



## **Joint Transport Committee Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Thursday, 15th December, 2022 at 10.00 am

Meeting to be held in a Mayor's Parlour - Sunderland City Hall (SR1 3AA)

---

## **AGENDA**

---

	<b>Page No</b>
1. <b>Apologies for absence</b>	
2. <b>Declarations of Interest</b>	
3. <b>Minutes of the previous meeting held on 13.10.2022</b>	<b>3 - 10</b>
4. <b>Transport Budget 2023/24</b>	<b>11 - 38</b>
5. <b>North East Active Travel Strategy Update</b>	<b>39 - 44</b>
6. <b>Enhanced Partnership update</b>	<b>45 - 70</b>
7. <b>Public Health Speciality Trainee Placement with Transport North East</b>	<b>71 - 74</b>
8. <b>Forward Plan and Work Programme Update</b>	<b>75 - 80</b>

Contact Officer: Melvyn Mallam-Churchill  
Tel: 0191 433 2149  
E-mail: [melvynmallam-churchill@gateshead.gov.uk](mailto:melvynmallam-churchill@gateshead.gov.uk)

This page is intentionally left blank



**JOINT TRANSPORT COMMITTEE, OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**DRAFT MINUTES FOR APPROVAL**

DATE 13 October 2022

Meeting held South Shields Town Hall

**Present:** (Chair) – David Taylor-Gooby

(Vice-Chair) – Andrew Clark

Councillors: Paul Donaghy – Sunderland City Council  
Paul Dean – South Tyneside Council  
David Francis – South Tyneside Council  
Les Bowman – Northumberland Council  
Brian Gallacher – Northumberland Council  
Craig Martin – Durham City Council  
Thom Champion – Newcastle City Council  
John Eagle – Gateshead Council  
Sue Stonehouse – South Tyneside Council  
Liz McHugh – South Tyneside Council  
Kevin Shaw – Durham City Council  
Lisa Ferasin – North Tyneside Council  
Brenda Clelland – Gateshead Council

Officers: Rachelle Forsyth-Ward – Transport North East  
Philip Meikle – Transport North East  
Lucy Keating – Transport North East  
Eleanor Goodman – Transport North East  
Fiona Bootle – Transport North East  
Phil Smith – TT2  
Stephen Gwilym – Durham City Council

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillor B Coult – Durham County Council  
Councillor S Deinal – Durham County Council  
Councillor D Snowdon – Sunderland City Council

## **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor J Eagle noted his employment with Nexus as a declaration of interest. The Committee were advised that he has been given dispensation to be a member of the Committee.

RESOLVED - That the declaration of interest be noted.

## **3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 28 JULY 2022**

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on 28 July 2022 be approved as a correct record.

## **4. CONSULTATION PRINCIPLES**

The Committee were advised of the intention of Transport North East (TNE) to formalise Consultation Principles.

The draft principles define the steps TNE will take, as an officer group developing policy and strategy on behalf of the North East Joint Transport Committee (JTC) to make sure that local people have ample opportunities to have their say on the development of region-wide transport strategies and policies.

Although the methods within each consultation will vary depending on the project, the principles define the general approach to public consultation. These guidelines are flexible and will be adaptable depending on the audience and nature of the individual consultation.

The draft Transport North East Consultation Principles outline that on behalf of the JTC we will:

- Ensure that consultations last for an appropriate amount of time, as per the Government's Consultation Principles (2018)
- Consideration will be given to the timing of consultations with reference to the groups the engagement is hoping to target
- Ensure information is clear, in plain English and informative
- Outline why we are consulting and how people can get involved
- Select the most appropriate ways of consulting on a case-by-case basis
- Make use of emerging technologies and a range of activities where possible to raise awareness, ensuring it is easy for as many people as possible to get involved
- Ensure consultation is embedded in our processes and that views are listened to and incorporated as appropriate
- Fully analyse consultation responses
- Publish a summary of consultation responses and decisions taken as a result
- Continue to learn from previous public consultations

- Be mindful of equality, diversity and inclusion and ensure that there is opportunity for all persons to access and contribute
- Work with key partners (including local authorities) to ensure consultations reach residents across the North East (including Durham, Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside and Sunderland).

The principles are still in draft form and will be taken to the Joint Transport Committee in November for approval.

It was suggested that dependent upon the subject being consulted upon that efforts are made to make sure the consultation is done properly to get across the message. It was noted that in a recent consultation the questions were open ended. It was suggested that efforts be made to get the consultation to the right people. It was noted that for example some residents have indicated they didn't get a chance to offer opinion as they were unable to access the consultation on line.

It was suggested that we are mindful of non English speakers and other options to make sure consultations are fully inclusive.

It was noted that currently questionnaires aren't automatically translated into alternative languages but can be on request the option for large print and audio versions are also built into the consultation strategy.

RESOLVED - That the information presented be noted.

## **5. MAKING THE RIGHT TRAVEL CHOICE STRATEGY**

The Committee were informed of 'Making the Right Travel Choice' strategy. The strategy sets a target to encourage car users to switch one journey a week to public transport, walking or cycling and for people who don't have access to a car to continue to travel sustainably. This could result in around 200 million additional trips being made by sustainable transport every year, improving our environment and the health of local people.

In July 2022, the North East Joint Transport Committee (JTC) granted approval for the draft Strategy to progress to consultation. The consultation period commenced on 20 July and ended on 15 September.

The approach to the consultation was two-pronged. A public facing engagement campaign asked people what they think could be done to get people to travel sustainably more often. As well as this a formal consultation exercise with stakeholders also took place including, partners, business organisations, youth organisations, community groups and local transport operators.

The strategy will help tackle, poor air quality, physical inactivity and a reduction in CO2 emissions of around 214,000 tonnes in one year. It is acknowledged in the strategy that due to the region's diverse urban and rural mix there needs to be different solutions and expectations for peoples and businesses.

At the end of the consultation, we received-

- 674 responses to the public online survey
- 310 comment cards from the face to face events
- 57 responses to the stakeholder online survey
- Over 1,000 pieces of engagement in total

### **Stakeholder feedback**

- Across the engagement there was overall support for the strategy and headline target;
- Support that the strategy recognises that a “one size fits all” approach will not achieve the strategy’s target;
- Widespread support for the central target;
- Support for the introduction of the personas;
- Some stakeholders queried whether the target was ambitious enough;
- There was a request that there could be further inclusions made on alternative forms of transport e.g. community transport.

### **Public feedback**

- There needs to be greater emphasis on making public transport more attractive as an alternative to car use;
- We received a lot off feedback from face-to-face interactions that people are already prioritising green travel wherever possible;
- Responses indicated that people would be more likely to swap modes if car was a less appealing option, and if things like parking charges were increased and parking facilities reduced;
- Many responses highlighted that cost would be a key driver in making public transport a more viable transport option;
- There needs to be improvements to the walking and cycling network.

Following the conclusion of the consultation period, the following approach is being taken-

- All feedback which has been received has been reviewed by the project team in conjunction with senior managers;
- Key themes which emerged from the feedback have been discussed and an agreed process of how to embed the topic into the Strategy will be taken;
- A report which sets out all of the key feedback and how we intend to respond is currently being drafted. This will include some topics which may not be relevant to the Strategy. In these cases, we will set out why this feedback will not be embedded into a final draft.
- In addition, there may be some feedback which we utilise for future strategies, including the NE Active Travel Strategy;
- Members will be updated on this process and provided with a copy of the report.
- TNE will seek approval at NEJTC in November to publish the final Strategy.

The Committee commented that the felt that this was a really good aspiration to have. It was however suggested that the alternatives need to be more attractive than the car for people to use them.

It was also noted that care needed to be taken if thinking about introducing parking charges or increasing parking charges. It should be noted that Northumberland Council have taken the decision not to charge for parking in town centres. It was noted that car parking is not included in this strategy and is likely to be considered as part of the Road Infrastructure Strategy.

Committee members advised that they were supportive of the introduction of personas as a way of helping people understand options. It was also noted that it was positive that people

are already thinking about alternative travel options. It was noted that Committee members would like to see more improvements to cycle paths and footpaths.

It was suggested that the members of the Committee watch South Tyneside's give yourself a lift video which was also about encouraging different travel options.

It was queried what consultation was undertaken with Local Authorities and it was also suggested that work be undertaken with school children as parents dropping off their children cause traffic congestion for quite an intense timeframe of about 40 minutes.

It was noted that Transport North East work very closely with Heads of Transport within the Local Authorities and they have seen very early drafts of the strategy. It was also noted that in terms of general infrastructure there are several areas of funding such as the Active Travel Fund and the Transforming Cities fund which pass through Transport North East to Local Authorities. It is useful for officers to identify what could be put in the pipeline for the schemes to then be developed.

It was noted that in terms of more isolated communities and rural / smaller communities struggle to not use cars as busses stop at 8pm at night and sometimes only come once per hour.

Generally the Committee were encouraged by what they were hearing in terms of the move to a more greener sustainable environment.

It was noted that currently we don't have a co-ordination of fares between busses and trains and also the added difficulty of reliability.

RESOLVED - that the comments of the Committee be noted when presenting the final version of the 'Making the Right Choice' Strategy to the Joint Transport Committee.

## **6. TRANSPORT BUDGET 2023/24**

The Committee were presented with a report setting out the process and timetable for the approval of the levies and other budgets relating to the Joint Transport Committee. At its meeting on 18 October the Joint Transport Committee will receive a report which had been due to be considered on 13 September but due to the death of Her Majesty was postponed.

The budget proposals will be developed and consulted upon over the coming months and decisions on the levies and other aspects of the Transport Budget will be taken by the JTC on 17 January 2023.

Proposals for the Durham and Northumberland levies will be driven by the Transport budgets for those authorities which are being prepared in tandem. The Tyne and Wear Levy is largely determined by the grant required by Nexus, with £2.1m currently retained to fund cost relating to the former Tyne and Wear Integrated Transport Authority and contributions to the work of Transport North East (TNE). It is recommended that this retained levy amount is kept at the same level for 2023/24.

The current recommendation is for the top-slice of the Local Transport Plan (LTP) Integrated Transport Block grant funding towards the TNE team to be maintained at the current level of £0.500m (equal shares equating to £0.063m per authority).

The report sets out that based on the initial estimates, indications are that it will be necessary to increase the Tyne and Wear Transport Levy in both 2023/24 and 2024/25, as reported during the 2022/23 budget setting process. Initial forecasts suggest an increase to the levy of 4% (£2.6m) in 2023/24 and 3/75% £.5m) in 2024/25 will be necessary. Nexus is experiencing significant inflationary budget pressures, particular in relation to high voltage power and the position relative to the Medium Term financial Plan (MTFP) presented to the JTC in January 2022m the position for 2023/24 and beyond has worsened significantly.

In order to set a break-even budget on the Tyne Tunnels, an increase will be required to the tolls for Class 2 and Class 3 vehicles early in the 2023 calendar year. These increase are necessary in order to meet increase in payments to TT2 under the concession contract which increase in line with Retail Prices Index (RPI) inflation. A report will be presented to the Tyne and Wear Sub Committee for consideration and decision at their meeting on 3 November.

The Committee raised the issue that it wasn't possible to really provide comments or scrutinise as there was little detail in the report. It was noted that the scrutiny committee won't get the budget until December. The report to the JTC in November will have cost proposals. The Committee were advised that there will be very much more detailed costs and will come back to this Committee before it goes to the JTC.

The Committee advised that they would like to see the financial plan with information that we currently have and some sort of a forecast in terms of this is the way we are going.

It was noted that the report presented to the OSC this time last year contained more detail. Whilst it is appreciated that there is more uncertainty this year when going into a public report there needs to be an honesty with the public and we need to be making sure they are aware times are challenging at the moment.

It was also suggested it would be useful to know where we would be if current trends continue and for example if bus use has not recovered to the level it was pre-pandemic and some forecasting information as to what this would mean long term in relation to financial performance.

It was noted that there is some concern re Nexus and how much are we relying on the new units coming on line. It was noted that we don't have the figures yet, it is anticipated that in the longer term there will be better patronage of the new fleet and it will be more reliable. More detail will be brought in the next report. It was noted that there are some risks with regards to the reserves position but it is looking better and there is scope built in if there are delays.

It was queried whether there would be a different in energy costs with the new fleet. It was noted that the new trains are regenerative and will consume an awful lot of electricity. It was noted that there was a reason that the system was a Direct Current which was with regards to the limits of clearances on the metro system.

It was agreed that further discussion would take place with officers through the Chair and Vice Chair and a more detailed report would be presented which would allow members of the Committee to understand better the financial position and which would have some forecast information if the current trend were to continue.

RESOLVED - that the comments of the OSC be incorporated into the report to the Joint Transport Committee and a further report be prepared in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair.



## 7. TYNE PASS APPRAISAL

The Committee received a report on the Tyne Pass Appraisal Scheme members had already received a detailed briefing on the appraisal and the findings.

The Committee heard that the Tyne Pass Scheme for barrierless open road tolling has been in operation since November 2021 and the number of customers paying the toll successfully for their journey is on an upward trend.

The majority of customers pay the toll by pre-paid account (76% of all payments in August 2022). These customers benefit from an optimum service as they can:

- Pay before or after their journey
- Use the auto-top up facility with a linked bank card
- Received regular email alerts and reminders if their balance is running low; and
- Received a 10% discount on every journey

In August the toll was paid on time for 96.5% of journeys meaning only a small percentage of drivers (3.5%) failed to pay and received a UTCN (Unpaid Toll Charge Notice).

Journeys have been increasing while the percentage of tunnel users received a UTCN has decreased month on month since November 2021 with a slight lift in June and July and anticipated during the summer months. At the TWSC meeting on 7 July 2022 members agreed that an appraisal of the Tyne Pass scheme should be undertaken. The scheme had been operational for almost 8 months and members considered it was timely to carry out such an appraisal in order to consider the customer experience and review feedback from customers and stakeholders, both positive and negative.

The nature of the Concession contract with TT2 means that the obligations, responsibilities and the performance of TT2 are regularly assessed by Transport North East to ensure that its performance and concessionaire is satisfactory. However, an additional review was considered useful at this state to evaluate the Tyne Pass scheme so far and to plan for the future operation of the scheme as it reaches a more mature stage in the development. The appraisal will also provide transparency for the benefit of customers and the wider public to ensure that they are provided with value for money and a high quality service.

The appraisal has outlined several recommendations for the future including:

- TT2 to carry out further system development for Pre-Paid accounts to make account set-up simpler, in terms of entering car registration details.
- Hardship support to be extended to include charities and Citizens Advice branches in the wider local region
- TT2 to assess alternative banking processes to further improve payment processes; and
- Further data analysis to be carried out by Transport North East on the 'Pay by Midnight tomorrow' payment window and on customer behaviour

It was noted that what has been done at the Tyne Tunnel is fantastic and the massive impact on air quality is excellent.

It was felt that the exemption for Blue Badge Holders isn't necessarily what the Blue Badge scheme is about, it was meant to be about being able to park directly outside a store or to

manage medical appointments. It was noted that during the public consultation there was support from members of the public and the decision was taken to keep the exemption.

It was queried whether the appeals were as a result of the teething issues with the payment system. It was noted that a dashboard of appeals is published on the website. It was noted that the proportion of appeals allowed is coming down quite steadily as people become used to the systems.

It was noted that there is an issue of large vehicles/lorries tailgating which can be intimidating. It was queried whether it would be possible to have some signage.

It was noted that there has been a bigger increase in usage at weekends. It is hoped that this is because the system is improving.

RESOLVED - that the information contained within the report be noted.

## **8. FORWARD PLAN AND WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE**

The Committee received the report for the Forward Plan and Work Programme for the Committee for 2022/23.

The Committee requested that further information be brought to the Committee on the issue with Electric Vehicle Charging and the issues around the procurement of new electrical vehicles. It was suggested that there were several issues which could be discussed when discussing the ZEV Strategy. It was also suggested that the issue of what went wrong which led to the procurement process had to be cancelled.

It was suggested that if some virtual working groups were set up this could help expediate bringing something detailed to a future OSC.

It was queried whether it would be possible to look at transport to hospitals, it seems that it is becoming more difficult to get buses to hospitals.

RESOLVED - (i) That the Work Programme be noted  
(ii) That the suggestions from the Committee be noted

## **9. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will take place on 15 December 2022



## North East Joint Transport Committee Overview and Scrutiny Committee

---

**Date:** 15 December 2022

**Subject:** Transport Budget 2023/24

**Report of:** Chief Finance Officer

### Executive Summary

On 15 November 2022, the North East Joint Transport Committee (JTC) received a report setting out draft proposals for the transport levies and other budgets relating to the JTC. This report provides members of the JTC Overview and Scrutiny Committee with a full copy of the JTC report for discussion as part of the consultation process at Appendix 1.

The report to the JTC provides an update on the Forecast of Outturn for 2022/23 and sets out draft proposals for 2023/24 and indicative estimates for future years, which can be summarised as follows:

- It is proposed to increase the Tyne and Wear transport levy by 4.0% in 2023/24 (as reported to the JTC as part of last year's budget process) to enable Nexus' services to be maintained. Even with this levy increase and proposed use of reserves totalling £10.7m, due to the significant inflationary pressures (most notably HV power), Nexus is currently forecasting a deficit of £9.4m and it is therefore critical that further support from the DfT is forthcoming.
- The budget for the Tyne Tunnels takes account of the decision of the Tyne and Wear Sub Committee (TWSC) for an increase in the tolls to be applied from May 2023. This is a delay from the earliest applicable date of February 2023, keeping the toll at the current level for both Class 2 and Class 3 vehicles throughout the winter to provide relief for tunnels users during this period taking into account winter fuel bills and the current cost-of-living crisis. The income lost by holding the Class 2 tolls at the current levels for that period will be funded by Tyne Tunnels reserves.
- It is proposed to continue the contribution of £10,000 per authority towards Transport North East which is retained from the Durham and Northumberland levies. The contribution from the Tyne and Wear levy to fund central activity next year will be £2.100m, (in line with current allocations) which is mainly used to meet costs relating to the former Tyne and Wear Integrated Transport Authority, namely charges for historic debt.

- It is proposed that as a minimum, funding for Transport North East from the Local Transport Plan Integrated Transport Block is continued at £500,000, (£62,500 per council and Nexus).
- Durham and Northumberland County Councils are currently working on budget proposals which will inform the levy requirements for 2023/24 and details will be included in the report to this committee at its meeting in January 2023.

## **Recommendations**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to note the report and make any observations or recommendations on the content, which will be factored into the final budget report to be considered by the JTC at its meeting on 17 January 2023.

## **Guiding Principles for Scrutiny Members:**

The below are the key guiding principles to support the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members in reading the report in advance of the meeting to:

- consider any added value that Scrutiny can bring
  - promote effective discussion and consider the information in the report
1. The impact the matter has on individuals in the community and across the North East Combined Authority
  2. Focus on the efficiency and effectiveness of the proposals, next steps and any potential changes
  3. Consideration to any risks that may occur
  4. Scrutiny focusing on any performance management or quality assurance

## **1. Background Information and current context**

- 1.1 At its meeting on 15 November 2022, the North East Joint Transport Committee (JTC) received a report setting out the draft proposals for the transport levies and other transport budgets in 2023/24, with some indicative estimates for future years. The final proposals on the levies and other aspects of the transport budget will be recommended to the JTC for approval at its meeting on 17 January 2023.
- 1.2 This report is attached as Appendix 1. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is invited to provide comment and make any recommendations to the JTC which will be taken into account in developing the detailed proposals for the Transport Budget 2023/24.

## **2. Proposals**

- 2.1 The report at Appendix 1 provides an updated forecast of outturn for the current year, which shows an overspend against the transport grant for Durham, a small underspend for Northumberland and a lower than forecast deficit against the transport grant for Nexus. Any over or underspends are managed within the reserves of the respective organisations, with the transport levies and grants fixed for the year.
- 2.2 The report at Appendix 1 covers all areas of the JTC budget and contains the draft proposals for 2023/24 budgets. Durham and Northumberland councils are currently working on budget proposals which will inform the levy requirements for 2023/24 and details will be included in the report to this committee at its meeting in January 2023. Nexus detailed budget setting for 2023/24 is currently underway and the position for the next financial year, when the Energy Bill Relief Scheme (EBRS) comes to an end, has worsened significantly relative to the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) presented to the JTC in January 2022. The main factors being the costs of high voltage power and other inflationary pressures such as contract costs and pay awards. It is expected that a greater reliance on reserves will be required, and it is necessary that the improvement in the forecast 2022/23 position be earmarked for this.
- 2.3 It will be necessary to increase the Tyne and Wear transport levy by 4.0% in 2023/24 (as reported to the JTC as part of last year's budget process) to enable Nexus' services to be maintained. Even with this levy increase and proposed use of reserves totalling £10.7m, due to the significant inflationary pressures (most notably HV power), Nexus is currently forecasting a deficit of £9.4m and it is therefore critical that further support from the DfT is forthcoming.
- 2.4 It is proposed to continue the contribution of £10,000 per authority towards Transport North East which is retained from the Durham and Northumberland levies. The contribution from the Tyne and Wear levy to fund central activity next year will be £2.100m, (in line with current allocations) which is mainly used to meet costs relating to the former Tyne and Wear Integrated Transport Authority, namely charges for historic debt.

2.5 It is proposed that, as a minimum, funding for TNE from the Local Transport Plan Integrated Transport Block is continued at £500,000 (£62,500 per council and Nexus).

2.6 For the Tyne Tunnels for 2023/24, the Tyne and Wear Sub Committee agreed an increase in the tolls to be applied from May 2023. This is a delay from the earliest applicable date of February 2023, keeping the toll at the current level for both Class 2 and Class 3 vehicles throughout the winter to provide relief for tunnels users during this period taking into account winter fuel bills and the current cost-of-living crisis. The income lost by holding the Class 2 tolls at the current levels for that period will be funded by Tyne Tunnels reserves.

### **3. Reasons for the Proposals**

3.1 The information in this report is provided to the Committee as part of the consultation process on the budget, as set out in the NECA Constitution (in its role as Accountable Body for the JTC). The Committee is invited to provide comment and make any recommendations to the JTC which will be factored in to the final report setting out budget proposals for 2023/24 which will be recommended to the JTC at its meeting on 17 January 2023.

### **4. Alternative Options Available**

4.1 This report is presented for information and comment.

### **5. Next Steps and Timetable for Implementation**

5.1 Comments raised by the committee will be factored in to the final report setting out budget proposals for 2023/24 which will be recommended to the JTC at its meeting on 17 January 2023.

### **6. Potential Impact on Objectives**

6.1 The Transport Budget Proposals 2023/24 will seek to achieve the Transport policy objectives of the JTC.

### **7. Financial and Other Resources Implications**

7.1 Financial and other resources implications are set out in the report attached at Appendix 1.

### **8. Legal Implications**

8.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report. The Transport budget and levies must be agreed unanimously by the JTC once finalised.

### **9. Key Risks**

9.1 Appropriate risk management arrangements are put in place in each budget area by the delivery agencies responsible. Reserves are maintained to help manage financial risk to the authority.

## **10. Equality and Diversity**

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

## **11. Crime and Disorder**

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

## **12. Consultation/Engagement**

12.1 This report forms part of the consultation on 2023/24 budget proposals, as set out in the NECA Constitution (in its role as Accountable Body for the JTC).

## **13. Other Impact of the Proposals**

13.1 There are no other impacts arising from this report.

## **14. Appendices**

14.1 Appendix 1: JTC Report 15 November 2022 – Revenue Budget Proposals 2023/24 and Updated Forecast of Outturn 2022/23

## **15. Background Papers**

15.1 JTC Budget 2022/23 ([Public Pack](#))[Agenda Document for North East Joint Transport Committee, 18/01/2022 14:30 \(northeastca.gov.uk\)](#)

## **16. Contact Officers**

16.1 Eleanor Goodman, NECA Finance Manager,  
[Eleanor.goodman@northeastca.gov.uk](mailto:Eleanor.goodman@northeastca.gov.uk), 0191 433 3860

## **17. Sign off**

- 17.1
- The Proper Officer for Transport
  - Head of Paid Service:
  - Monitoring Officer:
  - Chief Finance Officer:

This page is intentionally left blank



## North East Joint Transport Committee

---

**Date:** 15 November 2022

**Subject:** Transport Budget 2023/24 and Forecast of Outturn 2022/23

**Report of:** Chief Finance Officer

### Executive Summary

This report provides the North East Joint Transport Committee (JTC) with an updated forecast of outturn for the transport revenue budgets for 2022/23, based on the position to 30 September 2022 and a summary of the draft transport budget and levies for 2023/24.

The transport levies and grants to Durham, Northumberland and Nexus are fixed for the current year so the outturn is in line with the original budget allocations.

Durham County Council are currently forecasting an overspend of £0.547m arising mainly from increased costs on secured bus services as a result of inflationary pressure and support for services withdrawn by commercial bus operators, partially offset by an anticipated underspend in Concessionary Fares.

Northumberland County Council are forecasting an underspend of £0.128m. This is due to a forecast underspend on Concessionary Travel of £0.400m partially offset by increased costs of secured bus services of £0.266m.

Durham and Northumberland councils are currently working on budget proposals which will inform the levy requirements for 2023/24 and details will be included in the report to this committee at its meeting in January 2023.

The overall forecast outturn for 2022/23 for Nexus has improved relative to the original budget. Although (as reported to the July meeting of the JTC) serious financial challenges have arisen in relation to the increasing cost of High Voltage (HV) power, additional security to tackle anti-social behaviour, bus interventions caused by turmoil in the commercial market and other inflationary pressures, these have largely been met in the current year by Local Transport Fund (LTF) grant (which had only been notified and made available after the JTC had approved the budget), additional Metro Rail Grant and savings on Network Rail Track Access charges.

Despite further pressures being identified since the summer, the forecast use of reserves in 2022/23 is £3.241m less than previously reported, largely as a result of the government's Energy Bill Relief Scheme (EBRS), where a sizeable discount on the HV power bill for Metro

is expected across the period October 2022 to March 2023. Without this intervention the expectation was that the forecasts would have deteriorated from the position reported in July.

Nexus budget setting for 2023/24 is currently underway and the position for the next financial year, when the EBRS comes to an end, has worsened significantly relative to the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) presented to the JTC in January 2022. The main factors being the costs of high voltage power and other inflationary pressures such as contract costs and pay awards. It is expected that a greater reliance on reserves will be required, and it is necessary that the improvement in the forecast 2022/23 position be earmarked for this.

It will be necessary to increase the Tyne and Wear transport levy by 4.0% in 2023/24 (as reported to the JTC as part of last year's budget process) to enable Nexus' services to be maintained. Even with this levy increase and proposed use of reserves totalling £10.7m, due to the significant inflationary pressures (most notably HV power), Nexus is currently forecasting a deficit of £9.4m and it is therefore critical that further support from the DfT is forthcoming.

It is proposed to continue the contribution of £10,000 per authority towards Transport North East which is retained from the Durham and Northumberland levies, and which funds the work of the team on behalf of the region. The contribution from the Tyne and Wear levy to fund central activity next year will be £2.1m (in line with current budgets) which also contributes to the work of TNE but is mainly used to meet costs relating to the former Tyne and Wear Integrated Transport Authority, namely charges for historic debt.

It is proposed that, as a minimum, funding for TNE from the Local Transport Plan Integrated Transport Block is continued at £500,000 (£62,500 per council and Nexus).

## **Recommendations**

The North East Joint Transport Committee is recommended to:

- i) Receive the report for information and comment;
- ii) Note the updated forecast of outturn for the 2022/23 Transport Budgets, as set out in the report;
- iii) Consider the budget assumptions/proposals set out in the report, forming the basis of consultation on the 2023/24 Transport budget;
- iv) Note that the budget proposals for Transport will be subject to a consultation process including reports to the JTC Overview and Scrutiny Committee, relevant officer groups and the Leadership Board of NECA and the NTCA Cabinet;
- v) Note the intention to approve the budget and agree the Transport levies at the meeting of the JTC on 17 January 2023.

## **1. Background Information**

- 1.1 The JTC receives funding from a variety of sources including the levies on Durham, Northumberland and Tyne and Wear councils, Tyne Tunnels income, grant funding and interest on the investment of its cash balances. This funding is used to deliver the transport objectives of the Committee through the provision of revenue grants to Durham and Northumberland councils and to Nexus for the delivery of public transport services, the funding of the Tyne Tunnels and the central strategic support provided by TNE.
- 1.2 In line with the Transport Levying Bodies Regulations 1992, the transport levies must be issued by 15 February preceding the commencement of the financial year in respect of which they are to be issued.
- 1.3 This report provides the North East Joint Transport Committee (JTC) with an updated forecast of outturn for the transport revenue budgets for 2022/23, based on the position to 30 September 2022, and an update on the budget assumptions and proposals for the levies and other budgets relating to the JTC, together with initial proposals for these budgets in 2023/24.
- 1.4 The budget proposals will be further developed and consulted upon in the coming months, and decisions on the levies and other aspects of the Transport budget for 2023/24 will be taken by the JTC on 17 January 2023. Decisions on Tyne Tunnels tolls and Metro Fares will be taken by the Tyne and Wear Sub Committee (TWSC).

## **2. Proposals**

### **Transport Levies 2022/23 and Indicative Levies 2023/24**

- 2.1 As the transport levies and revenue grants are normally fixed for the year there is no change in the levies payable and the grants payable between the original budget and the forecast outturn, and minimal change in the retained transport levy budget. Any surplus or deficit against the budgets for the three main delivery agencies (Durham County Council, Northumberland County Council and Nexus) is retained or managed within the reserves of that organisation.
- 2.2 A proportion of the levies is retained to support the work of the JTC through TNE and to meet historic costs relating to the former Tyne and Wear Integrated Transport Authority (TWITA). This area of the budget is expected to break even in the current year.
- 2.3 The updated forecast of outturn for the current year, together with the initial budget proposals for 2023/24 are set out in table 1 below, with further explanations provided in the sections that follow.

Table 1: 2022/23 Forecast and Indicative 2023/24 Transport Levies and Grants

	<b>2022/23 Original Budget</b>	<b>Spend to Date Q2</b>	<b>2022/23 Forecast Outturn</b>	<b>2022/23 Forecast Variance</b>	<b>2023/24 Initial Draft Budget</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
<b>Total Levy Income</b>	<b>(87.201)</b>	<b>(43.601)</b>	<b>(87.201)</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>(89.775)</b>
Grant to Durham	15.609	7.805	15.609	0.000	15.609
Grant to Northumberland	6.347	3.174	6.347	0.000	6.347
Grant to Nexus	63.125	31.563	63.125	0.000	65.699
Levy contribution to JTC central costs	2.120	1.100	2.120	0.000	2.120
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>87.201</b>	<b>43.642</b>	<b>87.201</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>89.775</b>
<b>Contribution (to)/from JTC reserves</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>(0.041)</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>

### **Tyne and Wear Levy**

- 2.4 The majority of the Tyne and Wear levy is paid as a revenue grant to Nexus for the delivery of public transport services. Initial budget proposals include an increase in the levy on Tyne and Wear councils from £65.225m to £67.799m, an increase of £2.574m or approximately 4%. This would increase the grant paid to Nexus for the provision of public transport services from £63.125m to a proposed £65.699m. The centrally retained budget of £2.100m, retained to fund Tyne and Wear transport costs (primarily relating to the former TWITA) and contribute to the central TNE budget which it is proposed would be held at the current level next year.

### **Nexus Revenue Budget**

#### **Updated Forecast of Outturn 2022/23**

- 2.5 For 2022/23 a balanced budget was set, following the JTC approval of several measures, including a 6.75% (£4.125m) increase in the Tyne and Wear transport levy and a planned use of £5.6m of Nexus' reserves in year.
- 2.6 At the JTC meeting in July 2022, Nexus highlighted that since the approval of the budget, a range of serious financial challenges had arisen (amounting to £10.611m) including the increasing cost of High Voltage (HV) power, additional security to tackle

anti-social behaviour, bus interventions caused by turmoil in the commercial market and other inflationary pressures. Nexus reported that these costs had been offset by Local Transport Fund (LTF) grant (which had only been notified and made available after the JTC had approved the budget), additional Metro Rail Grant and savings on Network Rail Track Access charges, meaning there was no overall net impact on the budget, with application of £5.6m of reserves still required.

- 2.7 This was reflected by Nexus in a revised budget which is shown in the table at paragraph 2.9. Despite further pressures being identified since the summer, at the end of period 6 Nexus is now forecasting that it will need to use £2.359m of reserves in order to balance the budget this year, which is £3.241m less than previously reported. This is due to the government's Energy Bill Relief Scheme (EBRS) where a sizeable discount on the HV power bill for Metro is now expected across the period October 2022 to March 2023. Without this intervention the expectation was that the forecasts would have deteriorated from the position reported in July.
- 2.8 Budget setting for 2023/24 is currently underway and the position for the next financial year has worsened significantly relative to the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) presented to the JTC in January 2022. It is expected that a greater reliance on reserves will be required, and it is necessary that the improvement in the 2022/23 position be earmarked for this.
- 2.9 The table below shows expenditure to the end of period 6 (15 September), together with the forecast to the year end, against the revised budget. There is narrative following the table explaining the variances against the revised budget across the main service areas. As described earlier, whilst the position has worsened, there will be further central government intervention to steady the financial situation. However, in estimating the likely outturn, it is difficult to be too precise given the turbulence in the economy right now.

*Table 2: Nexus expenditure to period 6 and updated forecast 2022/23*

	<b>2022/23 Revised Budget</b>	<b>Spend to P6</b>	<b>Forecast at P6</b>	<b>Forecast Variance</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
Concessionary Fares	31.155	14.263	30.992	(0.163)
Metro	17.076	6.969	15.661	(1.415)
Bus Services	15.327	5.085	13.765	(1.562)
Other	5.167	1.972	5.066	(0.101)
	<b>68.725</b>	<b>28.289</b>	<b>65.484</b>	<b>(3.241)</b>
JTC Levy Grant to Nexus	(63.125)	(29.401)	(63.125)	0.000
	<b>5.600</b>	<b>(1.112)</b>	<b>2.359</b>	<b>(3.241)</b>
Reserves	(5.600)	1.112	(2.359)	3.241
	-	-	-	-

## **Metro**

- 2.10 At the end of period 6, the Metro net expenditure was £1.415m better than the revised budget, before application of reserves. During the year, the inflationary pressures have continued to rise, most notably the cost of HV power, which has more than doubled, caused by geo-political factors, and continued instability in the energy market. The Government has however announced a package of support across the period October to March through the EBRS and whilst the detail of the Scheme is still being worked through and the market remains volatile, the Scheme has alleviated the pressure on HV power costs across the last six months this year. Taking into account the impact of the EBRS and the allocation of LTF grant towards these unfunded pressures, the resulting pressure is estimated to be £0.900m. This is offset by £2.315m of expected savings and additional income which are explained in paragraph 2.11 and 2.12.
- 2.11 Metro fare revenue at the end of period 6 was £18.769m which exceeded the profiled budget by £1.510m (9%), which was set based on 84% of pre-Covid levels. Given the ongoing impact Covid is having on journey patterns, it is proving difficult to accurately assess the profile of patronage. In addition, the current economic climate could adversely impact customer numbers as the year progresses. Despite this however, it is apparent that Metro revenue is likely to be better than budget by the year end so a favourable variance of £1.000m has been included in the forecasts. The forecast also reflects the introduction of a £2 fare on Metro for Pay As You Go (PAYGO) products (now that DfT have set out their intentions to introduce this on bus and should TWSC determine that this initiative should extend to Metro at its November meeting) for a period of 3 months, commencing in January 2023. The revenue forgone is estimated to be around £0.300m.
- 2.12 There is a net saving of £0.639m reflected in the forecast which is across a number of areas (some of which are also applicable to the other service areas), including travel ticket costs, cash handling, ICT licences and additional contract income. In addition, there are savings expected in employee costs due to a number of posts being held vacant for longer than originally planned, which is expected to amount to £0.750m, as well as better than budgeted investment income, due to increasing interest rates, of £0.230m.
- 2.13 It is important that these underspends are seen in the context of both a significant amount of additional central government support (LTF and EBRS) and the need to still use reserves at the year-end to balance the budget. As explained in paragraph 2.8, because it is expected that a greater reliance on reserves will be required in 2023/24, it is necessary that the improvement in 2022/23 be earmarked for this purpose.

## **Concessionary Fares**

- 2.14 At the end of period 6, concessionary fares include higher than budgeted school income of £0.121m and other savings of £0.035m. The forecast outturn reflects an additional £0.091m of school income across the year, as well as overhead savings, as outlined in paragraph 2.12, of £0.072m.

## **Bus Services**

- 2.15 Taking into account the LTF grant, financial performance on Bus Services shows net expenditure at £1.562m better than the revised budget, before application of reserves. Nexus expects to generate an additional £0.333m of bus commercial revenue this year, as well as £0.589m of savings on secured service contracts, where an above inflation increase in the budget has not been fully required, following the network reconfiguration in response to commercial cuts and tender prices that have been subsequently obtained.
- 2.16 In addition to this, Nexus has received £0.535m of additional Bus Recovery Grant funding from Transport North East. This represents unused funding from the previous financial year, which had been carried forward under the terms and conditions of the grant. Finally, there are overhead savings, as outlined in paragraph 2.12, which are expected to amount to £0.105m for the year.
- 2.17 It is important that this underspend be seen in the context of both a significant amount of additional central government support (LTF and BRG) and the need to still use reserves at the year-end to balance the budget. As explained in paragraph 2.8, because it is expected that a greater reliance on reserves will be required in 2023/24, it is necessary that the improvement in 2022/23 be earmarked for this.

## **Other**

- 2.18 Other includes Ferry, Bus Infrastructure and Passenger Transport Information and at the end of period 6, financial performance shows net expenditure at £0.101m better than the revised budget, before application of reserves. To the end of period 6, ferry revenue is £0.217m, which is £0.019m higher than the profiled budget, however, the forecast revenue has not been adjusted at this stage. The forecast also reflects £0.054m of higher than budgeted fuel and insurance costs on the ferry, offset by overhead savings of £0.155m (paragraph 2.12 refers).

## **Nexus Revenue Budget 2023/24**

- 2.19 Nexus has highlighted that to continue its operations, an increase in the Tyne and Wear transport levy commensurate with that which was signalled in the budget report to the JTC in February 2022, will be required next year. In addition, a package of further support from Central Government (DfT) will be required due to the significant inflationary budget pressures (most notably HV power) which Nexus is experiencing. If neither are forthcoming, some critical decisions surrounding resourcing and operations will be necessary, which would be detrimental to the recovery of Nexus as it emerges from the Covid pandemic/cost of living crisis.
- 2.20 During budget setting for 2022/23, it was highlighted that it may be necessary to increase the Tyne and Wear Transport Levy further in both 2023/24 and 2024/25 given that Nexus cannot place reliance on reserves indefinitely. Initial forecasts suggested that an increase to the levy of 4.0% (amounting to £2.6m) in 2023/24 and 3.75% (amounting to £2.5m) in 2024/25 would be necessary. This was in addition to Nexus using an additional £3.1m of reserves in 2023/24 to enable services to be maintained, during recovery from the Covid pandemic.

2.21 The table below outlines the latest forecast for 2023/24 (Nexus is currently refreshing budget estimates for 2023/24) and it demonstrates that after various interventions, it is still necessary to increase the Tyne and Wear transport levy by 4.0% in 2023/24, to enable Nexus' services to be maintained. Even with this levy increase, due to the significant inflationary pressures (most notably HV power), Nexus is currently forecasting a deficit of £9.4m and it is therefore critical that further support from the DfT is forthcoming.

*Table 3: Nexus forecast 2023/24*

	£m	£m
<b>Original Deficit in MTFP 2023/24</b>		5.7
<b>Pressures</b>		
- HV Power and utilities	20.2	
- Contractual inflation and pay	4.8	
- Additional security to tackle ASB	0.9	25.9
		<b>31.6</b>
<b>Opportunities</b>		
- Fare revenue	(2.1)	
- Network Rail TAC	(1.6)	
- Other efficiencies	(1.3)	
- Additional MRG	(3.9)	(8.9)
		<b>22.7</b>
<b>Funded By:</b>		
- Levy increase	(2.6)	
- Use of reserves	(10.7)	<b>(13.3)</b>
<b>Revised (Surplus)/Deficit 2023/24</b>		<b>9.4</b>

2.22 As the table above shows, since the development of the medium-term financial plan (where a deficit of £5.7m was anticipated), a range of unforeseen pressures have arisen.

2.23 What is striking is the cost of High Voltage Power. The likely costs in 2023/24 are difficult to quantify with any certainty and are dependent on the geo-political influences mentioned in this report together with the procurement strategy Nexus has adopted where there is less price certainty in the future. What is clear, is that without continued Central Government support, Nexus will be unable to deliver a balanced budget, even after taking into account significant use of reserves. However, it is estimated that continuation of the Energy Bill Relief Scheme into 2023/24 would put Nexus in a much more favourable position where it would be possible to balance its



budget. At this time there is no certainty or expectation that the government will extend the EBRS into next year.

- 2.24 Taking these additional pressures into account means that the deficit for 2023/24 is now forecast at £22.7m, an increase of £17.0m on that previously notified to the JTC in February 2022.
- 2.25 The forecast reflects cautious optimism about Metro fare revenue, which although is still behind pre-Covid levels, continues to recover well. The cost of living crisis and impending recession is something that could reverse progress in this regard therefore the position is still considered fragile. In addition, savings are expected to arise from a reduction in the track access charge payable to Network Rail for operating on the Sunderland line, now that the debt associated with the construction of the extension is nearly fully repaid.
- 2.26 The opportunities also include further efficiencies made up of savings that are expected to arise from the introduction of the new fleet and other savings from containing cost pressures within existing budgets. Finally, the additional £3.3m of Metro Rail Grant (MRG) received in 2021/22 will be allocated in 2023/24, as well as an additional £0.6m following the indexation of the grant in 2022/23.
- 2.27 Given the magnitude of the financial challenge, Nexus is proposing to increase the amount of reserves funding used in 2023/24 by £7.6m to help underpin the revenue budget. This is possible due to the better financial position reported in 2021/22 as well as the expected improved position in 2022/23. The adoption of such a strategy is considered prudent given the need to maintain services as far as possible in order to ensure Nexus emerges from the Covid pandemic/cost of living crisis in a positive way, something that the recovery plan for the Metro submitted to central government in January 2021 insisted on.
- 2.28 The table below shows the estimated impact on the Tyne and Wear Councils from a proposed 4% increase in the levy in 2023/24. The population estimates which must be used for the apportionment of the levy within Tyne and Wear, are the 2021 mid-year estimates, have not yet been released by the Office for National Statistics at the time of writing this report, and are due to be released during November 2022. The apportionment shown in the table below uses the local authority census 2021 population data as a proxy.

*Table 4: Proposed Tyne and Wear Levy by Council (Estimated based on Census 2021 population shares)*

	<b>Current Levy – 2022/23 Budget</b>	<b>Revised Levy (after population change)</b>	<b>Proposed increase (4%)</b>	<b>2023/24 Proposed Levy</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
Gateshead	11.488	11.346	0.448	11.794
Newcastle	17.453	17.369	0.685	18.055
North Tyneside	11.882	12.093	0.477	12.570

	<b>Current Levy – 2022/23 Budget</b>	<b>Revised Levy (after population change)</b>	<b>Proposed increase (4%)</b>	<b>2023/24 Proposed Levy</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
South Tyneside	8.597	8.552	0.337	8.889
Sunderland	15.805	15.865	0.626	16.491
<b>Total</b>	<b>65.225</b>	<b>65.225</b>	<b>2.574</b>	<b>67.799</b>

2.29 Further work is being undertaken in relation to the development of budget estimates for 2024/25 and 2025/26 and these will be brought to the JTC in January 2023 (as well as the final budget for 2023/24 once this has been fully refreshed). At this point in time, the levy increase for 2024/25 previously indicated is still expected to be required and an increase thereafter will also be required.

2.30 In addition, it will be necessary to place reliance on reserves for longer than previously anticipated, thereby leaving little scope for addressing any additional budgetary pressures that may arise in the future, which unless inflation falls back to levels that the UK is more accustomed to and the energy crisis abates, is highly probable. It therefore remains imperative that Nexus continues to lobby the DfT for further support.

### **Durham**

2.31 The Q2 forecast of outturn for Durham County Council shows an estimated overspend of £0.547m. This is due to overspends on the passenger transport network and supported services due to inflationary pressure and support for services withdrawn by commercial bus operators. This will be partially offset, in line with current guidance, by an anticipated underspend in Concessionary Fares.

2.32 Both Bus Stations and Bus Shelters are also forecast to overspend due to additional premises costs. The table below shows that forecast of outturn at the end of the second quarter of the financial year:

2.33 *Table 5: Durham Updated Forecast of Outturn 2022/23*

	<b>2022/23 Original Budget</b>	<b>Spend to Date Q2</b>	<b>2022/23 Forecast Outturn</b>	<b>2022/23 Forecast Variance</b>	<b>2023/24 Initial Draft Budget</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
Concessionary Fares	12.205	5.049	11.070	(1.135)	12.205
Subsidised Services	2.688	1.115	4.294	1.606	2.688
Bus Stations	0.176	0.533	0.199	0.023	0.176

	<b>2022/23 Original Budget</b>	<b>Spend to Date Q2</b>	<b>2022/23 Forecast Outturn</b>	<b>2022/23 Forecast Variance</b>	<b>2023/24 Initial Draft Budget</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
Bus Shelters	(0.268)	0.067	(0.211)	0.057	(0.268)
Passenger Transport Information	0.089	(0.132)	0.085	(0.004)	0.089
Staffing	0.719	0.360	0.719	0.000	0.719
Share of JTC central costs	0.010	0.000	0.010	0.000	0.010
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>15.619</b>	<b>6.992</b>	<b>16.166</b>	<b>0.547</b>	<b>15.619</b>

- 2.34 Work is underway on preparation of the 2023/24 budget for Durham which is shown for the time being as in line with 2022/23 although changes are anticipated by the time of the report to this committee in January.

### **Northumberland**

- 2.35 The forecast for Northumberland County Council at the end of Q2 is for an overall underspend of £0.128m. This largely due to a forecast underspend on Concessionary Travel of £0.400m. Following the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions, the DfT has allowed local authorities to negotiate with the local travel providers regarding the reimbursement rates payable in respect of concessionary travel. The Council has been able to negotiate two fixed price deals with the two major operators for the period April 2022 to March 2023 rather than based on a reimbursement rate per journey. This has provided budget certainty for all parties as passenger numbers are yet to recover to pre-pandemic levels.
- 2.36 The Supported Services budget is currently forecast to overspend by £0.266m. The overspend relates to the high number of contracts that have been handed back to the Council by operators due to the increase in fuel prices and the lack of resources (drivers/vehicles) available. The passenger transport team have reviewed the existing network and prioritised the contracts that continue to provide value for money and ensure that all geographic areas are served by the new network.
- 2.37 The budget for 2023/24 is currently in the process of being developed with figures unavailable at this time. These will be reported to the January meeting of the committee. It is therefore shown in the table below as in line with the 2022/23 budget although updated budget estimates are anticipated by the time of the next meeting.

2.38 *Table 6: Northumberland Updated Forecast of Outturn 2022/23*

	<b>2022/23 Original Budget</b>	<b>Spend to Date Q2</b>	<b>2022/23 Forecast Outturn</b>	<b>2022/23 Forecast</b>	<b>2023/24 Initial Draft Budget</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
Concessionary Fares	4.931	1.817	4.531	(0.400)	4.931
Subsidised Services	1.230	0.609	1.496	0.266	1.230
Bus Services	0.028	0.008	0.034	0.006	0.028
Passenger Transport Information	0.025	0.000	0.025	0.000	0.025
Staffing	0.133	0.067	0.133	0.000	0.133
Share of JTC central costs	0.010	0.000	0.010	0.000	0.010
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>6.357</b>	<b>2.501</b>	<b>6.229</b>	<b>(0.128)</b>	<b>6.357</b>

### **Transport North East**

2.39 Transport North East (TNE) supports the JTC, providing relevant information to support policy choices and to deliver policies at a regional level. Since its creation in 2018, the team has been working at full capacity to develop and lead delivery of a broad and ambitious transport programme on behalf of the region. Over the past year, TNE has:

- Reviewed its structure to focus on modal strategy and the development of business cases and delivery plans for regional level interventions;
- Developed and delivered a regional transport communications plan;
- Continued horizon scanning for funding, bidding and partnership opportunities, including successful bids to the North East Local Enterprise Partnership and the award of £163.5m for the Bus Service Improvement Plan and Enhanced Partnership scheme;
- Developed a more detailed suite of modal strategy and policy documents to support the overarching outputs of the Transport Plan;
- Continued to develop the regional position on rail devolution and bus policy;
- Continued to support Northumberland County Council as it prepares to implement the Northumberland Line scheme;

- Managed the region’s relationship and represented the region’s needs with Transport for the North, the Rail North Partnership, and the new Northern Transport Acceleration Council;
- Formulated the JTC’s response to transport consultations and policy making opportunities;
- Continued to make the case for investment in the East Coast Mainline and continued funded provision of the East Coast Mainline Authorities Secretariat role;
- Managed the distribution of funds through the North East Transport Assurance Framework;
- Contributed to the North East LEP’s strategies, plans and workstreams;
- Managed the Concession contract with TT2 through a complex transition to open road tolling;
- Delivery of EV charging hubs at key strategic sites identified in the Electric Vehicle enabling study;
- Sponsored the development of specific programmes of work of regional significance associated with the transport plan or associated with the publication of the Connectivity blueprint such as bus and cycling infrastructure and network improvements;
- Provided public access 24/7 to fully operational Tyne Pedestrian and Cycle Tunnels.

2.40 The updated forecast of outturn as at the end of September 2022 and draft budget estimates for 2023/24 are shown in the tables below.

2.41 *Table 7: TNE Core Budget Forecast of Outturn 2022/23 and initial draft Budget 2023/24*

	<b>2022/23 Original Budget</b>	<b>Spend to Date Q2</b>	<b>2022/23 Forecast Outturn</b>	<b>2022/23 Forecast Variance</b>	<b>2023/24 Initial Draft Budget</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
Employee costs	0.709	0.307	0.699	(0.010)	0.791
Transport Plan/Strategy Work	0.060	0.023	0.069	0.009	0.050
Research and Development	0.100	0.049	0.100	0.000	0.090
Travel and Miscellaneous	0.021	0.009	0.025	0.004	0.024

	<b>2022/23 Original Budget</b>	<b>Spend to Date Q2</b>	<b>2022/23 Forecast Outturn</b>	<b>2022/23 Forecast Variance</b>	<b>2023/24 Initial Draft Budget</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
IT/Equipment/Ac commodation	0.011	0.000	0.011	0.000	0.004
Contingency	0.049	0.002	0.049	0.000	0.018
Organisational Development	0.000	0.001	0.020	0.020	0.020
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>0.950</b>	<b>0.391</b>	<b>0.973</b>	<b>0.023</b>	<b>0.997</b>
LTP Funding	(0.500)	(0.500)	(0.500)	0.000	(0.500)
Retained Transport Levy	(0.284)	(0.284)	(0.284)	0.000	(0.284)
External funding for specific posts	(0.166)	(0.008)	(0.144)	0.022	(0.177)
LTA Capacity Revenue Grant	(0.000)	(0.001)	(0.020)	(0.020)	(0.020)
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>(0.950)</b>	<b>(0.793)</b>	<b>(0.948)</b>	<b>0.002</b>	<b>(0.981)</b>
Net Expenditure to be funded from Reserves	0.000	(0.402)	0.025	0.025	0.016
Contribution to/(from) Reserves	0.000	0.402	(0.025)	(0.025)	(0.016)

- 2.42 Net employee costs are forecast to be slightly below budget as a result of the mix of work being carried out by the team meaning that more costs are chargeable to external funding sources. The budget for 2023/24 is forecast to increase as a result of estimated pay awards and incremental progression as well as some changes to the staffing establishment approved by the Managing Director, Transport North East earlier in the year which enable the team to meet increasing demands from central government, local authorities and stakeholders, make a more direct contribution to the promotion of active travel within our communities, improve our strategy to both internal and external customers and support the delivery of the Transport Plan objectives.
- 2.43 Overall net expenditure is forecast to be £0.023m above the original budget for the year, primarily due to the creation of a budget for organisational development work which will be funding by LTA Capacity Revenue grant awarded after the original budget for the year was set.

2.44 Draft estimates for 2023/24 are included in the table above. These are being further developed in line with the work plan for 2023/24 and detailed estimates will be provided to the January 2023 meeting of the committee.

2.45 *Table 8: TNE Grants and Projects – Forecast of Outturn 2022/23 and initial draft Budget 2023/24*

	<b>2022/23 Original Budget</b>	<b>Spend to Date Q2</b>	<b>2022/23 Forecast Outturn</b>	<b>2022/23 Forecast Variance</b>	<b>2023/24 Initial Draft Budget</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
Active Travel Planning	0.796	(0.092)	0.788	(0.008)	0.125
BSIP/Enhanced Partnership	0.280	0.141	19.227	18.947	38.405
Capability Fund	0.000	0.319	2.160	2.160	0.000
Freight Study	0.000	0.000	0.050	0.050	0.000
LTF (Bus and Light Rail)	0.000	3.650	9.924	9.924	0.000
LTF October-December extension	0.000	0.000	1.312	1.312	0.000
Metro Futures Planning Studies	1.136	0.127	1.155	0.019	0.222
Rail Development	0.236	0.109	0.262	0.026	0.261
TCF Programme Management	0.621	0.176	0.341	(0.280)	0.284
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>3.069</b>	<b>4.430</b>	<b>35.219</b>	<b>32.150</b>	<b>39.297</b>
ATF Revenue Grant	(0.796)	0.092	(0.788)	0.008	(0.125)
Capability Fund Grant	0.000	(0.319)	(2.160)	(2.160)	0.000
DfT BSIP Grant	(0.207)	(0.141)	(19.227)	(19.20)	(38.411)
Local Transport Fund	0.000	(3.650)	(9.924)	(9.924)	0.000
LTF October-December extension	0.000	0.000	(1.312)	(1.312)	0.000

	<b>2022/23 Original Budget</b>	<b>Spend to Date Q2</b>	<b>2022/23 Forecast Outturn</b>	<b>2022/23 Forecast Variance</b>	<b>2023/24 Initial Draft Budget</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
Metro Futures Planning Studies – funded by Nexus budget transfer	(1.136)	(0.127)	(1.158)	(0.022)	(0.182)
Metro Futures Planning Studies – funded by LEP	0.000	(0.004)	(0.070)	(0.070)	0.000
Rail Administration Grant (via Nexus)	(0.236)	(0.109)	(0.264)	(0.028)	(0.261)
TCF Grants	(0.621)	(0.176)	(0.341)	0.280	(0.284)
<b>Total Grants and Contributions</b>	<b>(2.996)</b>	<b>(4.434)</b>	<b>(35.244)</b>	<b>(32.248)</b>	<b>(39.263)</b>
Net Expenditure to be funded from Reserves	0.073	(0.004)	(0.025)	(0.098)	0.034
Contribution to/(from) Reserves	(0.073)	0.004	0.025	0.098	(0.034)

- 2.46 A number of new revenue funding streams have been awarded to TNE to administer since the original budget for the year was set. The DfT's Capability Fund provides active travel revenue funding for local authorities to enable the delivery of behaviour change programmes linked to the implementation of infrastructure. The package is a combination of payments which will be made to the Local Authorities for delivery and TNE-led elements, such as increasing the amount of active travel data the team have access to which will inform the development of the North East Active Travel Strategy.
- 2.47 The JTC was awarded £9.924m from the Local Transport Fund in respect of socially necessary bus services and light rail services, which was effective from April to October 2022. A further extension has been awarded, £1.312m which applies from October to December 2022.
- 2.48 Following the government's announcement that the region had been indicatively awarded funding of £163.5m for its Enhanced Bus Partnership, work has been underway to meet the new timescales and requirements set out in the indicative



funding letter. Figures included in the forecast outturn for 2022/23 and indicative budget estimate for 2023/24 are included on the basis that the EP funding is confirmed and received during the current financial year.

- 2.49 Should a devolution deal for a new mayoral combined authority in the region be signed off, there will be various pieces of transport work required as a result. Further information and updated budget proposals will be brought to the JTC as necessary at the appropriate time.

### **Tyne Tunnels**

- 2.50 The Tyne Tunnels are operated as a ringfenced account, so all costs associated with the tunnels are fully met from toll income and Tyne Tunnels reserves, with no call on the levy or other public funding.

- 2.51 *Table 9: Tyne Tunnels Forecast of Outturn 2022/23 and initial draft Budget 2023/24*

	<b>2022/23 Original Budget</b>	<b>Spend to Date Q2</b>	<b>2022/23 Forecast Outturn</b>	<b>2022/23 Forecast Variance</b>	<b>2023/24 Initial Draft Budget<sup>1</sup></b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
Tolls Income	(32.715)	(19.079)	(31.218)	1.497	(35.145)
TT2 Contract	24.322	7.731	24.370	0.048	28.400
Employees	0.142	0.062	0.129	(0.013)	0.147
Historic Pensions	0.050	0.023	0.050	0.000	0.050
Premises	0.014	0.000	0.078	0.064	0.051
Support Services	0.155	0.004	0.160	0.005	0.160
Supplies and Services	0.195	0.036	0.218	0.023	0.347
Financing Charges	8.140	0.000	6.466	(1.674)	7.267
Interest/Other Income	(0.065)	(0.001)	(0.208)	(0.143)	(0.112)
Repayment from TWITA for temporary use of reserves	(0.240)	(0.120)	(0.240)	0.000	(0.240)

<sup>1</sup> These figures have been updated since the report discussed at the JTC meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

	<b>2022/23 Original Budget</b>	<b>Spend to Date Q2</b>	<b>2022/23 Forecast Outturn</b>	<b>2022/23 Forecast Variance</b>	<b>2023/24 Initial Draft Budget</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
Capital Expenditure Funded from Revenue – Tyne Pedestrian and Cycle Tunnels	0.000	0.128	0.423	0.423	0.000
Net Expenditure to be funded from Reserves	(0.002)	(11.216)	0.228	0.230	0.925
Contribution to/(from) Reserves	0.002	11.216	(0.228)	(0.230)	(0.925)

- 2.52 Decisions on toll charges are matters reserved for the Joint Transport Committee Tyne & Wear Subcommittee (TWSC). The Tyne Tunnels toll revision mechanism is set out in the **River Tyne Tunnels Order 2005** and allows the Joint Transport Committee Tyne & Wear Subcommittee (TWSC) to increase the toll paid by customers (the '**Real Toll**') every 12 months. The calculation for the toll increase is set out in the legislation and is based on the Retail Prices Index (RPI) from the application of the last increase.
- 2.53 Separately, a '**Shadow Toll**' sets the amount paid to TT2 per journey, also based on RPI. It increases every January and is a contractual commitment as set out in the **Project Agreement** agreed in 2007.
- 2.54 The Real Toll charged to users needs to be the same amount or similar to the Shadow Toll paid to TT2 per journey, otherwise the JTC would incur a loss on each tunnel journey. Keeping them in alignment means that JTC toll income is sufficient to make the appropriate monthly payment to TT2 for operating the tunnels
- 2.55 The current Real Toll lags slightly behind the Shadow Toll (10p lower) due to a decision taken by the Tyne and Wear Integrated Transport Authority (TWITA) in August 2011. This came about because of a conflict between the construction period and the date that the Shadow Toll increased, where the TWITA felt it was inappropriate to raise tolls for tunnel users during a period of major road disruption. However, this has been the position for several years and is accounted for each year within the budget. The current Real Toll is £1.90 and the Shadow Toll is £2.00
- 2.56 The legislation does not provide for any alternative to the RPI based increase in the Real Toll and assumes that the authority will always increase user charges in line with the RPI calculation. The Project Agreement similarly prescribes the calculation for the Shadow Toll increase without any alternative. Based on the calculation, TT2

has confirmed that the Shadow Toll will increase to £2.30 on 1 January 2023; therefore, to fund this, members should consider an increase in the Real Toll to £2.20 in early 2023, in order to fund the payments to TT2 under the Project Agreement.

- 2.57 If the increases are applied, it will be the first increase for Class 2 vehicles (cars) since April 2021. The calculated increase based on RPI is an increase for Class 2 vehicles would be from £1.90 to £2.20. An increase to the toll payable for Class 3 vehicles is also triggered from May 2023 (the earliest date an increase can be applied) and the calculated RPI-based increase would be from £3.90 to £4.40
- 2.58 Under normal circumstances the toll should be increased from 1 February 2023 to keep a balanced budget; however, members of the TWSC could consider a delay to implementing the increase by way of a toll freeze on the Class 2 toll, holding it at £1.90 per car until May 2023. This would keep the toll at an artificially lower level throughout the winter to provide relief for tunnels users during this period taking into account winter fuel bills and the current cost-of-living crisis. The income lost by holding the Class 2 tolls at the current levels for that period could be funded from Tyne Tunnel reserves on a short-term basis, but is not a sustainable long term solution.
- 2.59 Tolls income is forecast to be lower than the budget in 2022/23, because the budget assumed that an increase in the toll for class 2 vehicles would be applied during the financial year. The decision taken by the Tyne and Wear Sub Committee at its meeting on 3 November may delay the implementation of the increase until May 2023. In addition, payments to TT2 under the contract are forecast to be higher than budget due to RPI inflation being at a higher level than anticipated.
- 2.60 This is mitigated by lower financing charges on external borrowing, and increased interest income on the balances held in reserves. Interest returns on short term investments have increased during the year as interest rates have increased sharply while external borrowing costs have remained static. The original budget for the year for financing charges included an additional provision for the repayment of debt over and above the minimum revenue provision requirement. The additional, voluntary provision will be deferred in order to minimise the contribution required from Tyne Tunnels reserves for the 2022/23 outturn.
- 2.61 Budget estimates for 2023/24 are set out in the table above and take into account the decisions taken in relation to the tolls by the Tyne and Wear sub committee. An increased budget for Supplies and Services is proposed, which includes additional provision for contracts relating to the Tyne Pedestrian and Cycle Tunnels such as maintenance contracts and costs which will be incurred in relation to the planned handover to TT2 to operate the Pedestrian and Cycle Tunnels once the refurbishment works are complete.

### **3. Reasons for the Proposals**

- 3.1 The NECA Constitution requires that consultation on budget proposals be undertaken at least two months prior to the budget being agreed. The information included in this report is presented to update the JTC on the preparation of the 2023/24 Transport budgets. The report also provides updated forecasts for the current year based on the latest available information.

#### **4. Alternative Options Available**

- 4.1 The updated forecasts and indicative budget proposals presented in this report are intended to inform the JTC of work on the preparation of the 2022/23 Transport budget and begin the formal budget consultation process in line with the requirements set out in the NECA constitution in its role as Accountable Body for Transport.
- 4.2 Option 1 – the North East Joint Transport Committee may accept the recommendations set out in the report.
- 4.3 Option 2 – the North East Joint Transport Committee may suggest amendments or alternative proposals to be considered. Option 1 is the recommended option.

#### **5. Next Steps and Timetable for Implementation**

- 5.1 The NECA Constitution requires that consultation on budget proposals be undertaken at least two months prior to the budget being agreed. The draft proposals will be subject to consultation with the Overview and Scrutiny Committees, relevant officer groups and constituent councils. Comments raised as part of the consultation process will be considered in the preparation of the final reports.
- 5.2 Proposals are at an initial stage and work will be ongoing in developing these further over the coming weeks. Decisions on the levies and other aspects of the Transport budget will be taken by the JTC on 17 January 2023.

#### **6. Potential Impact on Objectives**

- 6.1 The budgets presented in this report are aligned to the achievement of the Transport policy objectives of the Authority.

#### **7. Financial and Other Resources Implications**

- 7.1 The financial and other resource implications are summarised in detail in the body of the report where they are known. Further details which are developed as part of the budget development and consultation process will be identified in the January 2023 report to the Committee.

#### **8. Legal Implications**

- 8.1 The JTC must approve the transport budget and levies unanimously. It will be recommended to make this decision at its meeting in January 2023.

#### **9. Key Risks**

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

#### **10. Equality and Diversity**

- 10.1 There are no equality and diversity implications arising from this report.
- 11. Crime and Disorder**
- 11.1 There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.
- 12. Consultation/Engagement**
- 12.1 The NECA Constitution (in its role as accountable body for the JTC) requires that consultation on its budget proposals be undertaken at least two months prior to the budget being agreed.
- 13. Other Impact of the Proposals**
- 13.1 There are no other impacts arising from this report.
- 14. Appendices**
- 14.1 None.
- 15. Background Papers**
- 15.1 JTC Budget 2022/23 – Report to JTC 2 February 2022  
<https://northeastca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/2022.02.02-JTC-Public-Documents-Pack.pdf>
- 16. Contact Officers**
- 16.1 Eleanor Goodman, NECA Finance Manager,  
[eleanor.goodman@northeastca.gov.uk](mailto:eleanor.goodman@northeastca.gov.uk), 0191 433 3860
- 17. Sign off**
- The Proper Officer for Transport:
  - Head of Paid Service:
  - Monitoring Officer:
  - Chief Finance Officer:
- 18. Glossary**

This page is intentionally left blank

## North East Joint Transport Committee Overview and Scrutiny Committee

---

**Date:** 15<sup>th</sup> December 2022  
**Subject:** North East Active Travel Strategy- Update  
**Report of:** Managing Director, Transport North East

### Executive Summary

The North East Active Travel Strategy aims to make it easier for people to walk, wheel and cycle for all types of journeys in the region.

We want to see a 45% rise in the number of shorter active journeys by 2035. Achieving this could see the following benefits for the region:

- Prevention of approximately 1,000 premature deaths, primarily due to increased physical activity levels;
- Reduction in carbon emissions, potentially saving around 80,000 tonnes of CO2 emissions per year;
- Growing the region's economy by around £350 million a year.

The strategy sets out an ambitious £500 million package of interventions which, if funded and delivered, will help achieve the strategy target and enable these key benefits to be realised.

This report updates Joint Transport Committee Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the progress of the North East Active Travel strategy and the proposed public consultation. Approval to proceed with the consultation will be sought from Joint Transport Committee on 20 December 2022.

### Recommendations

- i. The Joint Transport Committee Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to note this report.

### Guiding Principles for Scrutiny Members

The below are the key guiding principles to support the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members in reading the report in advance of the meeting to:

- Consider any added value that Scrutiny can bring; and

- Promote effective discussion and consider the information in the report.
- The impact the matter has on individuals in the community and across the JTC area.
- Focus on the efficiency and effectiveness of the proposals, next steps and any potential changes.
- Consideration of any risks that may occur.
- Scrutiny focusing on any performance management or quality assurance.



## **1. Background Information**

- 1.1 The North East Transport Plan (NETP), published March 2021, sets out the North East's transport ambitions up to 2035. Within the Plan, a commitment was made to develop and publish a North East Active Travel Strategy.
- 1.2 Delivery of an Active Travel Strategy will help achieve the Transport Plan's vision of 'Moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East' and the Plan's five objectives.
- 1.3 The North East Active Travel Strategy builds on the region's Making the Right Travel Choice (MTRTC) strategy target to encourage car users to switch one journey a week to public transport, walking or cycling and for people who don't have access to a car to continue to travel sustainably.
- 1.4 The North East Active Travel Strategy will help to achieve this switch to sustainable travel by enabling more active journeys – making them easier, safer and more enjoyable.

## **2. Key Points**

- 2.1 This strategy describes an ambition for growing active travel in the North East. It sets out the opportunities and benefits of active travel, considers what it would take to encourage more walking, wheeling and cycling, and sets out an ambitious programme of investment that would help to achieve a major increase in active travel rates of 45% by 2035.
- 2.2 By achieving this increase in the number of journeys, the region could see the following benefits:
- Preventing approximately 1,000 premature deaths, primarily due to increased physical activity levels;
  - Reduction in carbon emissions, potentially saving around 80,000 tonnes of CO2 emissions per year;
  - Benefiting the region's economy by around £350 million a year.
- 2.3 The consultation draft of the Active Travel Strategy will cover the period up until 2035 and sets out a £500 million package of regional interventions that will help get more people in the North East to walk, wheel and cycle more often. The strategy also identifies schemes which connect active travel to public transport stations and interchanges, enabling people to make part of their journey by active travel and part by public transport.
- 2.4 The Strategy has been strengthened by research with underrepresented groups and work to calculate the regional economic benefits which could be gained from additional journeys being made by active travel.

## **3. Consultation Approach**

- 3.1 Subject to JTC approval in December, public consultation will begin on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2023 and run for a period of 8 weeks. The consultation will follow TNE's consultation principles which aim to encourage region-wide participation, including from underrepresented groups.
- 3.2 TNE have undertaken pre-consultation engagement to help inform the development of the strategy through the formation of an active travel stakeholder forum. Feedback from the forum has been used to strengthen the draft Strategy. Further sessions with the forum are planned for January.
- 3.3 Transport North East (TNE) will utilise a multi-channel approach to drive reach of the consultation alongside traditional PR and organic social media which will run throughout the engagement period.
- 3.4 Throughout the public consultation period, the public and stakeholders will be able to provide input by:
- Filling in an online survey
  - Emailing their thoughts or request further information
  - Calling a dedicated telephone hotline
  - Attending an online event
  - Attending an in person 'drop in' event
  - Following Transport North East for updates on social media – Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter.
- 3.5 Communications activity as part of the consultation will include:
- PR and Media relations including press releases and media interviews
  - Social Media (Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn)
  - Facebook advertising (paid for campaign)
  - Partner communications – working with partners including local authorities, Nexus, Sustrans, Living Streets, local active travel groups and a variety of community groups to encourage participation from the public. We will share assets with key partners and encourage them to share on their communications channels
  - Newspaper advertising
  - Events – including online events, in person 'drop ins' and stakeholder forum workshop sessions.

#### **4. Reasons for the Proposals**

- 4.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members on the draft North East Active Travel Strategy.

#### **5. Alternative Options Available**

- 5.1 The report is for information and therefore no alternative options are presented.

## **6. Next Steps and Timetable for Implementation**

- 6.1 A consultation draft of the North East Active Travel strategy will be submitted to JTC in December and approval to consult on the draft Strategy will be sought.

## **7. Potential Impact on Objectives**

- 7.1 The North East Active Travel Strategy will help to achieve the North East Transport Plan's five objectives.

## **8. Financial and Other Resources Implications**

- 8.1 All costs associated with the development of the Strategy, including the consultation process, are being met from Transport North East's in-year budget.

## **9. Legal Implications**

- 9.1 At this stage, there are no foreseen legal implications from the proposed consultation approach.

## **10. Key Risks**

- 10.1 No key risks have been identified at this stage.

## **11. Equality and Diversity**

- 11.1 The North East Active Travel Strategy is intended to positively address equality and diversity issues within the region by enhancing provision for all users. A review has also been undertaken to ensure that the strategy aligns to equality legislation.

## **12. Crime and Disorder**

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

## **13. Consultation/Engagement**

- 13.1 All seven North East local authorities and Nexus have been engaged in the development of the strategy. TNE have hosted an Active Travel Stakeholder Forum to give key stakeholders the opportunity to feed in to the Strategy's development. Through the proposal to consult wider on the Strategy, it will give stakeholders the opportunity to provide feedback.

## **14. Other Impact of the Proposals**

- 14.1 No specific impacts.

## **15. Appendices**

15.1 none

**16. Background Papers**

16.1 Agenda item 8- North East Active Travel Strategy Update. North East Joint Transport Committee, 18<sup>th</sup> October 2022

**17. Contact Officers**

17.1 Rachelle Forsyth-Ward  
Head of Transport Policy and Strategy Development  
[Rachelle.forsythward@transportnortheast.gov.uk](mailto:Rachelle.forsythward@transportnortheast.gov.uk)

**18. Sign off**

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

**19. Glossary**

NECA- North East Combined Authority

NTCA- North of Tyne Combined Authority

TNE- Transport North East

NETP- North East Transport Plan

NE MTRTC- North East Making the Right Travel Choice Strategy

## **North East Joint Transport Committee Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

---

**Date:** 15 December 2022

**Subject:** Bus Partnership Update

**Report of:** Managing Director, Transport North East

### **Executive Summary**

This report provides members of the Overview and Scrutiny committee with an update on the progress of work on the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) interventions and any points to note from the first meeting of the Regional Bus Partnership Board.

The following BSIP interventions were discussed at the Bus Partnership Board:

- Partnership name and logo
- Outline scope of the partnership website
- Approach to delivering the BSIP fares
- Bus passenger charter
- Code of Conduct
- Resource and software requirements
- Partnership marketing

### **Recommendations**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to note the contents of the report.

## 1. **Background Information**

- 1.1 Following the publication of the BSIP in October 2021 and the requirement to form a partnership board to support the delivery of the BSIP interventions, The North East Regional Bus Partnership Board has been formed in shadow form prior to the establishment of the Enhanced Partnership (EP) Plan and Scheme.
- 1.2 The board is formed of Local Authority representatives, bus operators, key passenger transport groups and is facilitated by the Transport North East bus team.
- 1.3 The board met for the first time on 4 November 2022 to discuss a number of early BSIP interventions that Transport North East and partners have been delivering prior to BSIP funding being made available.
- 1.4 Key Points
- 1.5 Partnership name and logo

The logo has been developed in collaboration with all partners and will sit alongside existing brands to become a recognisable symbol of public transport for the North East. A consistent logo for the partnership will also simplify the network for new and current bus users, complimenting investment in public transport integration such as our multi operator, multi modal ticketing schemes. This fresh identity will work alongside individual operator logos as a 'kite mark' badge of endorsement under the EP.
- 1.6 The partnership name is "Travel North East" and the logo and potential uses can be seen in Appendix 1.
- 1.7 Partnership Website

There are many apps and websites for public transport information available in the North East, however there is not currently an app or website that can offer complete information on all journey types which covers journey planning, real time information, ticketing information and network disruptions. In our Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) we set out how we could drive bus ridership by creating a single, central source of travel information for passengers in the North East, in a way that complements the public transport apps and websites already available on an individual operator level.
- 1.8 Our stakeholder and public engagement exercise told us that current bus users face important gaps in information provision which affect their journey experience. We also discovered that non-users are more likely to have negative perceptions of the convenience and ease of using the bus, with poor information sometimes reinforcing that view. If we are to achieve our BSIP Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) of boosting ridership and increasing customer satisfaction, we must make the provision and access of high-quality passenger information as easy as possible.
- 1.9 A specific task and finish group has been established to take advantage of BSIP investment to progress an app and website specification that will respond to demand from passengers in the region, driving commercial outcomes for bus.

1.10 If we respond to the needs of users with this specification, benchmarking against the best digital applications operation in the transport sector, we can achieve mass usage of the app and website for real-time information gathering, journey planning and ticket purchasing and subsequently satisfy the overriding KPIs of the BSIP- to boost bus ridership and customer satisfaction. The success criteria for the app and website will be:

- Mass adoption across the region, defined as 50% of people having the app downloaded on their phones;
- 30% of the region using the website or app regularly to make journeys;
- It being viewed as a key source of multi-modal travel information in the region, benchmarking well against the best apps and websites in existence;

A major boost to bus revenues, which offer a significant improvement to the long terms financial stability of the industry.

#### 1.11 Approach to delivering fares

A variety of operator led fares exist on today's network, as well as multimodal/multi operator tickets which are administered by Network One Ticketing Ltd (NTL). As operators' commercial offers have developed over time, they have naturally been shaped to reflect the operating circumstances of each operator, as well as each operator's commercial requirements.

1.12 To achieve the objectives of our BSIP, and to stimulate the performance of the KPIs outlined within it, a series of fare products have been developed throughout the BSIP process which will be funded through BSIP revenue funding allocated to an improved fare offer.

1.13 In terms of commercial analysis, Systra Ltd have acted as consultants to model the cost to the partnership of the implementation of fares.

1.14 To consider a legally compliant delivery route for the new products, DLA Piper, TNE's external lawyers have provided advice on the appropriate approach to the fares scheme.

1.15 Both the modelling and proposed avenues to delivery have been reviewed during a series of workshops attended by operators including Nexus and County Councils at a technical level. In general terms, the modelling has been acceptable to operators, with some refinements to both the assumptions driving the modelling and the proposed products being made.

#### 1.16 Bus Passenger Charter

Many public transport passenger charters are in place in the region, with all rail operators and the Tyne and Wear Metro producing charters. Bus Passenger Charters currently in place by North East bus operators tend to cover similar themes of safety; information provision; fares and reliability of services. They also outline the complaints procedure and the rights of customers.

1.17 The introduction of our network wide passenger charter will coordinate these commitments, setting out a minimum standard that all North East bus passengers

can expect when traveling by bus in the region. The charter will also give customers confidence that their voice will be heard and that their feedback and complaints taken seriously.

1.18 To ensure regionwide commitment to the text of the Bus Passenger Charter, it has been drafted and agreed on in collaboration with local authority and bus operator partners.

1.19 The full text of the charter can be found in Appendix 3 of this report, key commitments fall under the following categories:

- We commit to operating a safe, secure and comfortable service
- We commit to always keeping you informed
- We commit to making every journey as easy and reliable as possible
- We commit to help, particularly when things go wrong

1.20 Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct is intended to ensure local authorities have the maximum foresight of network changes. This will ensure that bus users can be adequately notified, consulted with and that in the event that a withdrawn service will go on to be secured by a local authority, a gap in the service can be avoided. It is also intended that changes will always be introduced in a structured and well-communicated manner.

1.21 The Code of Conduct would reaffirm the commitment in the region to implement service changes at fixed dates in the year to minimise disruption and increase workload efficiencies. Flexibility will be allowed for however in the circumstance of seasonal demand or reliability concerns such as bus driver shortages which can mean services must be reduced in frequency to ensure reliability.

1.22 The Code of Conduct can be found in Appendix 3 and shows full details on the timescales to be met by both bus operators and local authorities.

1.23 Resource and software requirements

As work has progressed on the development of BSIP interventions the requirement to have additional resource and software to support the interventions has become clear.

1.24 The additional resource will be required to support the Transport North East bus team in the monitoring and delivery of the fares products. To ensure operators are correctly reimbursed for the products funded by the BSIP, monthly reporting will be required from operators. This will need to be reviewed by a member of staff within Transport North East to allow the next payment to operators to be correctly adjusted. We expect this member of staff to be a commercial specialist.

1.25 Specialist software will be required to support the ongoing monitoring of BSIP interventions against Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) the exact specification is still being worked through and full details will be presented to the JTC when available. We are looking at options for this software to be provided by a third party provider or for the Transport North East data team to be adequately resourced to carry out the monitoring in-house.



## 1.26 Partnership marketing

The Department for Transport (DfT) have stated that they expect marketing campaigns to be carried out for all large BSIP funded interventions, the partnership therefore needs to have a consistent approach to marketing across intervention types. To ensure this consistency and taking into account the capacity of the Transport North East communications and marketing team the partnership is looking at procuring an agency to produce the marketing campaigns for the interventions. They will be overseen by a senior manager and be accountable to a marketing steering group.

## 2. Proposals

2.1 There are no proposals being put forward as this report is for information and discussion.

## 3. Reasons for the Proposals

3.1 Not Applicable.

## 4. Alternative Options Available

4.1 Not Applicable.

## 5. Next Steps and Timetable for Implementation

5.1 The elements of this report that feed into the EP Scheme will be included in the drafting as the EP Plan and Scheme goes through the statutory consultation.

5.2 Transport North East will continue to work with partners to finalise procurement plans for the website and additional resource to enable a swift start once funding is available.

5.3 A formal proposal on the fares will be brought to the JTC which will set out, as a minimum:

- Sets out the starting price for each product;
- Explains the delivery approach for each product; and,

Sets out the risks and issues associated with each product and the mitigations which may be taken by JTC.

## 6. Potential Impact on Objectives

6.1 The progress of the schemes included in this report are all key step towards our BSIP Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). These KPIs focus on growing bus ridership, reliability and customer satisfaction which in turn aligns with the objectives of the North East Transport Plan and the Making the Right Travel Choice Strategy.

6.2 In particular, the EP and BSIP aim to get more people using public transport which has a positive impact on the Combined Authorities' objective to improve

air quality and reduce carbon emissions. This is in line with the Combined Authorities' objectives to response to the Climate Change Emergency which has been declared by all constituent authorities.

## **7. Financial and Other Resources Implications**

7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising for NECA as a result of this report.

## **8. Legal Implications**

8.1 There are no direct legal implications arising for NECA as a result of this report.

## **9. Key Risks**

9.1 There are no key risks associated with the recommendations made in this report.

## **10. Equality and Diversity**

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

## **11. Crime and Disorder**

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

## **12. Consultation/Engagement**

12.1 The details of this report have been represented both to the North East Bus Partnership Board and the North East Joint Transport Committee (JTC).

12.2 In the production of the BSIP in 2021, detailed engagement was undertaken with partners, stakeholders and the public, as reported to JTC on 21 September 2021

## **13. Other Impact of the Proposals**

13.1 There are no other impacts arising from these proposals.

## **14. Appendices**

14.1 Appendix 1 – Partnership Logo  
Appendix 2- Bus Passenger Charter  
Appendix 3- Code of Conduct

## **15. Background Papers**

15.1 Bus Back Better – The National Bus Strategy: [Bus Back Better \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

The Bus Services Act 2017 – E Bus Back Better – The National Bus Strategy: [Bus Back Better](#)  
([publishing.service.gov.uk](#))

The Bus Services Act 2017 – Enhanced Partnerships Guidance: [The bus services act 2017: enhanced partnerships](#) ([publishing.service.gov.uk](#))

JTC Report – Vision for Buses (item 9): [\(Public Pack\) Agenda Document for North East Joint Transport Committee, 13/07/2021 14:30](#) ([northeastca.gov.uk](#))

JTC Report – Bus Partnerships (items 9 and 10): [\(Public Pack\) Agenda Document for North East Joint Transport Committee, 15/06/2021 14:30](#) ([northeastca.gov.uk](#))

Bus Service Improvement Plan outline resourcing form (the content of this document is exempt from publication pursuant to paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972)

## **16. Contact Officers**

16.1 Philip Meikle, Transport Strategy Director

E-mail: [philip.meikle@transportnortheast.gov.uk](mailto:philip.meikle@transportnortheast.gov.uk)

Heather Jones, Head of Enhanced Partnerships

E-mail: [heather.jones@transportnortheast.gov.uk](mailto:heather.jones@transportnortheast.gov.uk)

## **17. Sign off**

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

## **18. Glossary**

BSIP – Bus Service Improvement Plan

EP – Enhanced Partnership

JTC – Joint Transport Committee

NBS – National Bus Strategy

DfT – Department for Transport



**Travel  
North  
East**



# PRIMARY LOGO.

The logo is produced in 100% Black for print and R0 G0 B0 for web to allow easy, minimal use in various mediums and platforms across partner networks.

It can be reversed on photography and colourways where the dark version is not legible.

The logo should not be produced in any other colours.

## LOGOTYPE.



## MINIMUM SIZE.

Web. 75px width

Print. 15mm width

## VARIATIONS.



# IN USE.

The logo can be placed in partnership with others. The main partnership lockup is shown, and is encouraged to be used alone.

When the logo is with others, the recommendation is to remove any partnership related text. Rather the logo sits alongside others.

# IN PARTNERSHIP.

In partnership with



# WITH OTHERS.

CLOSE.



IDEAL.



ALTERNATIVE.



# IN USE.

Partners across the North East are key to this initiative, and therefore have a large role to play with this brand.

The logo should remain clear and visible when used with partners. Scaled to an appropriate size and aligned where best suited for literature and across web.

## KEY PARTNERS.

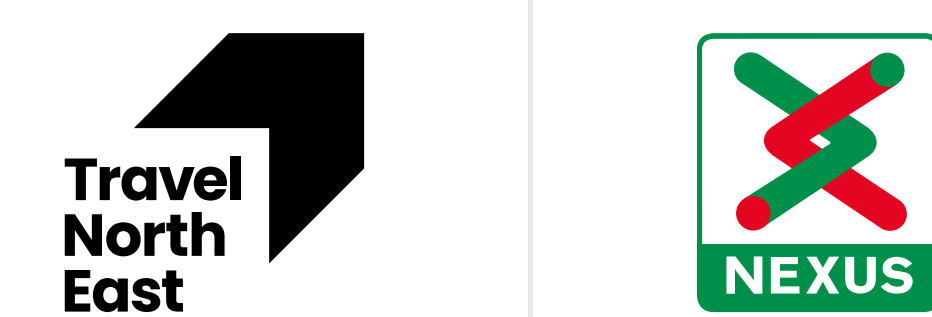
### FLOATING LEFT



### FLOATING RIGHT



### RIGHT DIVIDER



### LEFT DIVIDER





# PRINT.

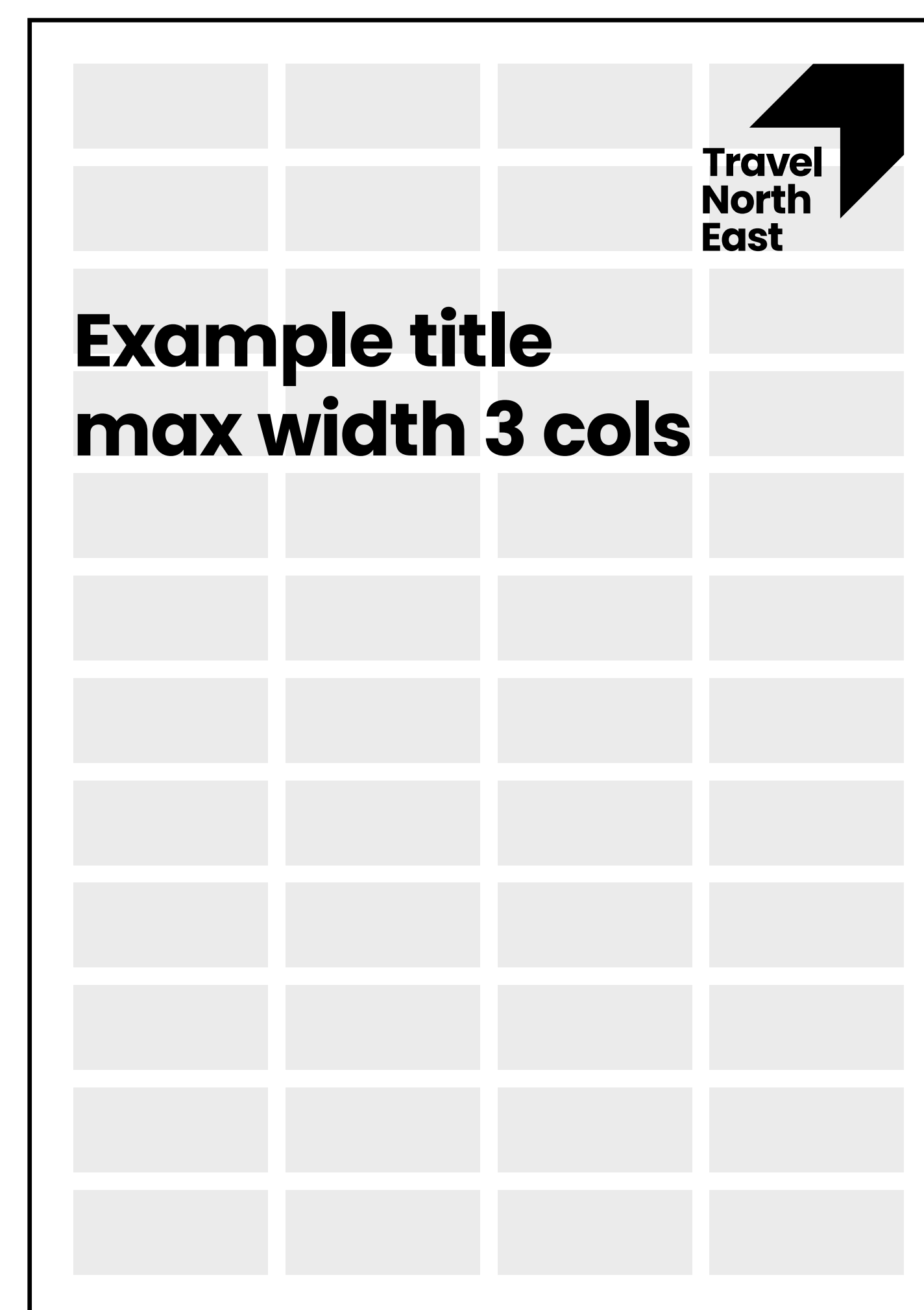
Recommendations for A4 and A5 are shown here. These can be scaled to show size adjustments.

If used larger, please use A4 sizes as reference, there is no maximum size limit.

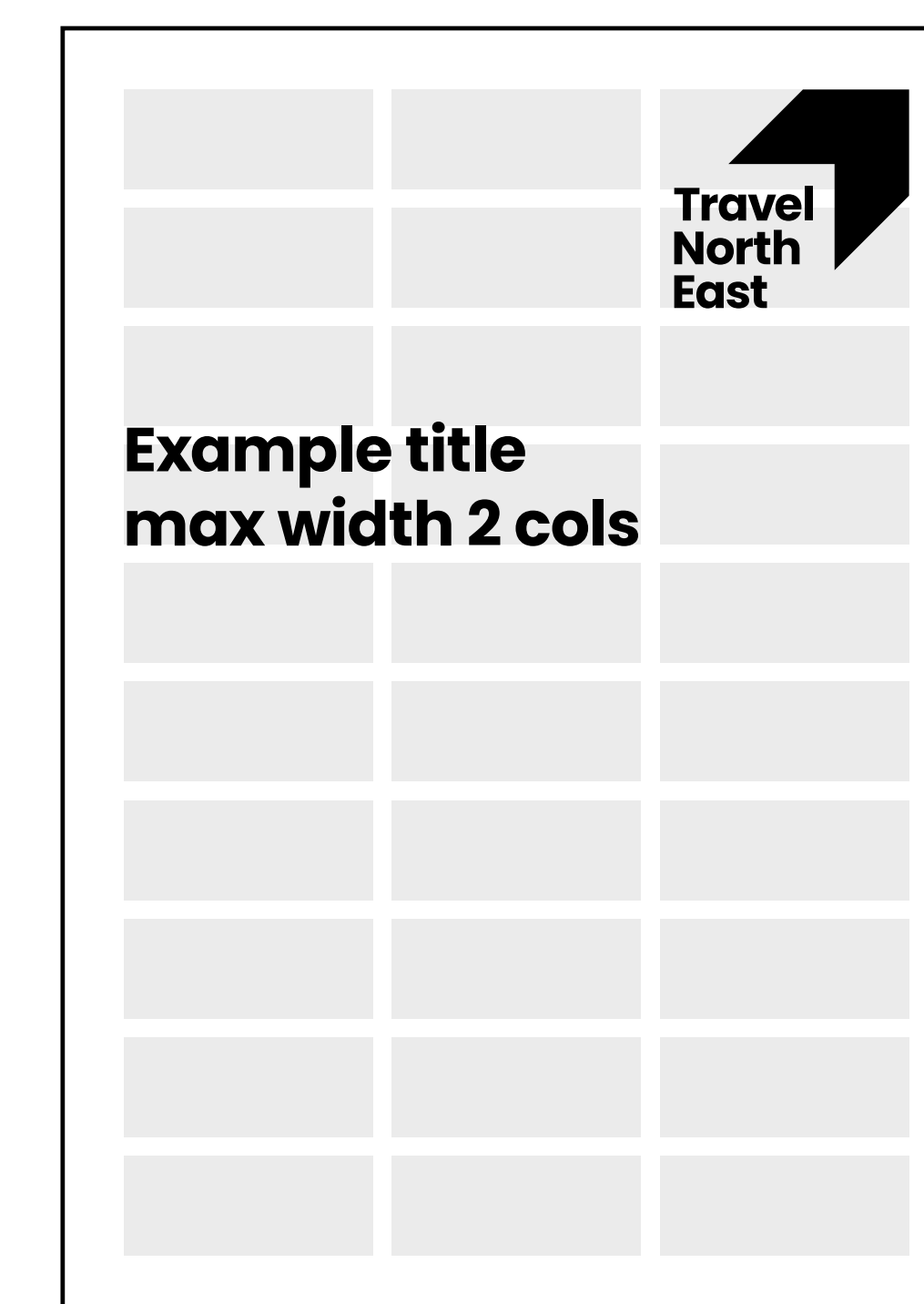
Minimum sizes have been shown on page 2.

## PAGE SCALES.

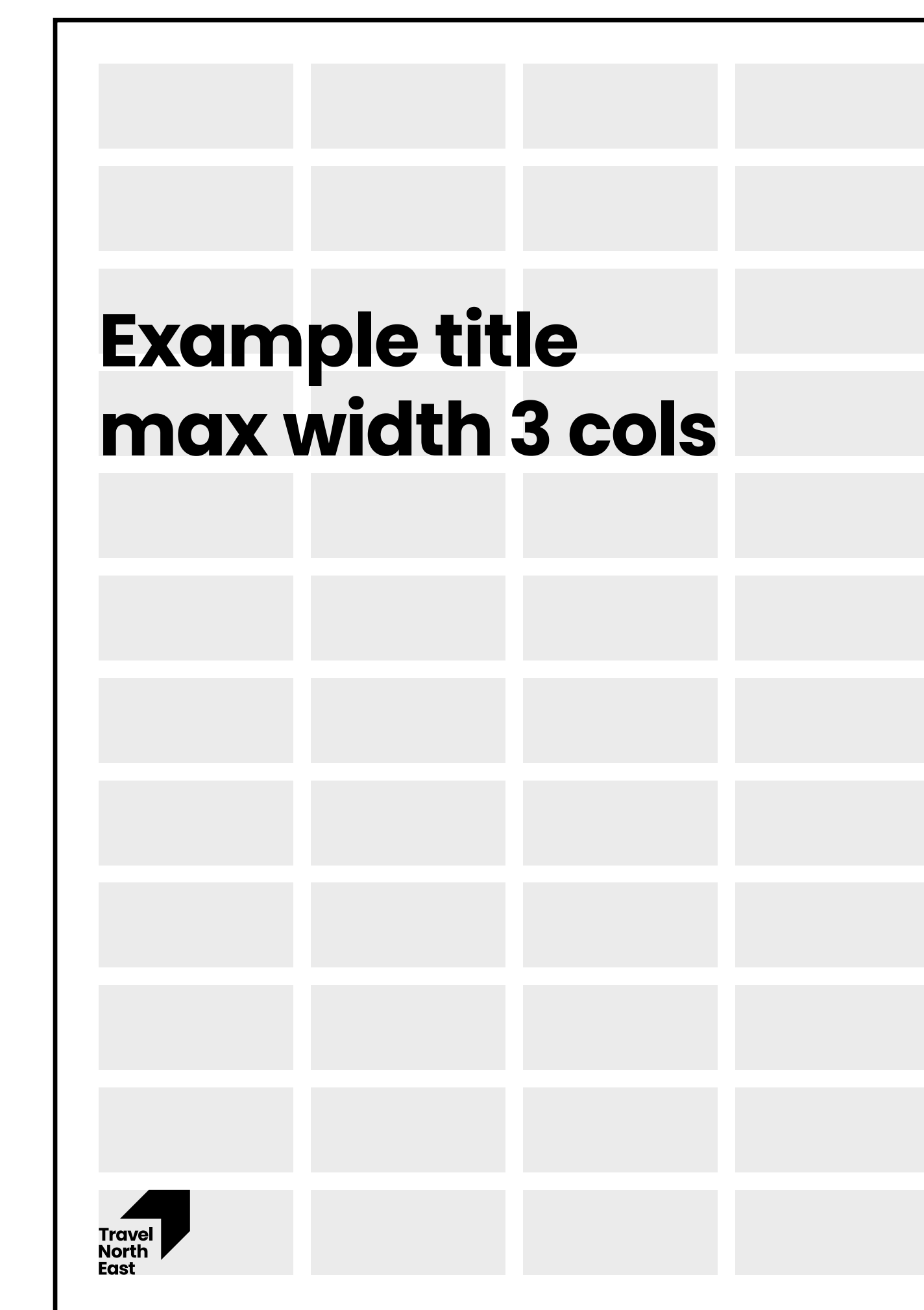
A4



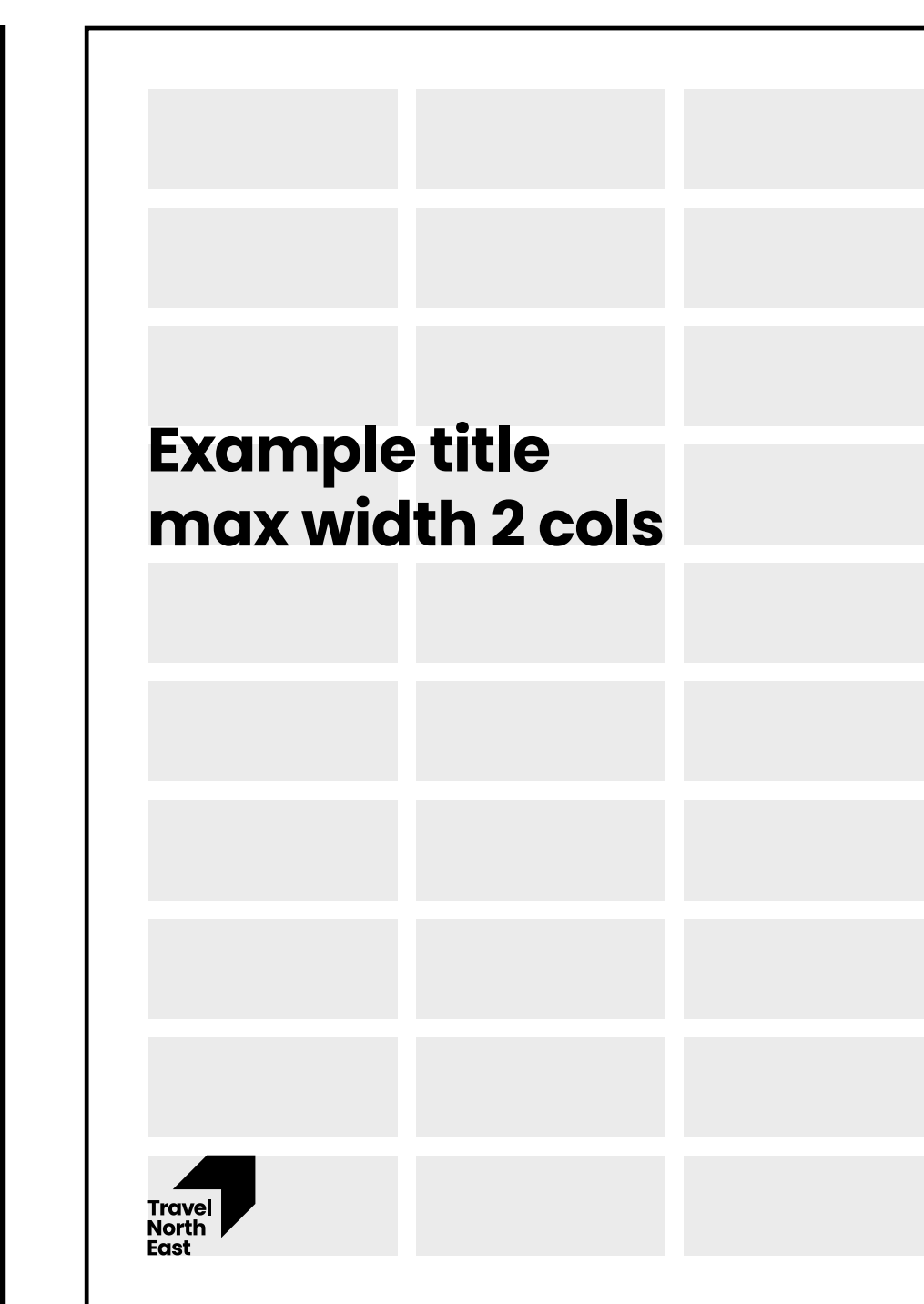
A5



A4



A5



# PRINT.

When used in partner print work, the logo can be moved to an appropriate position, where it is free from obstruction and can be clearly seen.

Other uses, including sitting alongside partners can also be utilised, dependent on document purposes.

# WITH PARTNERS.

Your new timetable from 16 September 2012

**Metrocentre - Newcastle - West Denton 84 84A**

**Monday to Saturdays**

Route Number	84A	84	84A	84	84A	84	84A	84	84A	84	84A	84
Metrocentre Interchange Stand C	10:40	11:40	12:40	13:40	14:40	15:40	16:40	17:40	18:40	19:40	20:40	21:40
Scotswood Broadmead Way	10:48	11:48	12:48	13:48	14:48	15:48	16:48	17:48	18:48	19:48	20:48	21:48
Benwell Adelaide Centre	10:53	11:53	12:53	13:53	14:53	15:53	16:53	17:53	18:53	19:53	20:53	21:53
Barrack Road St James' Park	11:02	12:02	13:02	14:02	15:02	16:02	17:02	18:02	19:02	20:02	21:02	22:02
Newcastle St Thomas Street arrive	11:06	12:06	13:06	14:06	15:06	16:06	17:06	18:06	19:06	20:06	21:06	22:06
Newcastle St Thomas Street depart	10:07	11:07	12:07	13:07	14:07	15:07	16:07	17:07	18:07	19:07	20:07	21:07
RVI Dental Hospital	10:09	11:09	12:09	13:09	14:09	15:09	16:09	17:09	18:09	19:09	20:09	21:09
Spital Tongues	10:11	11:11	12:11	13:11	14:11	15:11	16:11	17:11	18:11	19:11	20:11	21:11
Fenham Wingrove Road	10:15	11:15	12:15	13:15	14:15	15:15	16:15	17:15	18:15	19:15	20:15	21:15
Slyford Netherby Drive	10:22	11:22	12:22	13:22	14:22	15:22	16:22	17:22	18:22	19:22	20:22	21:22
Slyford Whitbeck Court	10:27	11:27	12:27	13:27	14:27	15:27	16:27	17:27	18:27	19:27	20:27	21:27
Denton Burn	10:29	11:29	12:29	13:29	14:29	15:29	16:29	17:29	18:29	19:29	20:29	21:29
West Denton Shops	10:37	11:37	12:37	13:37	14:37	15:37	16:37	17:37	18:37	19:37	20:37	21:37
Byrness Bus Turning Circle	10:38	11:38	12:38	13:38	14:38	15:38	16:38	17:38	18:38	19:38	20:38	21:38

**Route Number** 84A 84 84A 84 84A 84 84A 84 84A 84 84A 84 84A

**Byrness Bus Turning Circle** 09:41 ... 10:41 ... 11:41 ... 12:41 ... 13:41 ... 14:41 ... 15:41

**West Denton Shops** 09:42 ... 10:42 ... 11:42 ... 12:42 ... 13:42 ... 14:42 ... 15:42

**Slyford Whitbeck Court** 09:50 ... 10:50 ... 11:50 ... 12:50 ... 13:50 ... 14:50 ... 15:50

**Slyford Netherby Drive** 09:55 ... 10:55 ... 11:55 ... 12:55 ... 13:55 ... 14:55 ... 15:55

**Fenham Wingrove Road** 10:02 ... 11:02 ... 12:02 ... 13:02 ... 14:02 ... 15:02 ... 16:02

**Spital Tongues** 10:06 ... 11:06 ... 12:06 ... 13:06 ... 14:06 ... 15:06 ... 16:06

**RVI Dental Hospital** 10:08 ... 11:08 ... 12:08 ... 13:08 ... 14:08 ... 15:08 ... 16:08

**Newcastle St Thomas Street arrive** 10:10 ... 11:10 ... 12:10 ... 13:10 ... 14:10 ... 15:10 ... 16:10

**Newcastle St Thomas Street depart** 10:11 ... 11:11 ... 12:11 ... 13:11 ... 14:11 ... 15:11 ... 16:11

**Barrack Road St James' Park** 10:15 ... 11:15 ... 12:15 ... 13:15 ... 14:15 ... 15:15 ... 16:15

**Benwell Adelaide Centre** 10:24 ... 11:24 ... 12:24 ... 13:24 ... 14:24 ... 15:24 ... 16:24

**Scotswood Broadmead Way** 10:29 ... 11:29 ... 12:29 ... 13:29 ... 14:29 ... 15:29 ... 16:29

**Metrocentre Interchange** 10:37 ... 11:37 ... 12:37 ... 13:37 ... 14:37 ... 15:37 ... 16:37

**Note**  
No service Sundays or Public Holidays

arrivabus.co.uk

**We have the ambition, drive and knowledge needed to improve regional transport dramatically over the coming years.**

TransportPlan@transportnortheast.gov.uk  
transportnortheast.gov.uk

**Transport North East**

With part of the **Go-Ahead Group**

**More information**  
You can find out more about Go North East by visiting our website [gonortheast.co.uk](http://gonortheast.co.uk) and more information on how Go-Ahead Group manages sustainability can be found by visiting: [go-ahead.com/sustainability](http://go-ahead.com/sustainability)

If you have any comments, views or ideas on how we might improve, or have any thoughts on other issues that we should address in this report, please write to:  
Martijn Gilbert, Managing Director  
Go North East  
177 Queen Street  
Gateshead  
NE8 2UA  
E: [martijn.gilbert@gonortheast.co.uk](mailto:martijn.gilbert@gonortheast.co.uk)

**Summary Verification Statement from Bureau Veritas UK Ltd**  
Bureau Veritas UK Ltd (Bureau Veritas) has provided verification for The Go-Ahead Group plc (Go-Ahead) over selected sustainability indicators contained within the Group's Annual Report. The information and data reviewed in this verification process covered the period 30 June 2019 to 27 June 2020.  
The full verification statement including Bureau Veritas' verification opinion, methodology recommendations and a statement of independence and impartiality can be found on the Go-Ahead Group website:  
[www.go-ahead.com](http://www.go-ahead.com)  
[go-ahead.com/sustainability](http://go-ahead.com/sustainability)

Bureau Veritas UK Ltd  
October 2020

Designed by

**JOIN THE**

**BIG BUS CONVERSATION**

Have your say on the future of the region's bus network

Share your views:  
[www.transportnortheast.gov.uk/bigbusconversation](http://www.transportnortheast.gov.uk/bigbusconversation)

# OUT-DOOR.

The logo is advised to be placed on the near side rear window. Placed in white, this should be clearly visible to public.

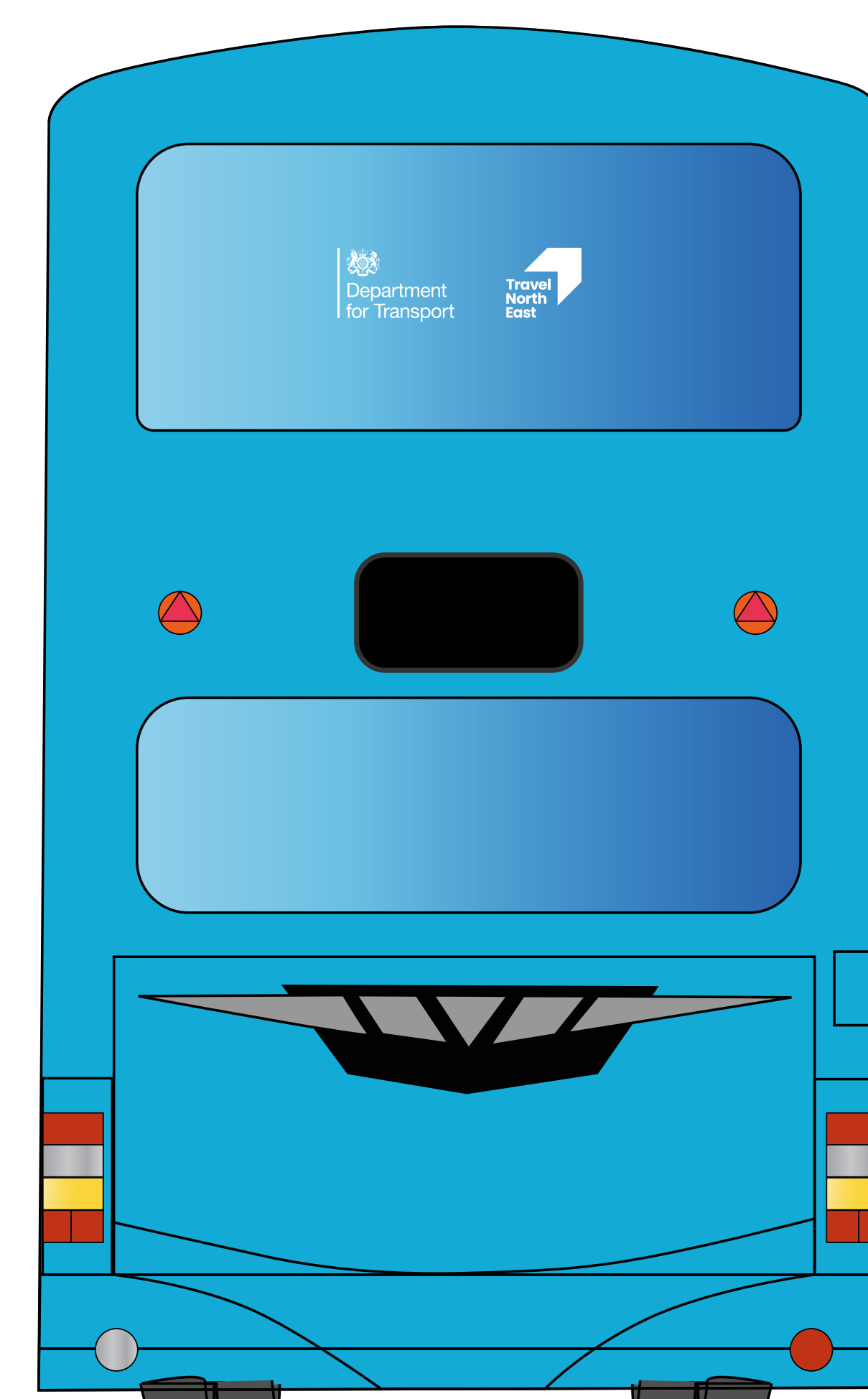
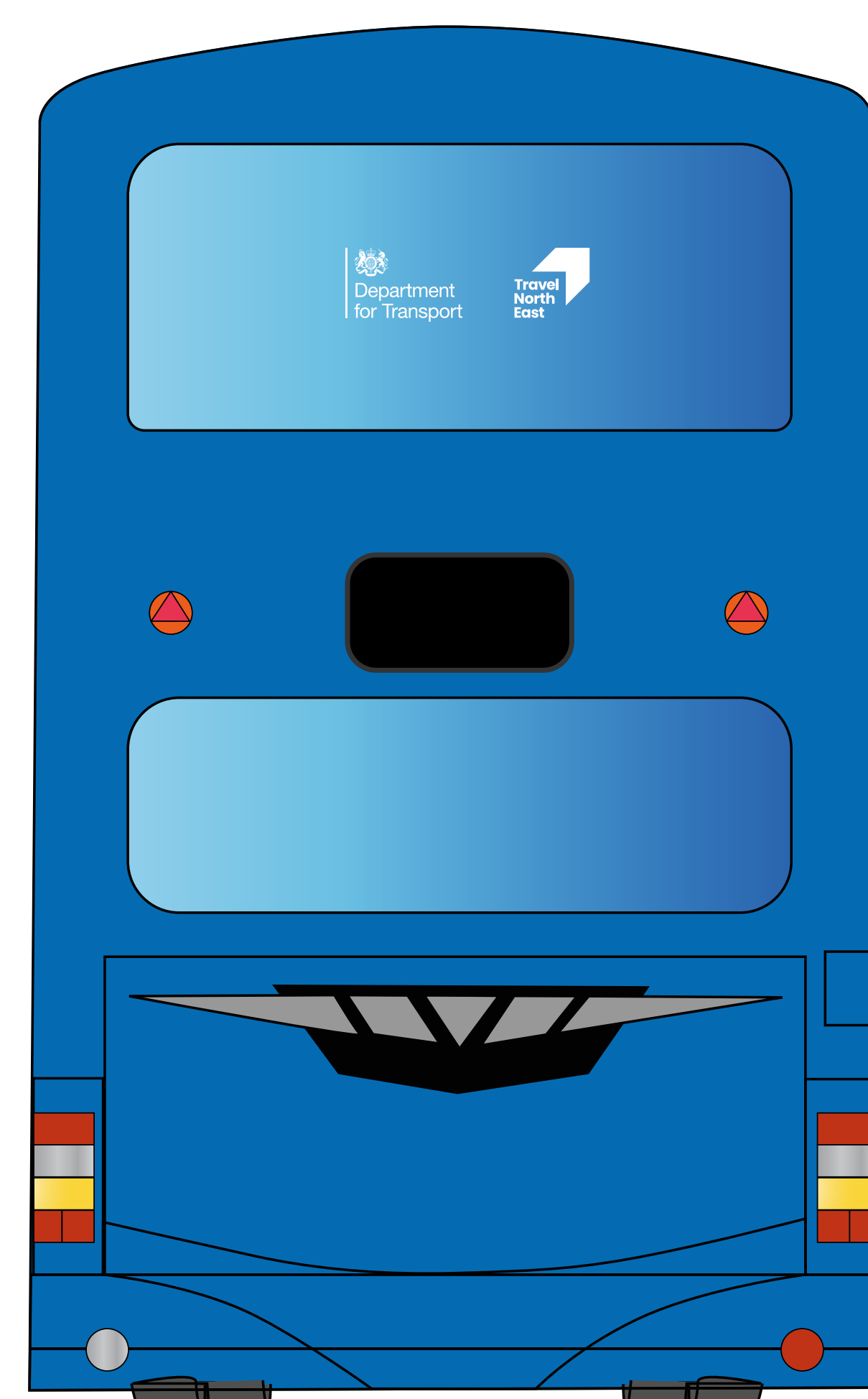
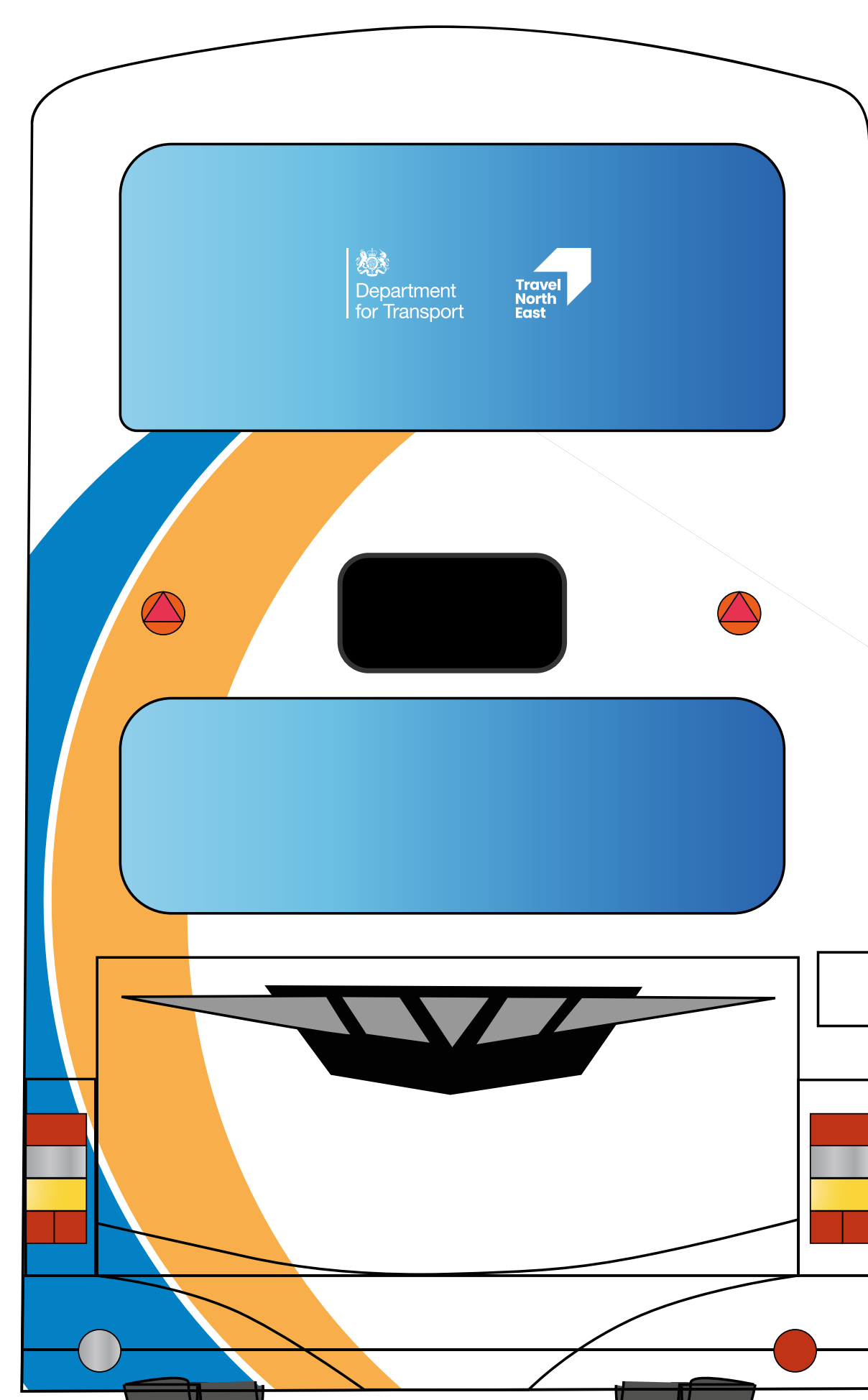
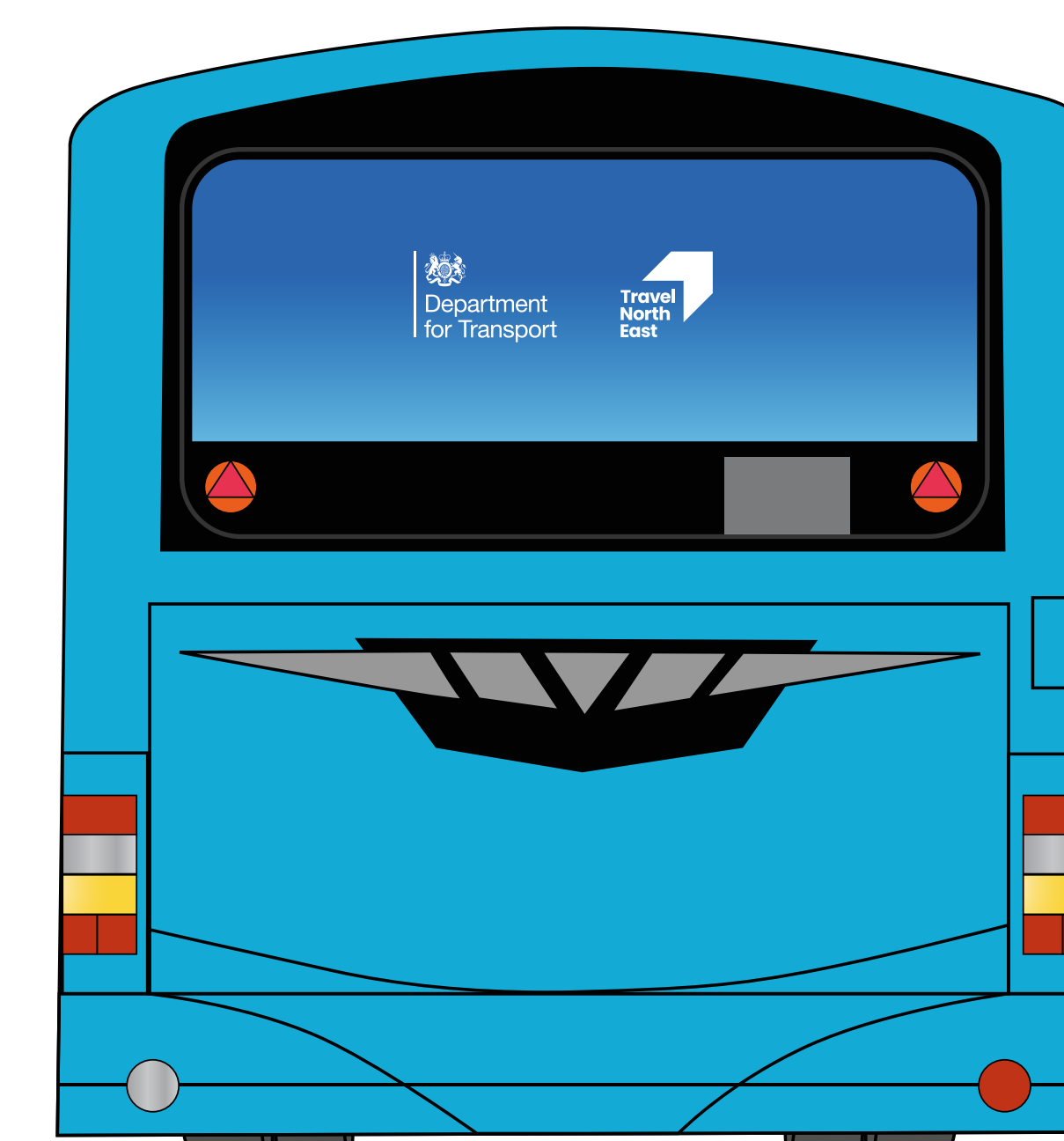
## PARTNER BUS SERVICES.



# OUT-DOOR.

If the advised location is not available, a secondary position on the rear of the bus can also be accepted.

## ADDITIONAL BUS LOCATIONS.



## **Our Customer Charter**

**Date of publication: XX 2022**

**Date of next review: XX 2025**

We, as the North East's bus operators and local authorities, want to ensure that every bus journey you make in the region is enjoyable and that you receive a consistently high level of service. We know that buses make a huge difference to the lives of local people, with thousands of journeys made everyday for work, education and leisure purposes. This is why regional bus operators and local authorities have joined in partnership to commit to offering an improved bus service for all, which will allow more people to take advantage of the social, environmental and health benefits of travelling by bus. This Bus Passenger Charter sets out what bus passengers can expect when travelling on any of the region's buses and what can be done if the experience falls short of our commitment to you.

## **Who we are**

The signatories to this Bus Passenger Charter are:

- Regional bus operators covered by the North East Enhanced Partnership
- Transport North East, who provide strategy and planning for public transport on behalf of the North East Joint Transport Committee, which brings together the seven constituent authorities of Durham, Newcastle, Northumberland, North Tyneside, South Tyneside, Gateshead and Sunderland;
- Nexus, the Passenger Transport Executive responsible for public transport across Tyne and Wear;
- Durham County Council and Northumberland County Council;

## **Our Commitments**

### **We commit to operating a safe, secure and comfortable service**

Our passengers can expect:

- A clean bus with comfortable facilities, charging sockets and Wi-Fi where available
- A professional and friendly driver
- For us to work in collaboration with colleagues in local authorities and police forces to ensure a secure, well maintained, place to wait for the bus
- CCTV provision on bus
- Cooperation with the Police and Crime Commissioner's (PCCs) Safer Transport Initiatives
- A zero-tolerance policy towards hate crime, anti-social behaviour of any kind or harassment towards passengers and bus staff.

### **We commit to always keep you informed**

Passengers can expect:

- Accurate, legible, and accessible sources of information regarding routes, timetables and fares- available in digital and paper form where appropriate
- Accurate, accessible and timely information about potential and actual disruption to service

- A clear, single source of information about how best to make multi-modal journeys across the North East
- The provision of real-time information via app and website, as well as 400 stops and stations across the network
- On board 'Next Stop' audio-visual information on all new buses (This commitment applies to buses added to the fleet (or manufactured?) after XX/XX/XXXX and buses with occupancy of over 22 seats)
- That bus users and effected communities will be consulted with prior to a major route or timetable change to ensure impacts are fully considered.
- Maintenance of hearing loop systems on buses and in interchanges where appropriate
- Bus drivers to be knowledgeable on routes, passenger entitlements, and the best fare options for a passenger's day of travel.
- For the bus partnership to publish performance statistics every six months, which passengers can view here: [PLACEHOLDER FOR LOCATION OF PERFORMANCE STATISTICS].

Each of our major operators have a dedicated website where you can access journey planning tools, view timetables and service updates, and check information on what kinds of tickets are available. This, and wider information about services, can be found at the websites below:

- <https://www.arrivabus.co.uk/north-east>
- <https://www.gonortheast.co.uk/services>
- <https://www.stagecoachbus.com/about/north-east>
- <https://www.nexus.org.uk/>
- <https://travelinenortheast.info/>
- [durhamcc-lts.trapezegroupazure.co.uk](https://durhamcc-lts.trapezegroupazure.co.uk)
- For a list of smaller operator websites please refer to [TNE WEBSITE INTERIM WEB PAGE / NEW LOGO ASSOCIATED WEBSITE]

### **We commit to making every journey as easy and reliable as possible**

We commit to:

- Aim to exceed bus punctuality and reliability targets that are set by the regulator, the traffic commissioner. This means that 95% of journeys will be no more than one minute early or five minutes late.
- The availability of service information pertaining to routes, timetables, fares and otherwise in accessible formats
- A network of bus routes running along all major roads connecting people to towns, cities and large employers
- A range of value for money tickets that can be used on any bus regardless of operator, with a range of payment methods including cash and contactless
- Providing a space large enough to take one wheelchair or two buggies on every bus as a minimum

### **We commit to help, particularly when things go wrong**

We commit to the below policies:

- Support for Guide Dog training across our fleets and stations and free travel for accredited Guide Dog trainers

Despite our best efforts, things can go wrong. In the event this happens, we will take the appropriate action to put things right and get your journey back on track. We commit to:

- Providing a considered and appropriate response to all queries, complaints and comments- treating each on a case-by-case basis
- A service guarantee (free bus ticket or voucher to compensate for service issues where necessary)
- An easy access guarantee: a taxi will be provided or cost covered where a bus is unable to accommodate a customer with a disability, who would usually be accommodated
- An Emergency Protocol to ensure operator cooperation in the interests of customer service and safety in the event of severe disruption. This Protocol is available to view at: [PLACEHOLDER FOR ONLINE LOCATION OF HUSKY PROTOCOL DOCUMENT ONCE RATIFIED]

### How to get in touch

We welcome feedback from passengers concerning their experiences across the network, specifically that which relates to the commitments in this charter.

If service has fallen below the standards specified above, we ask that you contact the operator of the service you used in writing or via phone at your earliest convenience so that we can try to find a suitable resolution.

#### Arriva

Online: [arrivabus.co.uk/contact-us](http://arrivabus.co.uk/contact-us)

By phone: 0344 800 44 11, 8:00am – 5:00pm Monday to Friday

By post: Arriva Customer Services, 487 Dunstable Road, FREEPOST ANG7624, Luton, Bedfordshire, LU4 8DS

#### Go North East

Online: [gonortheast.co.uk/contact](http://gonortheast.co.uk/contact)

By phone: 0191 420 5050, 7:00am – 7:00pm Monday to Friday and 9:00am – 5:00pm at weekends and bank holidays.

By post: Go North East, Customer Services Team, Freepost NT2674, Gateshead, NE8 1BR

#### Nexus

Online: [nexus.org.uk/contactus](http://nexus.org.uk/contactus)

By phone: 0191 20 20 747, 9:00am – 5:00pm Monday to Friday (except bank holidays)

By post: Customer Relations, Nexus House, St James' Boulevard, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 4AX

#### Stagecoach

Online: [stagecoachbus.com/help-and-contact](http://stagecoachbus.com/help-and-contact)

By phone: 0191 566 0231, 9:00am – 5:00pm, Monday to Friday

By post: Stagecoach North East Head Office, Wheatsheaf, Sunderland, SR5 1AQ

#### All other operators

Online: [INSERT LINK TO TNE WEBPAGE LISTING DETAILS OF SMALLER OPERATORS]

**If you feel we have not delivered on our commitments: Bus Users UK / Local Authority**

We will do all we can to resolve any issues to your satisfaction, however, if we have not dealt with the matter to your satisfaction, you can contact Bus Users UK, who will independently review your case. Their contact details are below:

Please address all correspondence to Bus Users UK:

22 Greencoat Place, London, SW1P 1PR | enquiries@bususers.org | bususers.org

**How to get BPC in other formats:**

[PLACEHOLDER – DECISION TO BE MADE ON TYPES OF ALTERNATIVE FORMATS AND HOW THEY MIGHT BE ACCESSED e.g. “Our website has ‘talking’ software that can translate the text of this charter into audio. The charter can also be viewed in high colour contrast, with enlarged text and in alternate languages. Paper copies are available upon request- please email XXX for this”.]

DRAFT



# Transport **North East**

---

**Code of Conduct – Management process for making changes to or on the bus network**  
**October 2022**

---

DRAFT



## Defined Terms

**“LA/PTE”** Local Authority/ Public Transport Executive, in the EP area this applies to Durham County Council, Northumberland County Council and Nexus

**“Partnership Board”** The North East Bus Partnership Board will provide governance to the North East bus Enhanced Partnership

**“Local Bus Board”** Local partnership boards for each Local Authority area within the EP Scheme Area, which provide a forum for discussions in respect of the EP Plan and EP Scheme and other matters in relation to bus services at a local level.

**“LTA”** Local Transport Authority, in the EP area this refers to The Joint Transport Committee who delegate their powers for secured bus services out to the LA/PTE as defined above.

## Introduction

The North East Bus Service Code of Conduct has been drafted between the region’s bus operators and local authorities as well as Transport North East (TNE) and Nexus. The Code of Conduct responds to issues raised during public and stakeholder consultation regarding the current process of bus services changes. This code introduces a consistent standard to ensure network changes can be made in an orderly manner and communities and bus users are adequately consulted with.

## Code of Conduct – Management process for making changes to or on the bus network

As is the case at present, planned network changes by operators will be implemented at fixed dates in the year, which are agreed annually with the LA/PTE, in order to retain customer confidence, limit pressure on publicity functions and assist contract management. It is acknowledged that flexibility will be required to respond to circumstances where there is seasonal demand or where there are reliability concerns.

Under certain situations it may also be agreed that a bus operator does not need to give advanced notice of changes, beyond the statutory requirements. This may be when a change will be beneficial to the bus network and therefore passengers, or when the affected LA/PTE and operator agree that a change is either immaterial or required, for example, to meet the requirements of a traffic regulation order.

The LA/PTE may also choose not to raise changes with Bus Boards, if they consider changes to be so minor and immaterial that the impact on passengers will be negligible.

- T-18 weeks – An operator determines the need to make a network change and submits initial proposals in writing to the appropriate LA/PTE, including Transport North East. The relevant bus board or boards are also identified so that changes can be communicated to elected members via correspondence from the local authority. Such a submission should include a short brief on the reasons for the change, including data if relevant and not commercially sensitive, demonstrating how the change or changes would impact the objectives set out in the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), Enhanced Partnership (EP) Plan and/or other current local transport policies. Where impacts are potentially or actually detrimental operators ought to detail methods of mitigation. On receipt Bus Board Chair to consider if the change(s) merits raising with the wider Local Bus Board. Any data requests, in line with section 6C of the Transport Act 1985, are to be made to operators at this time with the data provided as soon as is practicable for the LA/PTE to prepare feedback.
- T-15 weeks (latest) – Feedback on proposals to be sent to operators from LA/PTE *[It is expected that operators and LTAs communicate during this period to work through the proposals]*
- T-13 weeks – Plans, having taken into account initial feedback from Bus Boards and elected members, are ready for consultation.
- T-13 weeks – Authorities and / or operators undertake appropriate measures to publicise draft changes to routes and service levels, as well how feedback

can be provided, via social media (push adverts if funding allows), websites and digital information boards at bus stops, in bus stations and on-board buses, where available and appropriate. Engagement to be held with key stakeholder bodies and the general public via “drop in” sessions as appropriate.

- T-11 weeks – Bus Board Chair to consider if a meeting is required, if so, Local bus board meeting is held to review feedback and discuss with operators if any amendments to the proposed changes can be taken. If changes affect multiple local authorities’ officers should attend all local bus board meetings to provide members with the full proposal. T-11 to T-6 week period is used to make any final amendments to aforementioned changes.
- T-10 weeks – Final registration draft copies are supplied to each relevant LA/PTE, encapsulating any feedback received to date. Based on the type of change taking place, the LA/PTE can invoke any data requests as per the Bus Services Act 2017.
- T-8 weeks – No further data or service amend requests can be provided beyond this date unless agreed critical. LA/PTE to ensure that relevant proformas are provided as soon as practical after this date and not unduly withheld.
- T-6 weeks – Services registered and 6-week period is used to promote network changes. Promotion to be undertaken by operators and the LA/PTE including social media, websites, apps, and digital information displays at bus stations, bus stops and on-board buses where available and appropriate.
- T-6 weeks – A partnership board meeting is held for an overview if changes are region wide or beyond the jurisdiction of local bus boards i.e. three or more areas.
- T-6 weeks – Traffic commissioner notified, unless all partners agree that a short-term notice will be acceptable. This may be when a change will be immaterial to bus users, offer an increased service or respond to short term events such as reliability challenges.
- T-4 weeks – Operators and Authorities begin to update and go live with customer information where applicable.
- T-2 weeks\* – Revised bus service data (timetables/routes) to be updated for journey planning and real time passenger information systems. Roadside publicity updates begin to be undertaken for completion no later than T+1, best endeavours will be used to have updates completed by T-0.

*\*Where practicable and timetable finalisation has occurred on time, must occur between T-1 and T+1.*

- T-0 weeks – Changes, as agreed by all appropriate bodies in the weeks prior, go live.

DRAFT

This page is intentionally left blank

## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

---

**Date:** 15<sup>th</sup> December 2022

**Subject:** Public Health Specialty Trainee Placement with Transport North East

**Report of:** Managing Director, Transport North East

### 1. Summary of issue

- 1.1 This paper is to inform the OSC about a new public health trainee placement within Transport North East (TNE), and outlines the benefits of the placement for transport and public health sectors. The public health trainee will support consideration of health and wellbeing in JTC's policies, strategies and schemes and help strengthen links between transport and health.

### 2. Background

- 2.1 In March 2021, the JTC published the first Transport Plan for the region, which sets a vision of 'moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East.' The Plan also sets out five objectives:

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

The public health placement will contribute to meeting these objectives, particularly Healthier North East.

- 2.2 Transport influences health in many ways. For example:

- Physical activity through active travel (e.g. walking, cycling or wheeling) promotes health and wellbeing. Around 1 in 4 people in the North East are currently physically inactive, meaning they do less than 30min physical activity per week.
- Air pollution from transport can be harmful to health. It is estimated that poor air quality is responsible for around 360 deaths each year in central Tyneside alone.

- Road traffic collisions can cause serious injury or loss of life. In 2021 there were 2,891 casualties on the roads across our 7 local authority areas.
- Transport connects people to employment, education, social, leisure, and health opportunities. This can reduce social isolation, improve mental wellbeing and enable access to health and social care services.
- Traffic causes noise pollution which can affect sleep quality and increase stress levels.

A move towards more sustainable forms of transport, particularly active travel, is likely to reap significant health benefits for the people living in our region as well as delivering economic, environmental, and social benefits.

- 2.3 In the North East, there has been a move to closer working between health and transport sectors and a desire to collaborate to achieve shared objectives.
- 2.4 The Public Health Training Programme provides 5 years of public health training to candidates from medical and non-medical backgrounds. Upon completion of the programme, trainees are eligible to work as a Consultant in Public Health (professionally aligned to medical consultants). Public health trainees work in a variety of settings, such as local authorities (with local public health teams), UK Health Security Agency health protection teams, Department of Health, NHS England, hospital trusts, and universities.

### **3. Public health placement**

- 3.1 A new placement for a public health trainee at TNE for 12 months on a full time basis has been agreed between the Public Health Training Programme and TNE. This placement is supported by the 7 Directors of Public Health in the North East.
- 3.2 The public health trainee will strengthen the consideration of health within TNE policy and strategy development and scheme identification. This will help us achieve our objective of 'Healthier North East' in the North East Transport Plan. The placement will also help to build stronger links between transport and health sectors in the North East region.
- 3.3 The placement will also contribute to the trainee's development and provide valuable experience of working across sectors to help address the wider influences on health, such as transport factors.
- 3.4 Luke Robertshaw (Public Health Specialty Trainee, 4th year) joined the TNE Policy and Strategy Team on 3rd August 2022. He is being supervised by the Head of Transport Policy and Strategy Development at Transport North East and is also being mentored by the Director of Public Health at South Tyneside Council for his Public Health training and development.
- 3.5 The public health trainee has supported the development of Making the Right Travel Choices Strategy and is contributing to the North East Active Travel Strategy through the provision of public health input and advice. He is also



seeking to draw stronger input from key NE public health stakeholders into the formulation and consultation of TNE's strategies.

#### **4. Transport and Health Workshop - Moving in the same direction**

- 4.1 On 2nd December 2022, Transport North East in collaboration with Newcastle University and the North East Office for Health Improvements and Disparities (OHID) hosted Transport and Health- moving in the same direction, with the aim of starting a new cross-sector partnership focused on delivering shared regional objectives and tackling health inequalities through sustainable transport solutions. The public health trainee helped lead the development and delivery of the event which was attended by 60 people from public health, transport, planning and academic sectors. Very positive feedback was received from attendees on the quality and relevance of content delivered, and the connections made at the workshop.

#### **5. Next Steps**

- 5.1 A communications plan is being developed to publicise this placement in the context of closer collaboration between Transport and Public Health sectors.

This page is intentionally left blank



## North East Joint Transport Committee, Overview and Scrutiny Committee

---

**Date:** 15 December 2022

**Subject:** Joint Transport Committee Forward Plan and Scrutiny Work Programme

**Report of:** Policy and Scrutiny Officer

### Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the suggested work programme for 2022/23 for the Joint Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

### Recommendations

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- i. Review and comment on the suggested work programme.

## **1. Background Information**

- 1.1 The Joint Transport Committee (JTC) Forward Plan is a document which the Joint Transport Committee is required to maintain under the Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017. The Forward Plan for the Joint Transport Committee, and its Subcommittees is published on both the North East Combined Authority's website and on the North of Tyne Combined Authority's website. It lists the decisions that the Joint Transport Committee and its Officers intend to take in the coming months and must include all decisions to be made in the next 28 days. The JTC Forward Plan template contains specific information relating to each decision, including the date the decision will be made, a brief explanation of the topic, the consultation to be undertaken, and contact details of the author. The JTC Forward Plan template has recently been updated and includes further information including if the decision is a 'Key Decision' and if an item will be discussed in private.
- 1.2 Details of each decision are included on the JTC Forward Plan 28 days before the report is considered and any decision is taken. This supports the transparency of decision making across the Joint Transport Committee and allows members of the public to see the items that will be discussed. There are special procedures for circumstances where publication for the full 28 clear day period is impractical or where there is special urgency. Both of these procedures involve the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and would be reported to the committee at the next meeting.

### **Role of Overview and Scrutiny**

- 1.3 The Joint Transport Committee, Overview and Scrutiny Committee has been established in accordance with Schedule 2 (4) of The Newcastle Upon Tyne, North Tyneside and Northumberland Combined Authority (Establishment and Functions) Order 2018.
- 1.4 The Joint Transport Committee, Overview and Scrutiny Committee can examine any decisions of the Committee – be that by the JTC itself or a subcommittee, constituent authority, or officer holding delegated authority. This Scrutiny occurs in public and ensures democratic and public accountability.
- 1.5 One of the main functions of this Committee is the review and scrutiny of 'Key Decisions' made by the Joint Transport Committee and its Officers. The relevant regulations set out a test for what should be considered a Key Decision – being those which are most significant in financial or other terms. This is explained in the Decision-Making Protocol of the North East Combined Authority that was adopted by the Joint Transport Committee for its use at its inaugural meeting in November 2018.

### **Requests for Special Urgency/General Exception**

- 1.6 In accordance with the Decision Making Protocol, it was agreed by Members that the request of any Short Notice Procedure that involved the Chair of the Overview

and Scrutiny Committee would be reported at the next Committee. The table below shows the number of requests made since the last meeting was held:

Type of Short Notice Procedure	Number of Requests since previous Committee
Requests for Special Urgency	0
Request for General Exception	0

Details of requests for Special Urgency and General Exception can be found at this website <https://northeastca.gov.uk/decision-making/forward-plan/special-notice-and-urgency-provisions/>.

### **Annual Work Programme – Approach for ongoing overview and scrutiny of Transport Plan**

- 1.7 A JTC OSC working group was set up in March 2021 to discuss an approach for ongoing oversight and scrutiny of the Transport Plan when it comes into effect and recognised that that the Transport Plan gives the OSC clarity of the policy framework it is operating within and focus for the future.
- 1.8 At the 25 March 2021 OSC meeting members discussed and agreed that the Transport Plans objectives and policy statements can provide structure to the OSC's Work Programme over the next few years, by enabling it to focus on a particular area in each meeting. The committee also discussed an approach to structuring future meetings which involved receiving and debating an overview on progress being made on the Transport Plan and its objectives, planned future actions, and then providing the opportunity to scrutinise particular areas of the plan in more detail.
- 1.9 The scheduling of these areas of would be informed by whichever is the most advanced in the development of its delivery plan. This would provide the OSC the opportunity to have an effective and productive input into the delivery of the Plan. By the end of each meeting, the OSC should understand the Objective and its delivery plan so it is then able to monitor it and assist in providing ideas/proposals to support delivery or overcome obstacles (e.g. by identifying alternative actions for consideration by the JTC).
- 1.10 There is the opportunity to use, where appropriate, external input into the OSC meetings when considering the objectives and specific issues that may be on interest to certain groups.
- 1.11 The most recent version of the work programme (appendix two) has been compiled to allow the Overview and Scrutiny Committee the opportunity to consider items that will be of regional importance to the Joint Transport Committee, the JTC forward plan and items previously raised by Members. A link to the current forward plan can be found [here](#).

- 1.12 It should be noted that the work programme covers items that will be discussed at the meetings. It does not preclude 'deeper dives' providing more focused scrutiny of particular topics by a sub-group of the committee outside of these meeting dates. These topics can be raised with the Chair and Scrutiny Officer at any time.

## **2. Annual Work Programme – Update**

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to review and discuss the suggested work programme.

## **3. Reasons for the Proposals**

- 3.1 To provide an opportunity for Committee members to input on any additional items as part of continued planning for the Work Programme for 2022/23.

- 3.2 The work programme will be refreshed and updated at each meeting of the Committee throughout the year.

## **4. Alternative Options Available**

- 4.1 There are no alternative options available.

## **5. Potential Impact on Objectives**

- 5.1 Development of a work programme and review and scrutiny of decisions in the JTC Forward Plan will contribute towards the development and implementation of the policy framework of NECA, NTCA, Nexus and the North East LEP as well as providing appropriate challenge to decisions taken.

## **6. Financial and Other Resources Implications**

- 6.1 No financial or other resource implications are identified at this stage.

## **7. Legal Implications**

- 7.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from these recommendations.

## **8. Key Risks**

- 8.1 There are no key risks associated with the recommendations made in this report.

## **9. Equality and Diversity**

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

## **10. Crime and Disorder**

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

## **11. Consultation/Engagement**

11.1 On-going consultation takes place with Officers and Scrutiny Members across the local authorities that make up the Joint Transport Committee, in regard to the items for the Annual Work Programme as Appendix One.

## **12. Other Impact of the Proposals**

12.1 The proposals consider the wider impact and take into account the Principles of Decision Making. They allow Members' consideration of the items on the JTC Forward Plan and allow them the opportunity to have an overview of all performance, decision making and developments across the Joint Transport Committee structure.

## **13. Appendices**

13.1 Appendix One – Annual Work Programme

## **14. Background Papers**

14.1 None.

## **15. Contact Officers**

15.1 Gavin Armstrong, Policy and Scrutiny Officer  
Email: [gavin.armstrong@northeastca.gov.uk](mailto:gavin.armstrong@northeastca.gov.uk)  
Telephone Number: Tel No: (0191) 4247537

15.2 Mike Barker  
email: [mikebarker@gateshead.gov.uk](mailto:mikebarker@gateshead.gov.uk)  
Telephone: (0191) 433 2100

## **16. Sign off**

- 16.1
- The Proper Officer for Transport: ✓
  - Head of Paid Service: ✓
  - Monitoring Officer: ✓
  - Chief Finance Officer: ✓

## **17. Glossary**

17.1 NECA - North East Combined Authority  
North East LEP - North East Local Enterprise Partnership  
NTCA – North of Tyne Combined Authority

**Joint Transport Committee: Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme  
December 2022**

**Standing Items for each Committee Meeting:**

- Declaration of Interest
- Minutes of Previous Meeting
- JTC Forward Plan and Work Programme Report

**Source of work programme and items of importance:**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee obtains work programme items from the following sources:

- a) Items submitted by Members of the Committee (and including items referred by other members of the Combined Authorities)
- b) Suggestions from Officers
- c) The Budget and Policy Framework; Transport Plan
- d) The JTC Forward Plan
- e) The Proper Officer for Transport
- f) Evidence for any policy review work regarding Transport

**Suggested Work Programme 2022-2023**

<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Subject</b>
March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ZEV strategy</li> <li>• Enhanced Partnership Update</li> </ul>
July 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Road Infrastructure Strategy (TBC)</i></li> <li>• TCF Programme Closure</li> </ul>

It should be noted that the work programme covers items that will be discussed at the meetings. It does not preclude 'deeper dives' providing more focused scrutiny of particular topics by a sub-group of the committee outside of these meeting dates. These topics can be raised with the Chair and Scrutiny Officer at any time.