it was -65% of pre-Covid levels, now back to -35%.
- The government has provided additional funding for Metro, which will enable Nexus to reintroduce a normal timetable and sustain services up to 4th August.
- The absence of fare-paying passengers means that funding for buses is being provided almost entirely by the public sector during lockdown, of which approximately 42% is from central government and 54% from local government.

Tyne and Wear Metro and Nexus

Metro is the light rail network for the Tyne and Wear area of North East England. It delivers accessible, sustainable transport, fulfilling 36.4 million passenger journeys in 2018/19. With a fleet of 89 trains serving 60 stations, Metro is a vertically-integrated system, owned and operated by Nexus, the Tyne and Wear Passenger Transport Executive. Metro is part of everyday life in Tyne and Wear, an essential part of the fabric of the region and accessible to over 40% of the population.

For Metro, advising against all but essential travel has been a success. A reduced timetable was implemented for people travelling to hospitals, supermarkets or those who cannot work from home, including frontline NHS staff.

However, this led to heavy financial losses as a result of fare income plummeting. April 2020, saw passenger levels fall by 95.5% in comparison to the same period last year.

Government has agreed to provide Nexus with £16.2m of emergency funding for the Metro. This support has been announced in two tranches; an initial £8.6m for the period 17 March to 9 June which was confirmed on 12 May and a further £7.6m announced on 23 May for the period 12 May to 4 August. Whilst on the face of it, this second tranche of funding appears to be less than the first tranche of funding, the second tranche is back dated to 12 May, so there is a four-week period where the first and second tranches overlap. This means that the second tranche is better for Nexus and is designed to effectively cover its net losses in their entirety (this will necessarily include additional costs incurred in response to the Covid-19 emergency e.g. extra deep cleaning, signage, PPE and IT costs to facilitate homeworking).

There was a funding gap from the first tranche of emergency support and this was earlier estimated at £1.8m, for which Nexus has asked DfT for an explanation and for it to be recovered.

The new funding package is 'subject to a four weekly review where funding could go up or down depending on the outturn service levels, revenues and costs'.

Social distancing measures mean that it will be a long time before Metro returns to normal passenger numbers. Nexus will therefore continue its dialogue with civil servants about the need for additional financial support for the remainder of the year at the very least.

The outlook for future demand is also unclear. Nexus has undertaken research amongst its insight panel, which suggests 24% of people currently expect to use public transport less when things return to normal, and 45% expect to work from home more. If this is accurate this would represent further damage to the incomes of operators in the longer term.

It is also important to note that we still await confirmation from the government of long-term capital and revenue funding for the Metro; we had understood that this was imminent before the Coronavirus crisis hit, and it is all the more important now.

Bus

Buses are essential to the North East's economy. In our region in 2018/19, there were 162.4 million bus passenger journeys, making buses our most-used form of public transport and our region the 4th highest in England for bus use per household.

Local authorities in the North East have budgeted to spend around £70m on bus services and concessions during 2020/21, which equates to £1.35m per week.

However, Covid-19 has had a catastrophic effect on bus use, passenger numbers in our region down were by 90% in April. Bus operators have reported farebox revenues collected from passengers in the North East have collapsed to around 5-10% of their normal levels.

The collapse in bus ridership for all other journey purposes during the lockdown phase has required urgent action in the form of a financial rescue to keep bus companies afloat.

The government has requested that local authorities maintain their payments to bus operators at pre-pandemic levels. This means payments for concessionary travel reimbursements are being maintained, even though the actual number of concessionary travel passholders is a tiny fraction of what it was. And payments for secured bus services are being maintained, even though local authorities have agreed that some of those bus services should not be operated.

Central government has maintained Bus Service Operator Grant (BSOG) at pre-pandemic levels and implemented an emergency funding stream.

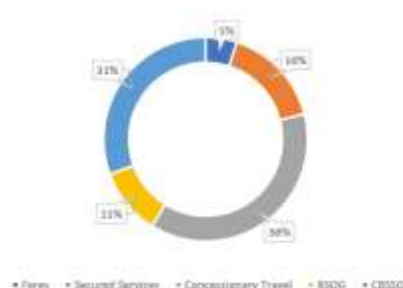
This has resulted in buses being almost entirely publicly funding, with local government providing a major share but with almost no control over services.

Bus industry revenues before and during lockdown

- Prior to COVID19 lockdown:
 - 61% from passenger fares
 - 33% from local authorities
 - 6% from central Government



- During COVID19 lockdown:
 - 5% from passenger fares
 - 54% from local authorities
 - 42% from central Government



While local authorities have agreed to make these payments in the short term, subject to some conditions, this is not a position that is sustainable in the long term. Local authorities are mandated to spend money to deliver service outcomes, not to simply maintain the finances of private businesses.

Social Distancing

Social distancing presents a significant challenge to public transport. Keeping passengers 2 metres apart reduces the capacity of vehicles and of spaces such as interchanges and station platforms. Put simply, this reduction of network capacity significantly reduces revenues placing financial pressure on operators.

- Floor markings, passenger information and station layouts have been amended accordingly.
- General observations from staff are that the social distancing is being kept to in most cases, but less than 20% of travellers are wearing face coverings
- The need to leave a 2m gap between people limits capacity on buses and Metro to no more than 20% of pre-Covid levels on each vehicle, so potentially only 100k passengers each day, compared with 500k pre-covid and we are concerned about where the surplus trips will go.
- We are concerned that our roads will rapidly become gridlocked. Air quality and carbon emissions will worsen, productivity will be reduced, and road-related deaths and injuries will grow.

Where will the 400k daily displaced passengers go?

- Based on rough assumptions it is possible that 25% of previous public transport trips will convert to homeworking, 25% won't travel at all (e.g. through unemployment or reduced desire to travel), and 25% may walk or cycle instead
- This would generate an extra 100k car trips across the region each day, mostly to and from town and city centres. By way of comparison, pre-Covid there were approx. 70k trips across the Tyne Bridge each day.
- This is likely to affect city centres disproportionately given their reliance on public transport
- It is unclear at this point whether car travel in general will reduce because of reduced economic activity or increased homeworking.

The Tyne Tunnels

The Tyne Tunnels are owned by the Tyne & Wear local authorities and are operated by TT2 Ltd as Concessionaire under a contract which runs to 2037. Last year 55,000 customers used the Tunnels each day.

Traffic flows through the tunnels have been greatly affected by Covid-19 measures and traffic is down by approximately 70% on normal expected traffic. This has had a profound effect on toll revenues that are used to service debts incurred in building the second road tunnel.

TT2 Ltd has worked tirelessly during March and April to keep the tunnels open for key workers and emergency services during lockdown. The two traffic tunnels and the pedestrian and cycle tunnels have remained fully operational throughout the lockdown period despite staff shortages, social distancing and severely depleted income from tolling.

TT2 Ltd has made a formal request asking for 'supplier relief' requesting shadow toll payments be made at normal levels for April, May and June which would equate to payments of approximately £4.8 million. A request has been made to the DfT to provide access to financial support for TT2 Ltd, in the same way that other sectors have been supported through this period. The Combined Authorities support the request and urge the government to provide this assistance.

The prospects for the long term economic revival of the Tyne Tunnels look more promising than for public transport, as traffic flows are likely to increase later this year. However, the Combined Authorities are concerned about the drastic reduction in TT2's income which is not only causing significant short-term issues, but also jeopardises investment in longer-term future work programmes, such as the Tyne Pass free-flow project. This project was planned for 2021 and was intended to bring tangible benefits for the region as it would increase tunnel capacity, cut journey times, significantly reduce emissions and create 80 new local jobs in 2021.

Difference of government approach to funding

We would also like to highlight the difference of government approach to funding for rail, bus and local government managed systems. In the case of rail, almost immediate decision to switch to management contracts with no risk to private sector. For the Bus industry, the government made a

fairly quick decision to provide public support to private sector leading to very limited risk to private sector. For Light rail/metro – there was a protracted decision-making during which systems had to operate at risk.

The Future

Despite government advice to avoid public transport use as people return to their place of work, in our region, the public transport network will continue to be the only option for many people to get around given that car ownership is lower than anywhere in else in England other than London. As we start to look ahead to our local economy restarting, it is impossible to overstate the importance of having frequent and reliable public transport services to get people around. Without it, those who do not drive will lose access to employment and vital services, and those who can drive will of course do so. We know that the current Metro and Local rail network already delivers an economic value per passenger of £8.50.

We believe that a new model for public transport is urgently needed in the North East. Local transport authorities should be responsible for commissioning and, where necessary, procuring all of the transport that their communities and businesses need. This includes buses, the Tyne and Wear Metro, the Shields Ferry, and local rail services provided by Northern Rail which of course is already back under central government control but has limited input from our local decision-makers. This model must be supported by a long-term devolved funding settlement from central government that is sufficient to restore transport to pre-crisis levels as a minimum.

Summary of key asks to government

- The creation of adequate devolved long-term funding streams for all public transport provision in our area;
- A commitment to change legislation so that we have the powers we need to deliver integrated and effective local transport in the North East through local government bodies;
- A recognition that social distancing breaks the traditional public transport model, and for as long as it is in place, a new model is required which will require extra funding and a lot of thought
- In order to give confidence to the public we need the government to have a major push on the use of face coverings on public transport
- The government needs to reinforce messaging to employers that we need to spread the peak over the day using flexible working hours and staggered shifts
- We need major and rapid investment in facilities for walking and cycling. Some announcements on funding have been made but there is no clarity on them as yet.
- The 54% of bus funding provided by local government is a new cost (around £70m annually across the NE); this is neither fair nor sustainable given the many pressures on local government created by the Covid crisis. We need a new model for bus funding.
- The support of Ministers and officials in the Department for Transport, HM Treasury, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, and any other part of government that can assist.

North East Joint Transport Committee

Date: 9 June 2020

Subject: North East Transport Plan Update

Report of: Managing Director, Transport North East.

Executive Summary

At Joint Transport Committee (JTC) in November 2019, the Transport Plan vision of 'Moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East' was agreed alongside some accompanying principals and objectives. At a subsequent meeting, a set of technical Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were discussed for inclusion in the technical document which will support our plan, and which are intended to monitor the performance of our plan. Because of Covid-19, three of these indicators are performing positively at present.

This paper asks JTC to confirm that the Vision, Principals and Objectives of the Transport Plan still stand in the light of the Covid-19 crisis; and that interventions included in the Transport Plan should seek to preserve positive outcomes and contribute to the region's economic recovery.

Recommendations

The North East Joint Transport Committee is recommended to;

- Note the contents of this report;
- Agree that the current vision, objectives and principles which are driving the development of the Transport Plan remain unchanged; and
- Note the list of KPIs and agree that the transport plan should include initiatives, which seek to preserve the current positive performance of these indicators; whilst supporting the economic recovery of the region once the Covid crisis has passed.

1. Background Information

1.1 In November 2019, JTC endorsed the Plan’s vision, objectives and principles. This endorsement has enabled the Plan to begin to be developed and for the Plan to be based on clear evidence and data. The approved vision, principles and objectives are set out below-

1.2

Vision	“Moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East”
Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• One total network• Look to the future• A great experience• North East pride and passion; and• Sound evidence and commitment to deliver for the region
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Carbon- neutral transport• Overcome inequality and grow our economy• Healthier North East• Appealing sustainable transport choices; and• Safe, secure network

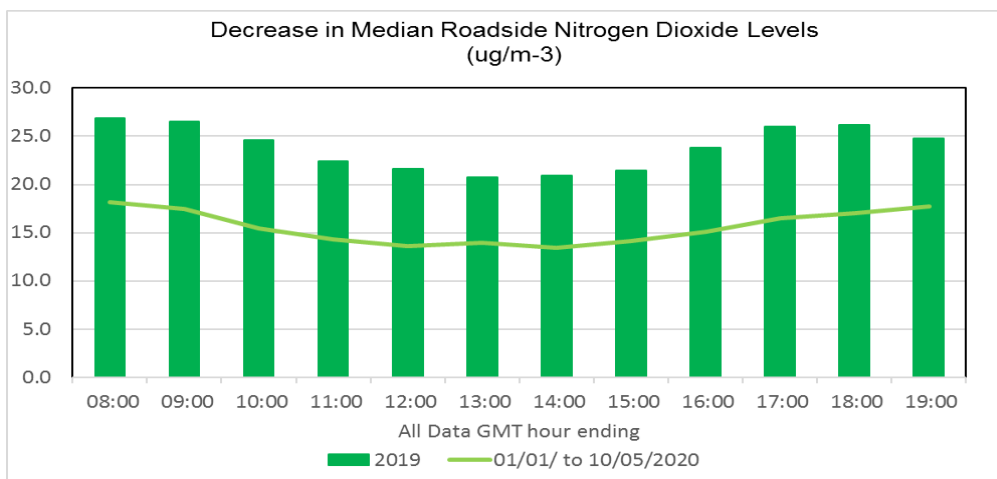
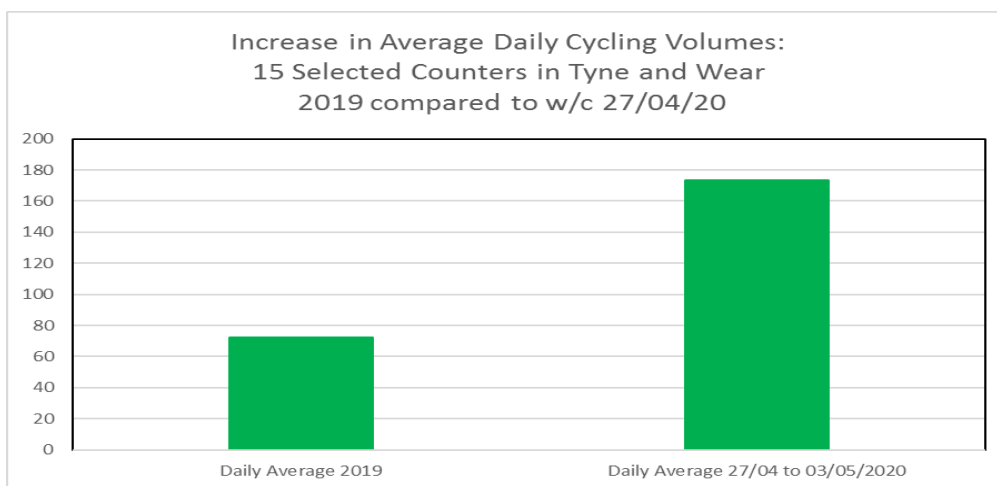
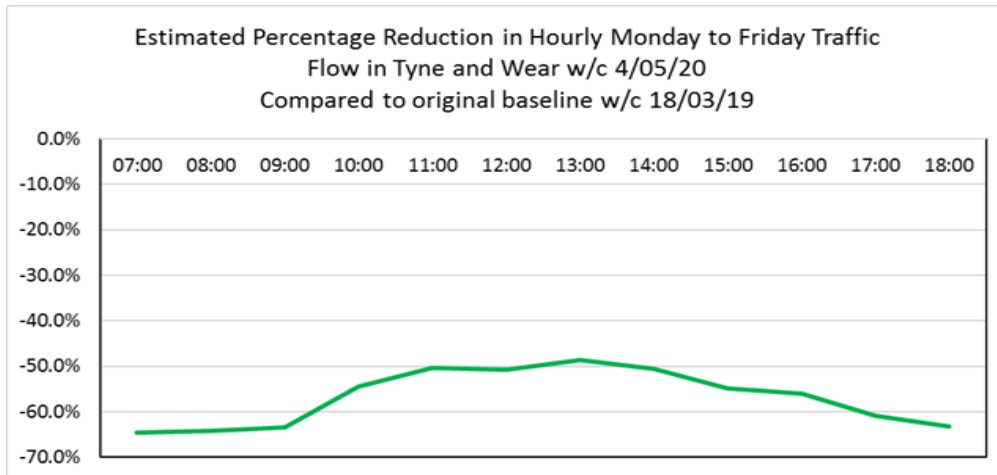
1.3 Key Performance Indicators

1.4 A series of technical KPIs intended to be used in the technical document to support the transport plan were discussed at JTC March 2020. Appendix A sets out the KPIs.

1.5 Road Network Efficiency, cycling numbers and Air Quality have been positively affected during COVID-19 and the associated lockdown. This has resulted in the KPIs relating to these measures performing positively at present.

1.6 The graphs below highlight that since the onset of the lockdown, there has been a decrease in traffic flows, increased uptake of walking and cycling and significant reductions in Nitrogen Dioxide levels.

1.7



1.8 **Timescales**

1.9 Development of the North East Transport plan continues, recognising the need to adjust the narrative of the plan to reflect the current situation and the revised role the transport network will need to play as a key enabler to economic growth and recovery following the COVID-19 lockdown.

- 1.10 To enable full exploration of the opportunities for transport to contribute to economic recovery the timescales for the development of the Plan are currently being revisited; however, the hope is the plan will still be delivered within this financial year.
- 1.11 The Transport Strategy Unit is currently working with a supplier to identify the best approach to carry out research with businesses, the results of which will be used to ensure synergy between business requirements and the Plan. Timescales for the Big Transport Conversation are also being reconsidered

2.	Proposals
2.1	It is proposed that members note the contents and agree that the vision, objectives and principles remain unchanged; and that the transport plan should seek to preserve positive outcomes from the Covid-19 crisis.
3.	Reasons for the Proposals
3.1	The vision, objectives and principles were decided as long term aspirations for our region and reaffirmation of them is essential for the ongoing development of the Plan.
4.	Alternative Options Available
4.1	Option 1 – The North East Joint Transport Committee may accept the recommendation set out in paragraph 2.1 above.
4.2	Option 2 – The North East Joint Transport Committee may not accept the recommendations set out in paragraph 2.1 above
4.3	Option 1 is the recommended option.
5.	Next Steps and Timetable for Implementation
5.1	Following agreement of the proposals outlined in paragraph 2.1, the Transport Strategy Unit will continue to develop the regional Transport Plan.
6.	Potential Impact on Objectives
6.1	Development of a high-quality sustainable transport network that provides excellent connectivity around the region will assist in meeting the objectives of the North of Tyne Combined Authority and North East Combined Authority, and their constituent members.

7.	Financial and Other Resources Implications
7.1	There are no financial or other resource implications arising from the report.
8.	Legal Implications
8.1	The Joint Transport Committee is legally responsible for preparing a single Transport Plan for the area of the two Combined Authorities, NECA and NoTCA. There are no other legal implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.
9.	Key Risks
9.1	It is vital that the region has a strategic transport plan which sets out our aspirations and interventions relating to transport needs for all sectors of the region; delays to the development of the Plan could have negative consequences.
10.	Equality and Diversity
10.1	Reduction of social inequality is a key goal of the plan and improved alternatives to car use will benefit all members of the community, as well as helping to address poor air quality, the effects of which are most acute for those with existing health conditions.
11.	Crime and Disorder
11.1	One objective of the plan is to improve confidence in safety and security for those using all modes of transport in the region
12.	Consultation/Engagement
12.1	LA7 Heads of Transport and Transport Strategy Board have been consulted on the proposals in this paper.
13.	Other Impact of the Proposals
13.1	No specific impacts
14.	Appendices
14.1	Appendix A- Transport Plan KPIs
15.	Background Papers
15.1	Agenda Item 7- North East Transport Plan, NEJTC, 19 th November 2019 Agenda Item 7- North East Transport Plan Update, NEJTC, 17 th March 2020
16.	Contact Officers
16.1	Rachelle Forsyth-Ward, Strategic Transport Advisor, Rachelle.forsyth-ward@northeastca.gov.uk

	Kim Farrage, Senior Specialist Transport Planner, kim.farrage@northeastca.gov.uk
17.	Sign off
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Proper Officer for Transport: • Head of Paid Service: • Monitoring Officer: • Chief Finance Officer:
18.	Glossary

Appendix A- Transport Plan KPIs

KPI	Objectives				
	Carbon Neutral North East	Overcome inequality and strong economy	Healthier North East	Appealing sustainable transport choices	Safe, secure network
Transport emissions per capita (tonnes CO ₂)					
Ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEVs) as a proportion of all licensed vehicles at the end of the year					
The percentage of properties that can access 200,000 jobs within 60 minutes by public transport.					
Annual mean average NO ₂ (ug/m ³) at all Automatic Urban and Rural Network sites in LA7					
Road network efficiency measure using the Teletrac Navman (Trafficmaster) dataset					
Trips per person per year by mode					
Infrastructure measures. (km of segregated cycle ways and public charging infrastructure)					
Total annual mileage Motor vehicle traffic (vehicle miles).					
Numbers killed and seriously injured, three year rolling average.					
Number of slight injuries, three year rolling average					
Perception surveys for modes					
The cost of travel by mode between selected origin-destination pairs					

This page is intentionally left blank

North East Joint Transport Committee

Date: 9 June 2020

Subject: Proper Officer for Transport - Delegations

Report of: Monitoring Officer

Executive Summary

The report recommends a list of powers to be delegated to the Proper Officer for Transport to support the effective delivery of the Joint Transport Committee's functions. The powers proposed are consistent with those held by other Chief Officers within the North East Combined Authority, the accountable body for the Joint Transport Committee, and include powers facilitating operational delivery of the transport function to be exercised in agreement with the Chief Finance Officer and/or the Monitoring Officer.

Recommendations

The North East Joint Transport Committee is recommended to agree to the delegations to the Proper Officer for Transport as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, for inclusion in the Committee's Standing Orders.

1. Background Information

1.1 Article 9(5) of the Newcastle Upon Tyne, North Tyneside and Northumberland Combined Authority (Establishment and Functions) Order 2018 ('the 2018 Order') requires the Joint Transport Committee to designate an officer as 'the proper officer for transport', being 'the principal officer to assist the committee in its exercise of the transport functions exercisable by the committee'.

1.2 In addition, the Joint Transport Committee's Standing Orders (January 2019) identify the following as the duties of the Proper Officer for Transport:

- a) working with the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Joint Transport Committee, its Committees or Sub-committees to recommend the business to be considered at each meeting;
- b) Working with the staff of the North East Combined Authority to develop a committee timetable which meets the needs of the Joint Transport Committee work programme;
- c) To co-ordinate the reports on the use of delegated authority discussed in Part 4.5 of these Standing Orders;
- d) To work closely with the Chief Executives of the Constituent Authorities to determine matters of the highest strategic authority in relation to regional transport matters.

As a new post, the Joint Transport Committee's Standing Orders as agreed in January 2019, did not include a list of delegated powers to the Proper Officer for Transport, other than those applicable generally to chief officers within the NECA Scheme of Delegation. Therefore, consideration has been given to an appropriate scheme of delegation to the Proper Officer to enable streamlined decision-making to support operational delivery, while incorporating appropriate checks and balances through the application of thresholds and/or the agreement of other chief officers of the JTC.

2. Reasons for the Proposals

2.1 To enable effective and timely decision-making in supporting operational delivery of the transport function.

3. Alternative Options Available

3.1 The Committee may wish to make alterations to the recommended scheme of delegation or decline to approve it..

4. Next Steps and Timetable for Implementation

4.1 If agreed, the delegations to the Proper Officer for Transport will come into effect immediately and the consequent changes to the Joint Transport Committee's Standing Orders will be made by the Monitoring Officer in due course.

5. Potential Impact on Objectives

- 5.1 Agreement to the delegations proposed will allow for effective and timely decision-making on behalf of the Joint Transport Committee while maintaining a system of good governance.

6. Financial and Other Resources Implications

- 6.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from the recommendation.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 The recommendation is consistent with the intention within the 2018 Order for the Proper Officer for Transport to assist the Joint Transport Committee in the exercise of its transport functions.

8. Key Risks

- 8.1 Any risks associated with the decision making powers from a committee to a single officer are mitigated by the application of maximum thresholds and the requirement for certain decisions to be made only with the agreement of other statutory officers of the Joint Transport Committee.

9. Equality and Diversity

- 9.1 There are no implications for equalities and diversity arising directly from this report.

10. Crime and Disorder

- 10.1 There are no implications for Crime and Disorder arising directly from this report.

11. Consultation/Engagement

- 11.1 The Proper Officer for Transport, Monitoring Officer, Chief Finance Officer and Transport Strategy Board have been consulted on the proposals.

12. Other Impact of the Proposals

- 12.1 The proposals comply with the principles of sound decision-making and enable the Joint Transport Committee to properly discharge its functions.

13. Appendices

- 13.1 Appendix 1: Proper Officer for Transport - List of Delegated Powers

14. Background Papers

- 14.1 None.

15. Contact Officers

15.1 Mike Barker, Strategic Director, Corporate Services & Governance
Gateshead Council, MikeBarker@Gateshead.Gov.Uk , Tel. No: 0191 433 2100

16. Sign off

- The Proper Officer for Transport:
- Monitoring Officer:
- Chief Finance Officer:

17. Glossary

JTC – Joint Transport Committee

NECA – North East Combined Authority

NoTCA – North of Tyne Combined Authority

Delegations - The Proper Officer for Transport

The Proper Officer for Transport, as authorised by Article 9 of the Second Order, may exercise the delegated powers set out below in accordance with all applicable legislation, the Rules of Procedure and Financial Regulations of NECA and/or the JTC.

1. The day to day routine management supervision and control of services provided for the JTC by staff under his/her control.

2. In relation to staff and staffing matters within his/her direct or indirect line management responsibility:
 - (i) Day to day management of staff
 - (ii) Appointment, dismissal and disciplinary action powers
 - (iii) Determination of staff grievances
 - (iv) Determination of applications for paid and unpaid leave and overtime, expenses, loans and ex-gratia payments
 - (v) Determination of the payment of removal expenses, lodging allowances or travelling allowances
 - (vi) Determination of the proposals to attend training courses

3. Contracts and Accounts:
 - (i) The disposal of surplus or obsolete equipment to the person submitting the highest quotation up to a limit of £10,000 in value
 - (ii) The acceptance of the tender or quotation duly assessed as being the lowest or the most economically advantageous:
 - a) For the supply of goods, materials or services for which financial provision has been made in JTC's Revenue Budget up to a limit of £100,000 in value for any one transaction, and
 - b) For building and civil engineering works provided that the value of the tender is within the estimate previously approved by the JTC and does not exceed £250,000
 - (iii) The invitation of quotations for contracts not exceeding £25,000 in value for the supply of goods, materials or services or the execution of works from at least three persons, subject to financial provision having been made in the Revenue or Capital Budget of the JTC.
 - (iv) The provision of services or the purchase of materials or minor items of equipment up to a total of £10,000 within one order or series of related orders for which provision has been made in the revenue estimates.

4. Subject to the agreement of the Chief Finance Officer:
 - (i) To negotiate and agree price increases where a contract provides for such increases to be negotiated and agreed by the parties
 - (ii) Where a contract contains provision for the extension to the contract period, the exercise of such extensions
 - (iii) Agreeing the assignment or novation of a contract
 - (iv) Write off debts up to an individual limit of £10,000

5. Subject to the agreement of the Monitoring Officer and Chief Finance Officer (and any other consents or approvals required to be obtained under any enactment or contractual obligation):
 - (i) To acquire by agreement any interest in land and property up to a value of £250,000 provided there is appropriate capital provision
 - (ii) To accept any offer or tender and agree and arrange for the disposal of any interest in land or property, provided the offer or tender does not exceed £250,000 and is the best consideration that can reasonably be obtained
 - (iii) To dispose of any interest in land or property at less than best consideration where the disposal will help the JTC secure the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of the area
 - (iv) To grant access to land or property by third parties for filming, performance or educational purposes for any consideration (or none) considered appropriate
 - (v) To make compensation payments relating to the new Tyne crossing
6. In agreement with the Monitoring Officer:
 - (i) To secure, receive and act upon notices, give or refuse consents, issue determinations, apply for permissions, make orders, grant licences, request the Monitoring Officer to take legal action, or take any other appropriate action to safeguard or promote the interests of the JTC or to prevent or mitigate harm to persons, property or the environment
 - (ii) To enter into contract documentation following tender/bid acceptance
7. To authorise in writing other employees under his/her control to act on his/her behalf in the exercise of delegations.
8. The Proper Officer for Transport should not exercise these delegated powers where:
 - (i) The matter or function is reserved to the JTC or NECA
 - (ii) The matter or function cannot by law be discharged by an officer
 - (iii) The Head of Paid Service, the Monitoring Officer or the Chief Finance Officer has directed that a delegated function should not be exercised in any particular instance
 - (iv) The JTC or NECA or any sub-committee has determined that a delegated function should not be exercised in any particular instance
9. Before exercising delegated powers, the Proper Office for Transport should consider the appropriateness of exercising such powers bearing in mind any strategic, reputational or financial impact and should consult the Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer and Chief Finance Officer if in any doubt.

North East Joint Transport Committee

Date: 9 June 2020

Subject: Programme of Committee Meetings, Municipal Year 2020/21

Report of: Deputy Monitoring Officer

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to invite Members to agree a programme of committee meetings for the Municipal Year 2020/21.

The programme of meetings is intended to assist the Joint Transport Committee (JTC) in discharging its functions effectively. The programme has been developed in consultation with the constituent combined authorities.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Joint Transport Committee agrees the proposed programme of committee meetings, as set out in Appendix A.

North East Joint Transport Committee

1. Background Information

- 1.1 The Newcastle Upon Tyne, North Tyneside and Northumberland Combined Authority (Establishment and Functions) Order 2018 (the Order) requires NECA and NTCA to appoint a Joint Transport Committee in accordance with Schedule 2 to exercise functions specified by the Order.
- 1.2 To support an effective discharge of those functions, the Joint Transport Committee is invited to approve a programme of committee meetings, as set out in Appendix A.
- 1.3 The proposed programme of committee meetings was developed in consultation with the constituent combined authorities and is based around key areas of work, effective reporting structure, efficiency and requirements of internal and external audit.
- 1.4 It is anticipated that for at least part of the municipal year, meetings will be held virtually, with members attending remotely in accordance with the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

2. Proposals

- 2.1 The Joint Transport Committee and its committees are advised to meet according to the programme of meetings set out in Appendix A.

3. Reasons for the Proposals

- 3.1 The Joint Transport Committee is required to have an effective committee structure. The proposals would help the Joint Transport Committee to discharge its functions effectively.

4. Alternative Options Available

- 4.1 Whilst the programme of committee meetings was developed to ensure efficiency and effectiveness and no alternative options are proposed at this stage, a level of flexibility is required to enable the committees to add, rearrange or cancel meetings in accordance with demand.

North East Joint Transport Committee

5. Next Steps and Timetable for Implementation

- 5.1 If agreed, the programme of meetings will be published and shared with key stakeholders.

Potential Impact on Objectives

- 6.1 As part of decision-making processes, the Joint Transport Committee is required to have an effective committee structure. Having a programme of meetings will assist in the delivery of objectives.

7. Financial and Other Resources Implications

- 7.1 The proposed programme of meetings was designed to minimise costs whilst supporting effective governance.

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

9. Key Risks

- 9.1 The proposed programme of meetings is aimed at assisting the Joint Transport Committee with the operation of an effective governance structure. A published programme of meetings supports the effective planning of business and decision making and supports openness and transparency.

10. Equality and Diversity

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

11. Other Impact of the Proposals

- 11.1 The proposals comply with the principles of decision-making.
- 11.2 The proposals were designed in consultation with the constituent combined authorities.

12. Appendices

- 12.1 Appendix A: Programme of Committee Meetings, Municipal Year 2020/21.

North East Joint Transport Committee

13. Background Papers

- 13.1 The Newcastle Upon Tyne, North Tyneside and Northumberland Combined Authority (Establishment and Functions) Order 2018.
- 13.2 The Durham, Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland Combined Authority Order 2014 (SI 2014 No.1012) as amended by the Second Order.

14. Contact Officers

- 14.1 Mike Barker, Deputy Monitoring Officer
Email: mikebarker@gateshead.gov.uk; Tel: 0191 433 2100

15. Sign off

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

16. Glossary

- 16.1 The Order - The Newcastle Upon Tyne, North Tyneside and Northumberland Combined Authority (Establishment and Functions) Order 2018.
- 16.2 NECA – North East Combined Authority

Joint Transport Committee
Draft Programme of Committee Meetings
Municipal Year 2020/21

Committee	Date / Time	June 2020	July 2020	Sep 2020	Oct 2020	Nov 2020	Dec 2020	Jan 2021	Feb 2021	Mar 2021	Apr 2021	May 2021	June 2021
Joint Transport Committee	Tue 2pm		14	15	20?	17		19		16			15 AGM
Joint Transport Tyne and Wear Sub-Committee	Thurs 2pm		9	10		5		14			8		
Audit Committee	Wed 10am		1		7		9				14		
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Thurs 10am	25			1		17			25			

Venues: Information on the venue will be published five clear days before the date of the committee meeting.

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 2, 3, 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 2, 3, 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 2, 3, 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank