

## North East Combined Authority, Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 1 December 2015 at 2.00 pm

Meeting to be held in a North Tyneside Council, Quadrant, The Silverlink, Cobalt Business Park, Newcastle upon Tyne, Tyne and Wear NE27 0BY

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## AGENDA

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1. <b>Apologies for absence</b>	
2. <b>Declarations of Interest</b>	
Please remember to declare any personal interest where appropriate both verbally and by recording it on the relevant form (to be handed to the Democratic Services Officer). Please also remember to leave the meeting where any personal interest requires this.	
3. <b>Minutes of previous meeting held on 20 October 2015</b>	1 - 6
4. <b>Devolution Update</b>	7 - 28
5. <b>Nexus Performance</b>	29 - 58
6. <b>Draft Budget 2016/17</b>	59 - 114
7. <b>Policy Review : Transport Related Barriers to Education, Employment and Training</b>	115 - 190
8. <b>Forward Plan &amp; Work Programme</b>	191 - 244
9. <b>Dates and time of next meeting</b>	
9 February 2016	

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**To All Members**

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## North East Combined Authority, Overview and Scrutiny Committee

20 October 2015

(2.00 - 3.45 pm)

Meeting held Committee Room, Civic Centre, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 8QH

### **Present:**

Councillor: Wright (Chair)

Councillors: Armstrong, Crute, Dillon, Eagle, Flux, Glindon, Graham, A Lower, Meling, S Pearson, Pidcock and Snowdon

### 17 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor Maxwell.

### 18 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Eagle declared an interest as an employee of Nexus.

### 19 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 8 SEPTEMBER 2015**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 8 September 2015 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

### 20 **POLICY REVIEW: TRANSPORT RELATED BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT - EVIDENCE FROM STAGECOACH**

Submitted: Report of Robin Knight (Stagecoach North East Commercial Director) to provide evidence from Stagecoach for the policy review on transport related barriers to education, employment and training (previously submitted and copy attached to the official minutes).

Robin Knight stated that Stagecoach had welcomed the call for evidence from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and introduced the report. He also advised that the report was in draft form at this stage and that further details would be added to the document before the close of the evidence call.

The report included information on Stagecoach activities to overcome barriers in the categories of ongoing activities to support passenger journeys, schools and colleges and employment. The Stagecoach comments focussed on Tyne and Wear as the company had very limited or no involvement in County Durham and Northumberland.

## Members' comments, questions and responses

- Smart Travel – Stagecoach, with Go North East and Arriva, was planning to roll out SmartZone Bus to Bus products. It was anticipated that only one card would be required for bus services.
- Smartzone was being piloted in South Tyneside although the trial was governed by the local authority boundary. A PAYG pilot had also been established by Stagecoach on bus services in Middlesbrough.
- The Smartzone ticket would be available for durations of one day, one week or a month.
- Bus operators had had a multi-modal all zone ticket ready for Tyne and Wear since March.
- A number of technical meetings had been held but Nexus could not join the bus operator scheme until a decision on the regulatory environment was taken.
- Members emphasized that the Metro only serviced a very small part of the NECA area and that multi-modal ticketing had to be an objective for the entire region.
- Go North East would also be submitting evidence to the policy review.
- It was understood that Arriva and Go North East had been in talks about rolling out Smartzone ticketing in County Durham.
- Members questioned the complexity in the North East (as compared to London). It was pointed out that the Competition and Markets Authority had acted as a break on multi operator ticketing. It was also noted that it was in fact the deregulated elements of transport services in the region currently delivering smart ticketing.
- In response to a request to say more on the problems of shift workers, Robin Knight said that historically services used to focus on scholars and workers at peak times. Now land use planning was key to providing services and Stagecoach was constantly looking at innovative initiatives.
- Stagecoach already worked with several educational establishments but was looking for any opportunity to work with others and to serve them.
- The Chair referred to research which had indicated that free and cheap ticket offers were not targeted at the people who needed the services the most. Robin Knight advised that this was a danger of long term/broad brush schemes but that any initiatives were targeted as well as they could be; commercial initiatives were focussed carefully on the people they were aimed at.

The Chair reminded members that Overview and Scrutiny Committee was evidence gathering only at this time. All evidence would be taken into consideration, and brought back to committee in February/March, before recommendations were put

forward to the North East Leadership Board (NELB). The recommendations of the review would contribute to the Transport Plan for the North East, which was due to be completed in 2016.

Evidence submitted from the City of Durham Trust would be published on the website. Other witnesses would be scheduled into the programme of the policy review.

## 21 THEMATIC LEAD TRANSPORT UPDATE

Submitted: Report of Thematic Lead for Transport to outline details of major transport developments and announcements since the last update report was provided to the Leadership Board on 14 July (previously submitted and copy attached to the official minutes).

Ian Coe (NECA Principal Transport Planner) introduced the report and advised that since the last meeting of the Leadership Board there had been a number of significant transport developments affecting the North East. This included the work of the Transport for the North (TfN) partnership, the Transport Vision for the North East, Local Growth Fund Transport Schemes, rail, public transport, sustainable transport and aviation.

### Members' comments, questions and responses

- In relation to indicative timescale for the Transport Plan, the Chair asked when the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be consulted. Ian Coe said he would come back with this information as a matter of urgency.
- The Chair requested that appropriate officers be advised that Overview and Scrutiny must be entitled to carry out committee level public consultation if it considered it necessary.
- The Scrutiny Officer requested that the Transport Plan be dealt with as an Article 4 plan and dealt with in accordance with the NRCA Constitution.
- A strong voice was needed to emphasize that disused rail lines in the region should be reopened to support the objectives of NECA.
- A member commented that it was disappointing that the political lead was not in attendance at the meeting. Committee was advised that the lead member would attend the Overview and Scrutiny meeting in March.
- Concern was expressed with regard to the scale of Transport for the North (TfN) and whether or not it had smaller plans which sat under the blueprint.

Ian Coe advised that TfN was a partnership and that NECA did have a voice. The NECA Transport Plan would dovetail into the work of TfN and take account of the North East's objectives.

- There was also the question about whether the current infrastructure could cope with the future growth.

Officers were looking at a study into local rail capacity to see if it could cope with the expected growth, the possibility of reopening lines, lack of capacity and pinch points.

- Members discussed the problems with the closed level crossing at East Boldon.
- It was pointed out that at some point prioritisation of issues in the report would be needed and that Overview and Scrutiny should be involved.
- As Arriva operated most of the bus services from Newcastle to Northumberland it had previously been agreed that they would be invited to a future meeting.
- An exercise was looking at the case for dualling either the A69, A66 or both.
- The current plan for the A1 was to dual it to Ellingham, Northumberland.

Ian Coe said he would check the criteria for dualing and also the position with regard to the rest of the A1.

- Overview and Scrutiny asked to be reminded of the Local Growth Fund Transport Schemes, if they were on schedule and how the plans were shared with residents.
- Regarding the consultation exploring options to support regional airports from the impacts of the devolution of Air Passenger Duty, Ian Coe agreed to share any progress with members in writing.

The Scrutiny Officer advised that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be included in the Transport Plan preparations and the additional information from the Principal Transport Planner would be circulated.

## 22 **DEVOLUTION UPDATE**

Submitted: Report of Head of Paid Service to provide the committee with an update on progress, the content of the NECA submission to Government and to consider governance systems and the role of overview and scrutiny under devolved arrangements (previously circulated and copy attached to the official minutes).

The Scrutiny Officer informed committee that, unfortunately, late apologies had been received from Adam Wilkinson, the NECA interim head of paid service.

The Chair and committee members expressed concerns about the unfortunate situation. There was a host of issues in the report that Overview and Scrutiny members wanted to comment on before decisions were taken. Following the

meeting the Scrutiny Committee agreed to meet with members of the Leadership Board to discuss progress on the proposals.

The next Scrutiny Committee meeting would be held on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> December at 2.00 pm in North Tyneside. The Head of Paid Service would be in attendance to provide the Scrutiny Committee with a progress report and the Chair of the Leadership Board would also be in attendance, on behalf of the Leadership Board.

## 23 **FORWARD PLAN & WORK PROGRAMME**

Submitted: Report of the Monitoring Officer (previously circulated copy attached to official minutes) which incorporated a copy of the NECA Forward Plan and the updated Scrutiny Annual Work Programme for 2015/16.

The Scrutiny Officer advised that the report provided Members with an opportunity to consider the items for the current 28 day period and to review the work programme.

Members were advised that the Nexus Performance update had been referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee by the Transport North East Committee (TNEC) via the North East Combined Authority, Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This was because of concerns about disruptions to the Metro Service on the weekend of the Great North Run.

## 24 **DATES AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

2:00pm, Tuesday 1 December 2015 at Cobalt, North Tyneside.

Councillor Armstrong submitted his apologies for the meeting. It was unlikely that Councillors Pidcock and Flux (Northumberland) would be in attendance due to a planning committee commitment.

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## North East Combined Authority

### Leadership Board

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REPORT FOR INFORMATION

**DATE:** 17 November 2015  
**SUBJECT:** Devolution Update  
**REPORT OF:** Head of Paid Service

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In September the North East Combined Authority (NECA) submitted a Statement of Intent to Government expressing an interest in the devolution of powers, responsibilities and resources from central Government to the North East. This signalled the start of negotiations with Government and a proposed devolution agreement was signed by the NECA Leadership Board and the Chancellor and Commercial Secretary on 23 October.

This report updates on progress to date and outlines the next steps in the process for NECA and the constituent authorities including the approach to public and stakeholder consultation and implementation planning.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Leadership Board note the contents of the report.

### **1 Background information**

- 1.1 In September the North East Combined Authority (NECA) submitted a Statement of Intent to Government expressing an interest in the devolution of powers, responsibilities and resources from central Government to the North East. This signalled the start of negotiations with Government and a proposed devolution agreement was signed by the NECA Leadership Board and the Chancellor and Commercial Secretary on 23 October.

### **2 Proposed Agreement**

- 2.1 The proposed agreement for devolution to the North East is attached at Appendix 1 and provides for the transfer of significant powers for employment and skills, transport, housing, planning, business support and investment from central government to the North East. It also paves the way for further devolution over time, and for the reform of public services, including health and social care, to be led by the North East.
- 2.2 Final agreement is conditional on a range of factors set out in the document: the legislative process, the Spending Review, further public consultation, agreement by the constituent councils, and formal endorsement by the Leadership Board and Ministers early in the New Year.

### **3 Consultation and engagement**

- 3.1 Following publication of the proposed devolution agreement, further public consultation commenced with an initial series of meetings organised across the NECA area to continue the conversation about devolution and capture the views of partners, stakeholders and residents on key issues within the proposals.
- 3.2 Feedback from these events will inform the development of further engagement sessions focused on some of the key themes within the proposals. In addition to the activity coordinated centrally by NECA, each constituent authority is developing arrangements locally to consult with residents and stakeholders in their area.
- 3.3 The regional business sector has a key role to play in devolution and arrangements are being made for focused discussions with the business community on a range of key issues in the proposals. The NECA Leadership Board will work with business leaders to determine arrangements within the region, which would reflect any new responsibilities for the combined authority and ensure the private sector is able to influence and advise decision-making in the region, through a close relationship with business representative bodies, including the North East Chamber of

# North East Combined Authority

## Leadership Board

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REPORT FOR INFORMATION

Commerce, Confederation of British Industry, Institute of Directors, Federation of Small Businesses and a reformed Local Enterprise Partnership.

- 3.4 Feedback from the latest public consultation exercise will be reported to a future meeting of the NECA Leadership Board prior to formal consideration on progressing with Government to the next stage in the process.

### 4 Next Steps

- 4.1 Progressing to the next phase of devolution is dependent on a range of factors, including the Spending Review announcement on 25 November and the passage of the Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill through Parliament, with Royal Assent expected before Christmas.

- 4.2 NECA and the constituent councils will continue to consult on the proposals into the New Year. Each of the seven local authorities will also consider the devolution agreement before the NECA Leadership Board considers whether to formally endorse the proposed agreement.

- 4.3 An implementation plan will be developed over the coming weeks to ensure that arrangements are in place to enable NECA to deliver on the proposals if they are formally agreed in the New Year. This will include establishing the appropriate capacity to progress the various workstreams related to the devolution agenda and the allocation of lead roles across the themes of the proposed agreement. Discussions with Government officials are also continuing in order to support this work and ensure a close dialogue on the detail of the proposals with individual government departments.

### 5 Potential impact on objectives

- 5.1 The proposed agreement provides for the transfer of significant powers for employment and skills, transport, housing, planning, business support and investment from central government to the North East in order to deliver the funding and responsibilities that are required to accelerate the area's economic growth.

### 6 Finance and other resources

- 6.1 In the current year additional funding is needed in order to provide the internal and external capacity to progress the various work streams related to the devolution agenda, including work relating to the Health and Social Care Commission and public service integration. The report at Item 8 on this agenda 'Draft Budget 2016/17 and Transport Levies' seeks Leadership Board agreement to a budget of up to £0.5m be established for this purpose, with any

release of the funding for specific proposals to be agreed under the delegated decision making process, with further details to be reported in the January Budget Report. The Chief Finance Officer is identifying funding sources for this expenditure including short term use of reserves; additional interest on cash flow; use of additional devolution funding next year; and virement / use of any other budget savings.

- 6.2 The Devolution agreement will bring considerable additional resources from 2016/17 onwards and the use of these resources will be determined by the Leadership Board following consultation.

## **7 Legal**

- 7.1 The Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill is progressing through the Parliamentary processes and is currently expected to receive Royal Assent in mid December. The emerging legislation requires that the Constituent Authorities and the Leadership Board support the devolution of functions and responsibilities to the Combined Authority.

## **8 Other considerations**

### **8.1 Consultation/community engagement**

A series of meetings with local and regional stakeholders is underway to raise awareness of the proposed agreement, discuss the detailed proposals and to find out more about what devolution could mean for the area. Further detail is set out in the body of the report at section 3.

### **8.2 Human rights**

There are no specific issues arising directly from this report.

### **8.3 Equalities and diversity**

There are no specific issues arising directly from this report.

### **8.4 Risk management**

The risks associated with devolved powers and funding streams will be assessed and reported to the Leadership Board as part of the report seeking formal endorsement to proceed to the next stage of the process with Government.

# North East Combined Authority

## Leadership Board

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REPORT FOR INFORMATION

### 8.5 Crime and disorder

There are no specific issues arising directly from this report.

### 8.6 Environment and sustainability

There are no specific issues arising directly from this report.

## 9 Background documents

### 9.1 Report to NECA Leadership Board – ‘Developing a Devolution Prospectus for the North East Combined Authority’ – 20 January 2015

Report to NECA Leadership Board – ‘Developing a Devolution Prospectus for the North East Combined Authority – update on stakeholder engagement – 16 June 2015

Report to NECA Leadership Board – ‘Devolution Update’ – 15 September 2015

## 10 Links to plans and policy framework

### 10.1 This report will support delivery of each of the Combined Authority themes and “More and Better Jobs”, A Strategic Economic Plan for the North East.

## 11 Appendices

### 11.1 Appendix 1 – North East Devolution Agreement

## 13 Contact Officers

### 13.1 Adam Wilkinson, Interim Head of Paid Service, North East Combined Authority [adamwilkinson@northeastca.gov.uk](mailto:adamwilkinson@northeastca.gov.uk) (0191) 643 6402

Caroline Winter, Policy Manager, 7 North East Local Authorities  
[caroline.winter@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:caroline.winter@newcastle.gov.uk) (0191) 211 5058

## 14 Sign off

Head of Paid Service ✓

Monitoring Officer ✓

Chief Finance Officer ✓

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HM Treasury



# NORTH EAST DEVOLUTION AGREEMENT

## DEVOLUTION AGREEMENT BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND THE NORTH EAST

This document sets out the terms of a proposed agreement between the North East Combined Authority Leadership Board and the Government to move forward with a radical devolution of funding, powers and responsibilities. Final agreement is conditional on the legislative process, the Spending Review, further public consultation, agreement by the constituent councils, and formal endorsement by the Leadership Board and Ministers early in the New Year.

The document we have negotiated together, set out alongside this statement, provides for the transfer of significant powers for employment and skills, transport, housing, planning, business support and investment from central government to the North East. It paves the way for further devolution over time, and for the reform of public services, including health and social care, to be led by the North East.

Devolution must deliver new opportunities for the people of the North East, helping to meet our Strategic Economic Plan to create 100,000 jobs. By prioritising Human Capital development, we will create a radical new approach to enhancing employment and skills, with devolved responsibility for adult skills, co-design of employment support for harder-to-help claimants, and partnership arrangements to create opportunities for young people.

The deal would enable the Combined Authority to create an Investment Fund focused on supporting the North East to compete in international markets, worth up to £1.5 billion, with an initial allocation of revenue funding for capital financing of at least £30 million a year for 30 years. The incoming Mayor would also have the option, with business support, to raise up to a further £30 million a year through a business rate supplement. The North East would in addition benefit from access to Local Growth Funding, from new Enterprise Zones, through the current bidding round, and from local leadership over European funding. Further details would be set out at and following the spending review through a place-based settlement and a single capital programme, demonstrating fair funding.

A Mayor for the North East would be established, working as part of the Combined Authority and subject to local democratic scrutiny, and with a strong partnership with business. Elections would take place in 2017. We will together review the appropriate relationship between the mayor and the role of police and crime commissioners.

We believe we can deliver a deal which is good for the North East, good for our individual communities, and good for the UK. It demonstrates the central role that the North East plays in delivering the ambitions of the Northern Powerhouse. We will now move forward to champion the progressive devolution which the North East demands and expects, with radical reforms of the relationship between the region and central government. Above all, we will help create new opportunities for the people of the North East, more and better jobs, and a greater say over their communities and their future.



**HM Treasury**



.....  
**The Rt Hon George Osborne**  
Chancellor of the Exchequer

.....  
**Cllr Simon Henig**  
Chair of the Combined  
Authority and Leader of  
Durham County Council

.....  
**Cllr Mick Henry**  
Vice Chair of the Combined  
Authority and Leader of  
Gateshead Council

.....  
**Mayor Norma Redfearn**  
Vice Chair of the Combined  
Authority and Elected Mayor  
of North Tyneside

.....  
**Cllr Nick Forbes**  
Leader of Newcastle City  
Council

.....  
**Cllr Grant Davey**  
Leader of Northumberland  
County Council

.....  
**Cllr Iain Malcolm**  
Leader of South Tyneside  
Council

.....  
**Cllr Paul Watson**  
Leader of Sunderland City  
Council

.....  
**Paul Woolston**  
Chair of the North East  
Local Enterprise Partnership

.....  
**Lord O'Neill**  
Commercial Secretary to  
The Treasury

## Governance

1. The proposal for a Mayoral Combined Authority is subject to the final formal consent of the Combined Authority (Leadership Board), the constituent councils, agreement of ministers, and to the Parliamentary process for the necessary primary legislation (The Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill and the proposed Buses Bill) and subsequent orders. This agreement is also conditional on the outcome of the Spending Review.
2. The Mayor will be the Chair and a Member of the North East Combined Authority and subject to the Authority's Constitution and associated procedures (to be amended in the light of the introduction of a Mayor). The powers contained in this deal document will be devolved from Government to the Mayoral Combined Authority. The Mayor will exercise certain powers with personal accountability to the electorate, devolved from central Government and set out in legislation:
  - Responsibility for a devolved and consolidated transport budget, with a multi-year settlement to be agreed at the Spending Review
  - Responsibility for franchised bus services and, through Rail North, franchised rail services, contributing to the delivery of smart and integrated ticketing across the North East.
  - Powers over strategic planning, including the responsibility to create a North East Planning Development Framework and to chair a new North East Land Commission to release land for development.
  - Powers to place a supplement on business rates to fund infrastructure, with the agreement of the local business community through the local enterprise partnership, up to a cap.
3. The North East Combined Authority (NECA), working with the Mayor, will receive the following powers:
  - To create a North East Combined Authority Investment Fund, bringing together funding for devolved powers and used to deliver a 15 year programme of transformational investment in the region.
  - Control of a new £30 million a year funding allocation over 30 years, to be included in the NECA Investment Fund and invested to boost growth.
  - Joint responsibility for an Employment and Skills Board, that will undertake a comprehensive review and redesign of the post-16 education, skills and employment support system in the North East, delivered through the area-based review of post-16 provision, devolution of adult skills funding by 2018/19 and co-design by Government and NECA of employment support for harder-to-help claimants
  - Responsibility for a devolved approach to business support from 2017, including further responsibility for UKTI export advice services, to be developed in partnership with Government.
  - Joint responsibility for the rollout of broadband across the North East.
  - Increased devolved responsibility for rural growth.

4. Other members of the North East Combined Authority Leadership Board (to be renamed as a Cabinet) will become portfolio leads for the Combined Authority's responsibilities, on the basis to be set out in its Constitution, and take on delegated powers as agreed with the Mayor. Cabinet portfolios will be established for all leaders, building on the existing arrangements established within the Combined Authority.
5. The Mayor for the North East will be elected by the local government electors for the areas of the constituent councils of the North East Combined Authority. Subject to parliamentary time allowing for the passage of legislation through parliament, the first election will be held in May 2017.
6. Proposals for decision by the Combined Authority may be put forward by the Mayor or any Cabinet Member. All members including the Mayor will have one vote. Any questions that are to be decided by the Combined Authority are to be decided by a majority of the members present and voting, unless otherwise set out in legislation. Decisions by the Combined Authority should have the support of the Mayor, unless set out otherwise in the Authority's Constitution, or specifically delegated to Cabinet members. The Cabinet will examine the Mayor's draft annual budget, plans and strategies and will be able to amend them if two-thirds of the members who have been appointed by the constituent authorities agree to do so.
7. The Overview and Scrutiny arrangements currently established for the Combined Authority will be retained, subject to any amendments required to reflect the introduction of the Mayor and any new statutory provisions.
8. Any transfer to the Combined Authority or Mayor of existing powers or resources currently held by the constituent authorities must be by agreement, unless set out in legislation.
9. The Combined Authority will work with partners across the North of England to promote opportunities for pan-Northern collaboration, including Transport for the North, to drive northern productivity and build the Northern Powerhouse.
10. Arrangements will be made to ensure a strengthened role for business working with the Mayor and Combined Authority.

## **Finance and Funding**

11. Future funding outcomes under this agreement should take account of:
  - a. The scale of opportunities presented in the overall devolution portfolio.
  - b. Ensuring the North East is not disadvantaged in relation to the fiscal freedoms granted to the Scottish Government.
  - c. Ensuring the North East does not suffer disproportionately from future reductions in funding through a fair funding settlement.
  - d. The ability for the Combined Authority to bid into any additional resources that become available over the 15 year period, on a fair and equitable basis.
12. The North East Combined Authority will create a fully devolved funding programme covering all budgets for devolved functions ("The North East Investment Fund"), accountable to the Combined Authority. The Fund will operate as a single programme,

bringing together resources for economic growth, skills and employability, regeneration, transport and housing; including allocations from the Local Growth Fund.

13. The Combined Authority will use the North East Investment Fund to deliver a 15 year programme (2016-2031) of transformational long-term investment. A minimum commitment of capital and revenue spending from Government will be set by agreement through the Spending Review.
14. As an initial allocation to the Investment Fund, an allocation of £30 million a year for 30 years (2016-46) in revenue funding for capital financing and other costs will be made, allowing the North East Combined Authority to create an investment fund up to £1.5 billion, subject to 5-yearly gateway assessments to confirm the investment has contributed to national growth. In addition, the Mayor will be given the power to place a supplement on business rates to fund infrastructure, with the agreement of the local business community through the local enterprise partnership, up to a cap. In the North East this could provide up to an additional £30 million a year in revenue funding to double the size of the Fund.
15. In addition, the North East will bring forward a proposal for consideration by Government for a single allocation of the Local Growth Fund to support a programme of investment, including an element of flexible revenue funding, committed over a 5 year period, and devolved to the Combined Authority.
16. The costs of the Mayoral Combined Authority will be met from within the overall resources devolved to the Combined Authority.
17. Where functions are agreed to be devolved or to be jointly accountable, the Spending Review will identify a fair level of revenue funding for those functions over the Spending Review period, in the form of a place-based funding settlement for the North East Combined Authority.
18. Within its powers and resources, the Combined Authority will have full flexibility, without reference to government departments, to:
  - a. Make multi-year commitments to projects and programmes
  - b. Secure substantial private and public sector leverage
  - c. Vire resources between projects and programmes, and across financial years
  - d. Use capital receipts from asset sales as revenue funding for public service transformational initiatives.
19. The Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill currently in Parliament makes provision which will govern further prudential borrowing for Combined Authorities. Following Royal Assent, Central Government will work with the Combined Authority to determine how these powers could apply within a framework of fiscal responsibility and accountability to the Combined Authority and local authorities.
20. The North East will receive additional Enterprise Zones and/or extension of existing zones, subject to the current bidding round for further Enterprise Zones.
21. The Combined Authority and Government will pilot a scheme which will enable the Combined Authority to retain all business rate growth that would otherwise have been paid as central share to government, above an agreed baseline, for an initial period

of five years. Government and the Combined Authority will also discuss wider localisation of business rates.

22. The Government agrees to delegate to the North East Combined Authority project selection powers for the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund. The Combined Authority will be granted Intermediate Body status to deliver these delegated powers. This will allow the North East to integrate and align investments with other aspects of the devolution deal, to select projects for investment, to improve performance and maximise economic impact. The Government will work with the Combined Authority to agree the detail of this delegation and, subject to agreement, it is expected to begin from April 2016.
23. Government will ensure fair funding for the constituent authorities, and the Combined Authority will publish an annual report setting out the overall extent of, and prospects for, public funding within its area.

### **Human Capital Development**

24. The North East Combined Authority will create an integrated employment and skills system tailored to the specific needs of the area, and thereby raise labour market participation and skills at all levels, to increase productivity, improve the life chances of young people, help people into work and meet the skills shortages experienced by North East employers.
25. This process will be overseen by an Employment and Skills Board with dual accountability to both the North East Combined Authority and to Government. The Board will bring together relevant senior representation from the Combined Authority; the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills; Department for Education; Department for Work and Pensions; the Regional Schools Commissioner (with their agreement); appropriate representation from business; and, HM Treasury. The Board will be chaired by the Commercial Secretary to the Treasury, Lord O'Neill.
26. The Board will:
  - a. Undertake a comprehensive review and redesign of the post-16 education and skills system and employment support for harder-to-help claimants in the North East. This will encompass the current area-based review of post 16 education and training institutions. The Board will subsequently evaluate the strategic fit and effectiveness of this system in meeting the future needs and demands of the local labour market.
  - b. Facilitate the full devolution to the Combined Authority of the 19+ adult skills budget, at the latest by 2018, subject to agreement on readiness to take on these responsibilities.
  - c. Develop key local strategies and plans for post-16 learning provision.
  - d. Collaborate to maximise the opportunities within the North East presented by the introduction of the apprenticeship levy and any annual underspends within the national Employer Ownership of Skills pilot programme (subject to the Spending Review).
  - e. Actively stimulate, promote and champion initiatives that seek to strengthen

and deepen partnerships between education and business to provide a focus upon economically-driven activity, such as vocational training (including 19+ apprenticeships and traineeships); experience of work; and, enterprise learning.

- f. Facilitate joint responsibility between Government and the Combined Authority to co-design the future employment support from April 2017 for harder-to-help claimants, many of whom are currently referred to the Work Programme and Work Choice.
- g. Examine the case for further devolution of employment and skills powers and budgets and bring forward proposals to government for potential transfer of accountability to the North East Combined Authority, in time to implement any resulting reforms by April 2019.

27. The Combined Authority will create a Service Transformation Fund, to support early intervention to support individuals and families with complex needs, to reduce high dependency on public services and support economic participation, supported by a data sharing agreement and other measures to promote the integration of local public services.

### **Supporting and Attracting Business and Innovation**

28. The North East Combined Authority will simplify and strengthen the support available for business growth, innovation and global trade in the North East in order to create more and better jobs. To deliver this commitment:

- a. Working within the scope of existing contracts (2015/16 and 2016/17), the Government will work with the North East to align the Business Growth Service and other national services with local business support through its Growth Hub, to give businesses a joined-up, simplified service that meets their needs. The North East will take full responsibility for a devolved approach to business support from 2017 onwards.
- b. The Government and North East Combined Authority will work to devolve further responsibility for UK Trade and Investment (UKTI) Export Advice services. This will include ring-fencing and a dual key approach to activities, and enhanced reporting on outputs and outcomes by UKTI.
- c. Government and the Combined Authority will take joint responsibility for the delivery of inward investment into the region. There will be a strengthened partnership between locally delivered services and UKTI, with a quarterly board to follow-up on progress. The Government will consider the case for creating a Northern Powerhouse hub for foreign investment, in discussion with key partners including the North East. This approach will be focused on maximising high level jobs and long-term economic impact.
- d. Government will offer the Combined Authority expert advice and support to put forward a strong proposal for a science and innovation audit. The audit would allow the Combined Authority to work with its universities and businesses to map the strengths of the North East. This would provide a new and powerful way to understand the region's strengths and how to maximise

the economic impact from the UK's research and innovation investment nationally. The audit would, for example, provide Government with part of the evidence base on which to make decisions on any further catapults and could be used to explore the North East's potential in smart data.

29. Government and the Combined Authority will agree a joint programme to create the right environment to drive the commercial rollout of ultrafast broadband following successful testing and to ensure 4G services are available to at least 95% of the North East's population. Government will also support the Combined Authority to reinvest funds into creative solutions to supply superfast broadband to remaining premises. The Combined Authority will work with businesses and universities in the North East to develop applications for 5G technology.
30. The Combined Authority will commission a feasibility study into the establishment of a National Smart Data Institute in the North East.

### **Health and Social Care Integration**

31. The North East Combined Authority and the NHS will jointly establish a Commission for Health and Social Care Integration, chaired by a senior national figure, to establish the scope and basis for integration, deeper collaboration and devolution across the Combined Authority's area, in order to improve outcomes and reduce health inequalities. It will report by Summer 2016. Terms of reference, agreed between the Combined Authority and NHS England, are attached.
32. The Commission will look across the whole system, including acute care, primary care, community services, mental health services, social care and public health. It will strengthen the NHS in the North East Combined Authority area, and continue to uphold its values, standards and constitution. The commission will build on best practice, including pioneer status, and the experience of integration in Northumberland.

### **More and Better Homes**

33. The Combined Authority and its constituent authorities will support an ambitious target for the increase in new homes, and will report annually on progress against this target. To ensure delivery of this commitment, the Combined Authority and Government agree to:
  - a. Establish a North East Land Board to review all land and property held by the public sector, and all suitable brownfield land, to identify surplus land in suitable locations for housing or economic development use.
  - b. Devolve statutory planning powers, including Compulsory Purchase Order powers and those powers available to the Homes and Communities Agency. These powers would be exercised, where needed, by the Mayor, with the consent of the Combined Authority and member(s) appointed to the Combined Authority by the relevant local authority in which the powers are exercised, to drive housing delivery and improvements in the stock of housing in the North East.

- c. The creation of a North East Planning Development Framework (not a regional spatial strategy) led by the Mayor, to enable the constituent authorities to deliver on housing growth. This will create an overarching framework for development in the North East, delivering the National Planning Policy Framework according to the specific needs of communities in the North East, supporting local development frameworks, and incorporating the duty to cooperate between the constituent local authorities.
- d. Support effective close working between the Housing and Communities Agency and the Combined Authority to ensure a focus on delivering housing on growth sites within the region.

## Transport

34. The Mayor and the Combined Authority, will create the UK's first fully integrated transport system, with the ambition to bring together responsibilities for rail, local highways, metro, buses and ferries, for both urban, sub-urban and rural communities.

To achieve this ambition:

- a. The Government is bringing forward legislation, as part of the Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill, to allow for the devolution of transport powers and funding to the Combined Authority to be exercised by the Mayor.
- b. Specific delivery arrangements will reflect the particular transport needs and challenges of areas within the region, including the option for the Mayor to delegate specific responsibilities to the Combined Authority or individual Cabinet members, for example over rural transport.
- c. Government will devolve a consolidated local transport budget with a multi-year settlement to be agreed at the Spending Review, including all relevant local highways and sustainable travel funding.
- d. Government will consider establishing and devolving a long-term funding programme to support investment in the Metro. This will include, :
  - a. Considering, through the spending review, setting a multi-year funding allocation for Metro reinvention phase 2, committed up to 2020-21,
  - b. The Combined Authority producing a business case, for consideration by Government, for investment in the Metro network to 2030, including the upgrade of the Metro fleet , potential expansion, and future integration of the Metro with the rail network.
- e. Rail North will, in partnership with DfT, assume full responsibility for oversight of the Northern and TransPennine Express franchises from April 2016, with the aim of delivering further improvements in rolling stock quality, frequency and quality of services, and new connections. As part of this arrangement, the Mayor and Combined Authority, with Tees Valley, Cumbria and North Yorkshire, will oversee rail matters included within the North East Business Unit area. As part of this, the Combined Authority and Government will consider a business case for the re-establishment of passenger services on the Ashington, Blyth and Tyne line.

- f. Longer-term, the Mayor and the Combined Authority, will bring forward a business case, for consideration by Government, for the unification and full devolution (beyond the forthcoming Northern franchise) of the management of rail and metro services within the North East, with the aim of creating the UK's first integrated regional rail network combining light and conventional rail.
- g. The Mayor and the Combined Authority will deliver a fully multi-modal smart ticketing and transport information network across the North East, aligned with the plans of Transport for the North on the implementation of integrated smart ticketing across the North.
- h. The Combined Authority will take forward, in accordance with the quality contract process, its existing proposals for the franchising of bus services from 2017, with the ambition for further extension to communities in Durham and Northumberland. Government will work with the Combined Authority to support the delivery of effective bus services in the North East, with the option for the Mayor to use additional powers through the Buses Bill, subject to necessary legislation and local consultation.
- i. On strategic, inter-regional transport issues and investment, DfT, Network Rail, Highways England and HS2 will continue to work with the North East Combined Authority and Mayor through Transport for the North, which will be put on a statutory footing by 2017.
- j. To support better integration between local and national networks, the Government and the North East Combined Authority will enter into joint working with Highways England and Network Rail on operations, maintenance and local investment through a new joint agreement on the delivery of investment and operations, which will be established by 2016.

### **Rural Growth and Stewardship**

- 35. Government will support the existing North East Rural Growth Network and approved LEADER programmes, and will work towards the devolution of rural growth programmes to the North East, including closer coordination of future stewardship and environmental programmes, to a timetable to be agreed by 2016.
- 36. The Government will explore with the Combined Authority and Northumberland National Park Authority the options to give the Park Authority greater commercial freedom.

### **Regulatory Powers**

- 37. Government and the Combined Authority will review which regulatory and planning powers that are currently held by ministers and public authorities should be transferred to the Combined Authority, to be exercised with the agreement of, or following a proposal from, the constituent authority or authorities in which those powers are applied. The powers to be reviewed include those that:

- a. support the Combined Authority's transport, regeneration and housing functions;
- b. promote safe and high quality neighbourhoods and town centres;
- c. support housing growth;
- d. support improvements in the quality of housing and challenge poor quality landlords; and
- e. promote public health by addressing obesity, smoking and substance misuse.

## Events

38. The Combined Authority will work with the Government to identify ways for the North East to play a major role in the UK's programme of business, cultural and sporting events.

## Other areas

39. This deal represents a first step in a progressive process of devolution of funding, powers and responsibilities to the North East. As well as the areas set out in this deal, the Combined Authority and Government will consider further opportunities for devolution, including but not limited to:

- a. Business cases for the relocation of significant government functions from London to the North East;
- b. Devolution of funding and assets held by central government which could be devolved to support faster housing and regeneration;
- c. Devolution of climate change initiatives, support for investment in energy efficiency and technological development;
- d. Measures to implement the Prime Minister's commitment to protect Newcastle Airport from the impact of devolution of Air Passenger Duty to Scotland;
- e. Opportunities for joint initiatives between the North East and Scotland, in areas such as tourism, culture, transport and industrial collaboration.
- f. Proposals for an appropriate relationship between the functions of a Mayor and future role of the Police and Crime Commissioners, including in relation to fire services, to be developed, subject to local consent and a business case developed jointly by PCCs and council leaders, and in consultation with the Fire and Rescue Authorities.

## Delivery, Monitoring and Evaluation

40. The North East Combined Authority will work with the Government to develop an agreed implementation, monitoring and evaluation plan in advance of implementation, which sets out the proposed approach for evaluating the impact of devolution.

41. The North East Combined Authority and Government will agree a process to manage local financial risk across local public bodies and will develop written agreements to agree accountability between local and national bodies on the basis of the principles set out in this document.
42. The provisions of this deal will be monitored by a Steering Group of senior officials from the Combined Authority and Government, meeting at least quarterly, with any issues of concern escalated to Ministers and Leaders to resolve, in keeping with the letter and spirit of this deal.

## NE COMBINED AUTHORITY AND THE NHS

### COMMISSION ON HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

#### TERMS OF REFERENCE

The North East Combined Authority and the NHS will jointly establish a Commission for Health and Social Care Integration, chaired by a senior national figure, to establish the scope and basis for integration, deeper collaboration and devolution across the Combined Authority's area<sup>1</sup>, in order to improve outcomes and reduce health inequalities.

The Commission will look across the whole system, including acute care, primary care, community services, mental health services, social care and public health. It will strengthen the NHS in the North East Combined Authority area, and continue to uphold its values, standards and constitution.

Membership will be determined by agreement, and include representation from the Department of Health, NHS England, the Combined Authority, Clinical Commissioning Groups, the Voluntary and Community Sector, and Providers.

The Commission will produce a report, by Summer 2016, setting out the case for further devolution and integration, and the steps that would be required to deliver them, with a view to:

- Ensuring that the system is financially sustainable, with a clear and credible plan, by identifying areas for investment of the North East's fair share of the additional resources available for the NHS, demonstrating how efficiencies can be secured through integrated delivery of services and service transformation, and reinvesting savings to improve health outcomes.
- Establishing a mechanism for the North East to input into decisions about the use of NHS capital investment in the area.
- Advising on which additional services commissioned by NHS England might be suitable for either co-commissioning with CCGs or for devolution, driven by a principle of subsidiarity.
- Setting out a plan for improvement of public health outcomes across the North East, narrowing health inequalities within and beyond the region.

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<sup>1</sup> "North East" in this context means the area covered by the North East Combined Authority (Durham, Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside and Sunderland).

- Establishing a close link with the Combined Authority's proposals for devolution of human capital development, in particular measures to address worklessness and inequality; assessing the feasibility of options for the devolution of powers to address public health challenges, including obesity, smoking and substance misuse; and linking to plans for innovation and economic growth.
- Proposing the most appropriate governance mechanism for devolution or joint accountability arrangements for any aspect of NHS spending, commissioning and performance management which the Commission recommends are devolved.
- Establishing the basis for democratic, legal and financial accountability to local leaders and communities and to NHS England, ministers and parliament.
- Developing an appropriate joint management regime between councils and NHS partners, effective operational and risk management arrangements, and a clear plan and timeline for transition.
- Ensuring that service delivery operates on the basis of subsidiarity, with local partnerships meeting the diverse needs of local communities on the basis of clear locality plans executed within an agreed framework.
- Recognising interdependencies and involving health and social partners in surrounding areas which would potentially be affected, or where there is potential benefit from delivering services in partnership.
- Identifying opportunities to accelerate progress in implementing the Five Year Forward View, building on existing initiatives.

In recognition of the progress already made towards integration and new models of care by particular areas in the North East, the Commission may make recommendations that allow for a faster pace of change in areas that have already made significant progress.

Any resulting devolution proposals will need to be formally agreed by the Combined Authority and either the NHS England Board (thereby ensuring consistency with NHS England's principles and criteria for devolution) or, depending on the nature of the proposal, the Department of Health.

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## North East Combined Authority

### Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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**DATE:** 1<sup>st</sup> December 2015

**SUBJECT:** Tyne & Wear Metro Performance

**REPORT OF:** Managing Director (Transport Operations)

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the current performance issues with regards to the Tyne & Wear Metro, and also to allow the Scrutiny Committee to review Metro services during the Great North Run.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Scrutiny Committee notes the performance information, and reviews Metro service levels.

# North East Combined Authority

## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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### 1 Background

1.1 At the Transport North East (Tyne and Wear) Sub-Committee on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2015, the members of that committee requested that the Scrutiny Committee be asked to provide an independent scrutiny of the issues with the performance of the Metro, particularly following performance on the day of the Great North Run.

1.2 Attached as Appendix 1 is Nexus's review into the delivery problems experienced on the Metro during the 2015 Great North Run. The remainder of this report is intended to provide performance information relating to the operation of the Metro system.

### 2 Overall performance of the Metro system

2.1 The overall performance of the network is reported to passengers through the Metro Passenger Charter using a measure known as 'Charter Punctuality'. The target for this measure is 87.2% and the two most recent periods recorded the following results:

- Period 6 85.48%
- Period 7 80.19%

2.2 The average Charter Punctuality across the two periods was 82.84%, which is a decrease compared to the previous three periods' average of 85.5%.

2.3 The Charter Punctuality of 82.84% is also slightly higher than the equivalent two periods last year of 82.1%. Previous reports have recorded negative variances when comparing year on year results and in some cases this has been in excess of 8%.

2.3 Therefore, although there remains some way to go before Charter Punctuality meets the required level, there is a trend of improvement to reflect the efforts that have been made by DBTW and Nexus to focus on punctuality and reliability.

### 3 Breakdown of influences on performance

3.1 Punctuality figures are a result of the performance of three organisations: DBTW, Nexus (in its capacity as infrastructure provider), and Network Rail.

3.2 Within DBTW there is a considerable focus on improving day-to-day delivery, reinforced by joint performance meetings with Nexus to identify improvement actions. Periods 6 and 7 saw an increase of 16% in the number of DBTW delay minutes when compared to the previous three periods. This included a

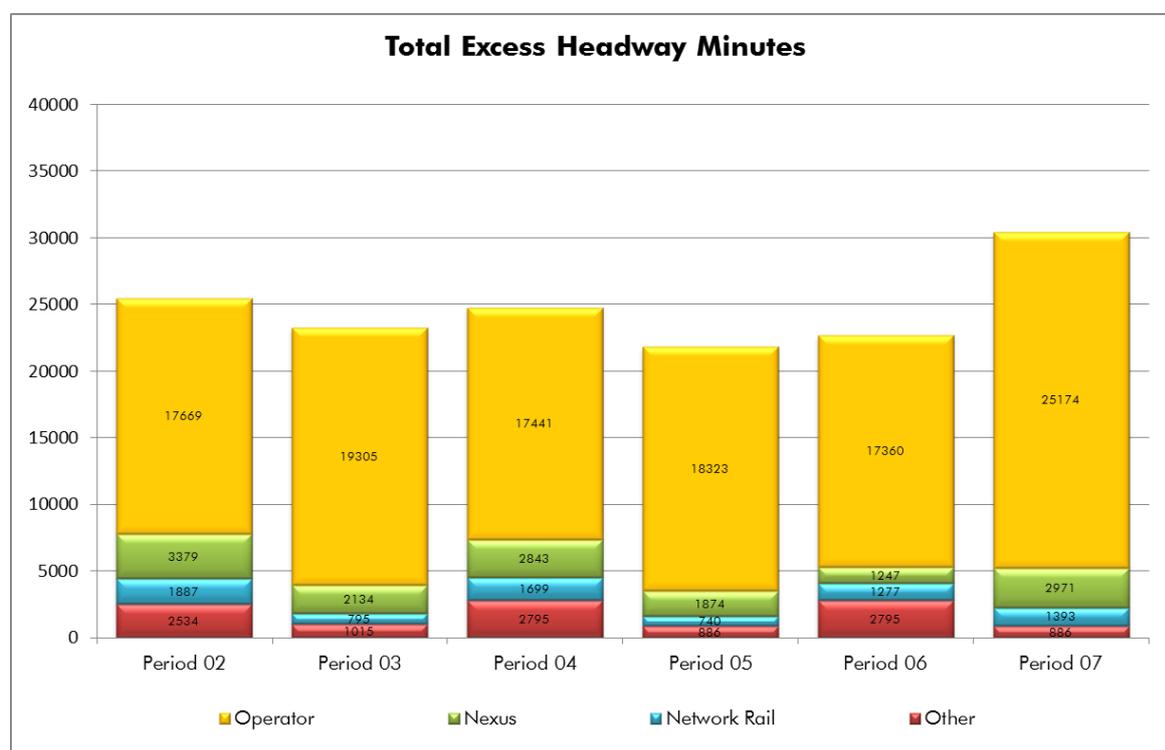
# North East Combined Authority

## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

sizeable quantity (1509 EHW Mins) in relation to the very poor delivery of Metro services for the Great North Run and also increased passenger loading delays relating to the successful delivery over three Rugby World Cup games.

Notwithstanding problems within period 7 as outlined above, when compared to the previous years' number of delay minutes within periods 6 and 7, this year has seen an improvement of 8%.

- 3.3 The internal DBTW drive called "Metro 90" continues. This is aimed at ensuring that all employees across the business are constantly focused on achieving high performance for customers.
- 3.4 Nexus' assets performed well during the periods being reported on, and even accounting for two external factors of flash flooding and a serious trespass incident which disrupted the operation of the Metro's infrastructure; the average number of delay minutes per period improved by 8% when compared to the previous three periods.
- 3.5 Network Rail had a lower level of performance during the periods being reported on; leading to a 24% increase in the average number of delay minutes per period in comparison to the previous three periods
- 3.6 The delay minutes (known as 'Excess Headway Minutes') attributable to the three organisations responsible for them, are shown in the graph below:



# North East Combined Authority

## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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- 3.7 The trend for each organisation based on average Excess Headway Minutes per period is as follows:

	Average EHM / Period		
	Previous 3 Periods	Current 2 Periods	Trend
Operator	18,356	21,267	16% Worse
Nexus	2,284	2,109	8% Improvement
Network Rail	1,078	1,335	24% Worse

- 3.8 In terms of moving forward, Nexus will continue to work collaboratively with DBTW and additionally exercise closer monitoring of key activities such as train fleet reliability.

### 4 Potential Impact on Objectives

- 4.1 The successful operation of the Tyne and Wear Metro assists the Combined Authority in delivering its objective to maximise the area's opportunities and potential.

### 5 Finance and Other Resources

- 5.1 The penalties levied on DBTW in respect of train operations to the end of period 6 of this financial year amount to £0.136m. Penalties levied during the whole of the prior year amounted to £0.271m.

### 6 Legal

- 6.1 There are no direct legal considerations arising from this report.

### 7 Other Considerations

#### 7.1 Consultation/Community Engagement

There are no specific consultation/community engagement considerations arising from this report.

#### 7.2 Human Rights

There are no specific human rights considerations arising from this report.

#### 7.3 Equalities and Diversity

There are no specific equalities and diversity considerations arising from this report.

# North East Combined Authority

## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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### 7.4 Risk Management

There are no specific risk management considerations arising from this report.

### 7.5 Crime and Disorder

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

### 7.6 Environment and Sustainability

There are no specific environment and sustainability considerations arising from this report.

## 8 Background Documents

8.1 None.

## 9 Links to the Local Transport Plans

9.1 This report has no direct links to plans in the Policy Framework.

## 10 Appendices

10.1 Appendix 1 Metro Services for the 2015 Great North Run 24<sup>th</sup> November 2015

## 11 Contact Officers

11.1 Raymond Johnstone, Director of Rail & Infrastructure, Nexus  
[raymond.johnstone@nexus.org.uk](mailto:raymond.johnstone@nexus.org.uk)  
Tel: 0191 203 3500

## 12 Sign off

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

## 13 Glossary

**DBTW** – Deutsche Bahn Regio Tyne and Wear Ltd, the current operator of the Tyne and Wear Metro through the Concession Agreement with Nexus

**Excess Headway Minutes** - the method by which delays experienced by passengers are measured

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# North East Combined Authority

## Transport North East (Tyne and Wear) Sub-Committee

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**Date:** 24 November 2015

**Subject:** Metro Services for the 2015 Great North Run

**Report of:** Managing Director (Transport Operations)

### Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide members with an update on Nexus's review into the delivery problems experienced on the Metro during the 2015 Great North Run.

### Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee notes within this report:

- i. the findings contained within Nexus' review;
- ii. that the events around the 2015 Great North Run are considered a one off;  
and
- iii. the apology Nexus extends in relation to the service levels delivered.

# North East Combined Authority

## Transport North East (Tyne and Wear) Sub-Committee

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### 1 Background Information

- 1.1 The 2015 Metro service aimed at supporting the Great North Run, experienced significant disruption shortly after the start of service and throughout much of the day.
- 1.2 In response to this a request was made by the NECA's Managing Director (Transport Operations) to undertake a review of the events leading up to the day of the Great North Run in 2015. The main purpose of the review is to:
  - a) establish facts as to what deficiencies presented themselves on Sunday 13 September 2015;
  - b) identify what caused the above to present themselves; and
  - c) make recommendations aimed at reducing similar risks reoccurring in future years.
- 1.3 Nexus's Director of Rail and Infrastructure has now completed the review and a copy of the report is attached as Appendix 1.

### 2 Findings

- 2.1 The review has found the main cause of the problems experienced was a reduction in the timetable that DBTW planned to deliver on 13 September 2015.
- 2.2 The only motivation for which the review found evidence for reducing from a previously successful set of arrangements was to avoid possible driver shortages relating to rostering difficulties. On the day, and against this already weakened plan, further driver shortages were experienced.
- 2.3 Before 10.00 hours the level of reduction in (year on year) capacity expressed by train kilometres (KMs) ranged from 25% to 44% across various parts of the network. This reduction in passenger carrying capacity then caused passenger loading problems which further compounded the delays.
- 2.4 With this disruption ongoing, good spacing or regulation of the service was lost and replaced by the bunching of trains across the network. This led to a number of overhead line power trips. Consequential to these problems overcrowding occurred and this in some cases resulted in a number of passengers feeling unwell.
- 2.5 Knowledge of the reduction in the planned timetable was contained within the DBTW operations team and was not escalated internally or conveyed externally to Nexus.
- 2.6 Overall it is considered that the experiences encountered on the Metro during the 2015 Great North Run day were a one off.

# North East Combined Authority

## Transport North East (Tyne and Wear) Sub-Committee

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### **3 Corrective Actions**

- 3.1 Nexus deeply regrets the failings experienced by Metro passengers on 13 September 2015, and would like to offer a sincere apology to Great North Run participants, spectators and organisers.
- 3.2 The review undertaken by Nexus identified a total of nine recommendations. These will now be actioned making way for Metro services on all future Great North Run days to be as successful as those prior to 2015.

### **4 Potential Impact on Objectives**

- 4.1 There is no specific potential impact on objectives arising from this report.

### **5 Finance and Other Resources**

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications regarding the contents of this paper

### **6 Legal**

- 6.1 There are no direct legal implications regarding the contents of this report.

### **7 Other Considerations**

#### **7.1 Consultation/Community Engagement**

There are no specific consultation/community engagement considerations arising from this report.

#### **7.2 Human Rights**

There are no specific human rights considerations arising from this report.

#### **7.3 Equalities and Diversity**

There are no specific equalities and diversity considerations arising from this report.

#### **7.4 Risk Management**

Nexus's Strategic Risk register recognises that continued delivery of the current Metro operating concession may not meet expectations and that a range of

# North East Combined Authority

## Transport North East (Tyne and Wear) Sub-Committee

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mitigating actions are detailed as control measures. A paper elsewhere on this agenda provides further detail.

### 7.5 **Crime and Disorder**

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

### 7.6 **Environment and Sustainability**

There are no specific environment and sustainability considerations arising from this report.

## 8 **Background Documents**

8.1 None.

## 9 **Links to the Local Transport Plans**

9.1 This report has no direct links to plans in the Policy Framework.

## 10 **Appendices**

10.1 Nexus Director Level Review in relation to the provision of the Great North Run 2015 Metro services.

## 11 **Contact Officers**

11.1 Raymond Johnstone, [Raymond.johnstone@nexus.org.uk](mailto:Raymond.johnstone@nexus.org.uk), Tel: 0191 203 3500

## 12 **Sign off**

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



## **APPENDIX 1**

### **1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The 2015 Metro service, aimed at supporting the Great North Run, experienced significant disruption shortly after the start of service. This review has found the main cause of this was a reduction in the timetable of planned delivery. The only motivation for which this review has found evidence for reducing from a previously successful set of arrangements was to avoid possible driver shortages. On the day, and against this already weakened plan, further driver shortages were experienced.
- 1.2 Before 10.00 hours the level of reduction in (year on year) capacity expressed by train kilometres (KMs) ranged from 25% to 44% across various parts of the network. This reduction in passenger carrying capacity then caused passenger loading problems which further compounded the delays.
- 1.3 With this disruption ongoing, good spacing or regulation of the service was lost and replaced by the bunching of trains across the network. This led to a number of overhead line power trips. Consequential to these problems overcrowding occurred and this in some cases resulted in a number of passengers feeling unwell.
- 1.4 The reduction in the timetable as planned was contained within the DBTW operations team and was not escalated internally or conveyed externally to Nexus.
- 1.5 This report contains 9 recommendations aimed at preventing a recurrence.

### **2. PURPOSE**

- 2.1 As a result of the request made by the NECA's Managing Director (Transport Operations) a review of the events leading up to the day of the Great North Run in 2015 and what was operationally delivered by the Tyne and Wear Metro have been reviewed:
- 2.2 The main purpose of the review is to:
  - a) establish facts as to what deficiencies presented themselves on Sunday 13 September 2015.



- b) identify what caused the above to present themselves; and
- c) make recommendations aimed at reducing similar risks reoccurring in future years.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

- 3.1 In compiling this report Nexus' Director of Rail & Infrastructure has used the input of a number of sources.
- 3.2 The main source of these inputs can be summarised as:
  - a) Face to face meetings with key staff
  - b) Contractual documentation
  - c) Control Room based logs from both Nexus and DBTW
  - d) Performance Management System Information
  - e) Feedback obtained from DBTW's own investigation
  - f) Other forms of base documents such as emails, minutes of meetings and similar relevant material

### **4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 On Sunday 13 September 2015, the 35<sup>th</sup> Great North Run (GNR), which is the world's largest half marathon, took place. The number of runners participating in the race has grown from around 12,000 in 1981 to an estimated 56,000 in 2013, rising to 57,000 in 2014 and 2015.
- 4.2 From before the start of the race, difficulties were experienced by a great number of passengers, many of whom were either running or going to spectate at this annual event.
- 4.3 Overcrowding and disruption continued for much of the day and overall the Tyne and Wear Metro's ability to support the GNR was found to be seriously below normal standards.
- 4.4 Certainly before 2015, the Tyne and Wear Metro has positively contributed to the overall success of the Great North Run.
- 4.5 The Tyne and Wear Metro is the largest light rail system in the UK outside London. On a daily (weekday) basis 450 trains operate carrying in excess of 100,000 passengers. The



annual patronage of the Metro has grown in recent years, reaching a level now of 39 million passenger journeys.

- 4.6 The Metro is owned by Nexus, the trading name for the Passenger Transport Executive, who manage the system in line with the North East Combined Authority's policies.
- 4.7 In April 2010 operations of the trains and stations, together with the maintenance of the train fleet and management of the operations of the control room, was let via a Concession Agreement (CA) to Deutsche Bahn Regio who formed a subsidiary company called Deutsche Bahn Tyne and Wear (DBTW).
- 4.8 This contract was let after a competitive tendering exercise. The contract is specified and controlled via a set of terms and conditions known as "transactional documents".
- 4.9 The transactional documents cater for numerous activities and situations including delivering 'special events' of which the GNR is one. Details of what is required are contained within one of the transactional documents known as the Operations Specification. This specifies broadly the service provision that makes up the timetable for normal Monday to Sunday services together with various forms of special events such as football matches at Sunderland and Newcastle, the Sunderland Airshow and the Great North Run.

## **5. SUMMARY OF EMERGING PROBLEMS ON 13 SEPTEMBER 2015**

- 5.1 Near to the start of service (around 07.00 hours), 3 x trains were noted as being cancelled for their entire daily diagrams. The reason for this was there were no driving resource.
- 5.2 From 07.14 hours to 08.00 hours a fault on two trains caused them to be late out of the depot. Then a further train failed in service resulting in it being taken out of passenger service.
- 5.3 By 08.10 hours reports of heavy passenger loadings were noted on the Airport line, then followed soon afterwards by Heworth and Sunderland stations.
- 5.4 By 08.48 hours passengers were being left behind at Heworth with many stations observed to have many sizeable queues.
- 5.5 At 09.39 hours large gaps in the service were noted by the Control Room staff with many trains now running 20 minutes late.



5.6 Over and above matters described in section 5.1 to 5.5 inclusive for the remainder of the day some other problems were experienced. These can be summarised as:

- a) 1 x track circuit failure between Whitley Bay and Tynemouth. This delayed trains that were already in excess of 20 minutes late by another 4 minutes per train on average and is not considered to have had an actual consequence on the delay on the day.
- b) A number of Overhead Line power supply trips which had the consequence of bringing trains to a standstill until the power was restored. This matter will be further explained in a later section of this report.
- c) A number of instances of passengers taking unwell, some of which resulted in medical attention and further delays being encountered.

5.7 From the details outlined within this section (5) of the report, it can be seen that problems emerged from the start of service, when the basic capacity to carry passengers was evidently not coping.

## **6. FACTORS FOR CONSIDERATION**

### **6.1 Specifying for the GNR**

- 6.1.1 Ordinarily the Metro Delivery on previous GNR days has been positive to the point that it has become an integral part of the day for many runners together with their families and friends. Reflecting this success, alterations to each year's plan is more of a minor adjustment rather than major changes.
- 6.1.2 The Concession Agreement and other transactional documents outlines requirements both generally on timetables and specifically on special events including the GNR.
- 6.1.3 The general requirements placed upon DBTW are that they should act professionally, in good faith and diligently.
- 6.1.4 The Operating Specification (which is one of many so called transactional documents) gives details as to the level of additional passenger services that should be delivered. In the case of the GNR, the key points to note in what is required are:-



- 11 extra trains
- 9 of which are timetabled
- 2 of which to work to instructions on the day
- The above applies between 0540 hours and 1932 hours
- The routes served being South Shields on one hand to Benton, Airport and Monkseaton.

In undertaking this review the wording of a small number of specific clauses in the Operating Specification have been identified as being less than fully clear and alterations should be made to add clarity. However none of the wording deficiencies found are considered to be causal factors in the events of 13<sup>th</sup> September.

6.1.5 Importantly, the Operating Specification Part 1, Appendix C states *"The Operator will ensure that Special Event Services are developed on the basis of analysis of previous experience of servicing such events."*

6.1.6 ***In considering the matter of what is specified, it is reasonable to conclude that a clear specification exists not only on what has to be delivered "on the day" but how there ought to be reviews allowing incremental improvements to be made year-on-year. Furthermore, the Operator, DBTW, should act professionally, in good faith and exercise diligence.***

## 6.2 Planning for the GNR

6.2.1 Following the requirements outlined in the Concession Agreement and other transactional documents, DBTW produced a report into the 2014 GNR Metro Delivery and passed this to Nexus in December 2014.

6.2.2 In April 2015, a joint Nexus/DBTW meeting discussed the 2014 review and made a list of recommendations totalling 13. Whilst some of these were addressing future needs beyond 2015 e.g. ensuring any future South Shields Interchange development would take cognizance of the GNR, others were aimed at addressing more immediate risks. In the case of 4 out of the 13 recommendations these centred around staffing or resourcing; in particular for drivers duties.

6.2.3 The next important milestone in the planning process appears to have been an internal DBTW meeting organised by the Train Planning Team. There was no



agenda for this meeting and the meeting invite described the purpose as "Discussion to look pragmatically at what train service we can run on GNR day in relation to the discussion we had a couple of months ago with Nexus' aspirations".

6.2.4 The meeting was attended by various parts of the Operations team and included a senior operations manager just short of director level and a senior member of the Contracts Team. The meeting considered the operational difficulties the GNR Metro services presented in terms of driver numbers and the (poor) take up of volunteers experienced during other similar events such as the Sunderland air Show. This meeting was held on 9 June 2015.

6.2.5 The above meeting focussed on the previous year's GNR delivery in terms of securing the correct level of driving resources.

The main issue that was being addressed was how to deal with the problem of obtaining the number of drivers required in order to comply with the Operating Specification or balancing the timetable to equal the level of resource that was considered likely to be available.

There no evidence to suggest that these considerations were motivated by an attempt to reduce costs.

The solution to the shortage of volunteer drivers was to reduce the length of the overtime shifts to make them more attractive to the drivers. The consequences of this solution were not discussed or considered.

6.2.6 What was also not discussed was how to use the "Traincrew Agreement" that exists between DBTW and the Trade Unions in order to minimise the risks relating to the lack of drivers. Section 4.5 of this agreement outlines that in order to safeguard the company's business and commitment to the Metro, arrangements will be agreed with "Sectional Committee A" (the drivers representative). This was never actioned.

6.2.7 Three days after the internal DBTW GNR planning meeting a joint DBTW and Nexus regular concession management meeting took place. This was held on 12 June and at the "Service Delivery Meeting". Amongst other things discussed was the GNR Metro service. The senior operations manager, who was the most senior attendee at the internal DBTW meeting three days before, confirmed, when asked



on the matter, "DBTW plan to run a base Sunday service with additional as per the Ops Spec." Whilst this statement suggested compliance with the Operating Specification it did not convey the critical information that a reduction in services was planned that would result in material changes to the early morning (pre 1000 hours) trains. Therefore those present from Nexus left the meeting with the clear impression that service levels were planned to be consistent with previous years.

- 6.2.8 On the 9 July 2015 the GNR timetable was received by Nexus. Railway timetables are detailed and complex documents that require specialists to construct them. The ability for any non-specialist person to detect flaws is limited. Despite being specifically requested by Nexus's Rail Contract Manager in December 2014, the email from DBTW's Planning Team did not confirm that the attached detailed timetable was either compliant or not in respect of the Operating Specification.
- 6.2.9 This detailed timetable document contained only eight additional trains instead of the required nine. It should be noted that the two (spare) trains to work to instructions on the day (see section 6.1.4) would not be timetabled and, therefore, not visible at this stage in the planning process. The fact that this number of additional trains did not meet the Operating Specification was never identified by Nexus' Concession Office staff. It was, however, returned to DBTW due to the fact that of the trains timetabled some did not meet the basic rules on matters such as turnaround times at terminal end stations.
- 6.2.10 An updated timetable was received by Nexus on 15 July 2015. Again this did not state clearly whether it was compliant or not. Again, like the previous version from 9 July 2015, Nexus Concession Office staff failed to identify it was missing one train.
- 6.2.11 In undertaking this review, it became clear that a number of people within DBTW operated under the assumption that prior to 2015 a base Saturday timetable was used and then supplemented with the total of 11 trains specified for the GNR. This has proved to be inaccurate. A review of the GNR timetable submitted for 2014 has established it consisted of 10 timetabled trains as opposed to the nine specified. It should be noted that 2 out of these 10 timetabled trains had very short distance running diagrams. If this service was to resemble a Saturday timetable, what was submitted would have had to have totalled 14 timetabled trains plus two to be ran as directed on the day. In short, on the basis of using 2014 actual timetable, arrangements for previous GNR events centred around a Sunday timetable not a Saturday timetable.



6.2.12 Lastly but importantly in reviewing this part of the planning arrangements for 2015 it should be noted that there was no evidence that any persons within DBTW outwith the attendees of 9 June meeting were aware of these changes. Specifically the directors of DBTW were not aware. Similarly the fact that changes had been made, which in effect were a diminution of the expected service level, was never conveyed to Nexus.

6.2.13 ***In considering the planning for the 2015 GNR, it is clear that in order to resolve the problem of obtaining the correct number of drivers to deliver the Metro service, the solution in place was simply to reduce the service level provided. No attempt was made to work with the Trade Unions in addressing this. No information was "passed up the line" to make the directors aware of this reduction in service and there was no message sent to Nexus. At the point of passing the detailed timetables to Nexus, DBTW failed to present them in a previously agreed format which would have made any changes and the level of compliance with the Operating Specification clear. The accumulation of these actions can only be described as being deliberately misleading. Nexus' Concession Office failed to notice this reduction in respect to the detailed timetable documents sent to them on two occasions in July 2015.***

### 6.3 The consequence of the shortfall

6.3.1 The diminution or shortfall in the service level became apparent to many passengers from an early stage on the morning of 13 September 2015. Shortly after 8.00 am heavy passenger loadings were noted and by 08.30 am passengers were being left behind by trains that were full to capacity.

6.3.2 Customer complaints received by both Nexus and DBTW relating to the GNR are shown below:-

Total in 2014 - 5  
Total in 2015 - 517

It can easily be seen from the numbers above that 2014 was a successful year and 2015 not.



6.3.3 On 16 September 2015 the 'Sort Out the Metro Group' wrote to the North East Combined Authority's Tyne and Wear Sub Committee chair. The Group highlighted a number of issues of concern. Attached to their letter was a list totalling 35 electronically posted comments most of which gave an account of problems experienced on 13 September 2015.

6.3.4 In respect to quantifying the shortfall and, therefore, understanding the magnitude of this, it is useful to consider over a number of years the train distance (capacity) provided on GNR days. These are recorded as:-

	<u>Planned KMs</u>	<u>Actual KMs</u>
2011	16,247	16,222
2012	16,295	14,665
2013	15,351	14,598
2014	15,412	14,232
2015	14,254	11,534

The capacity of train kms planned in 2015 was 7.5% less than the previous year's plan and was 12.2% less than that planned in 2011.

The actual capacity of train kms provided in 2015 was 19% less than the planned in 2015 and slightly more than a 25% reduction when compared to the planned km in 2014.

It is noticeable that the planned capacity in 2015 broadly equated to that which was actually delivered in 2014. Given that since 2012, what was actually delivered varied from the plan by between 5% and 10% it can be concluded that planning to deliver 14,254 km was inherently risky.

6.3.5 In terms of understanding the causes of this reduction the following summary aims to explain:-

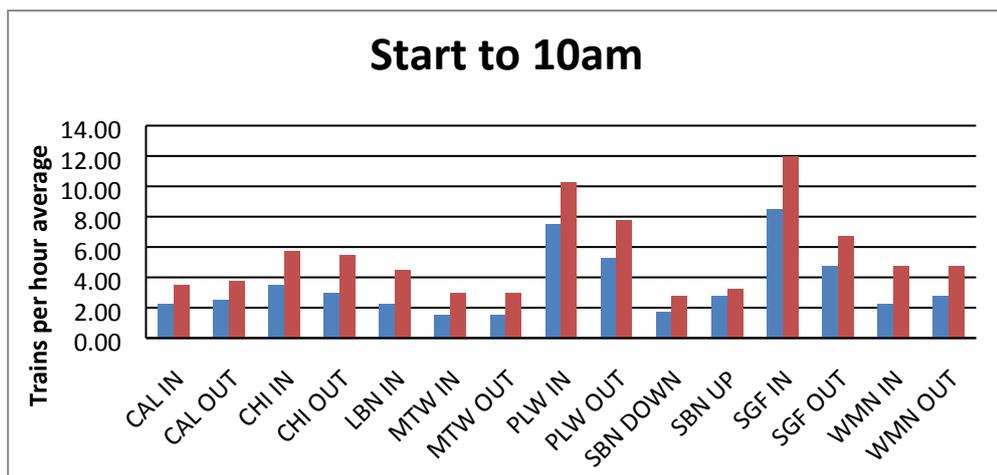
- a) The 1,158 km reduction between this year's planned 14,254km vs last year's planned 15,412 km can be attributed the new reduced timetable being created (less driving distance and therefore reducing capacity).
- b) On the day, the difference between the now (reduced) planned capacity of 14,254 km and the 11,534 km actual totalled 2,720km.

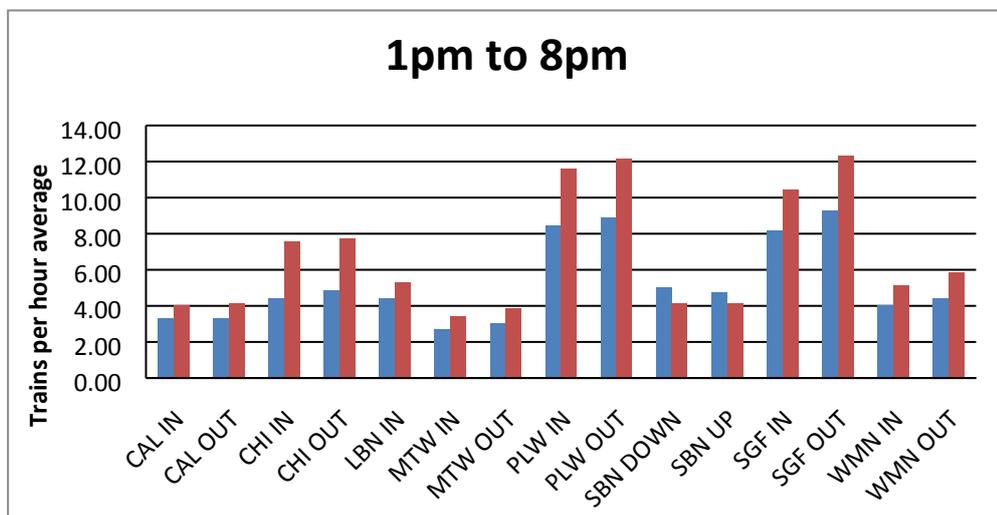
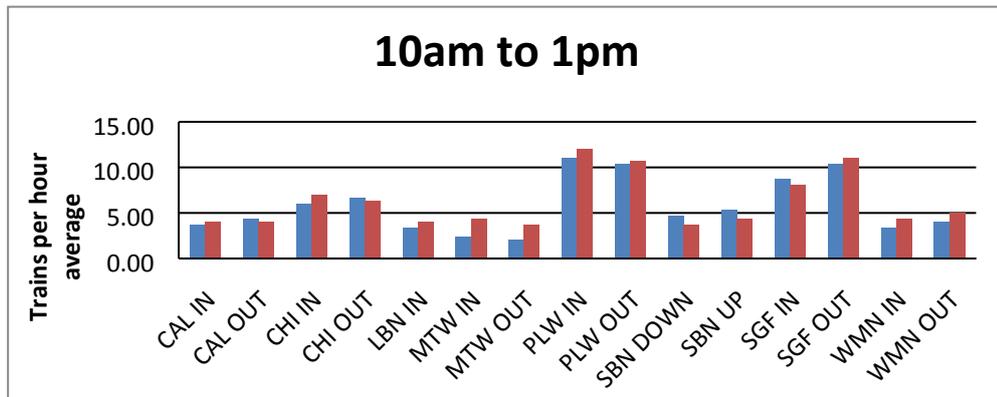


c) Using the traditional approach and methodology to attribution of perturbation used between Nexus and DBTW, this gives the GNR Metro services total reduction of 2,720km a breakdown of causal factors as follows:

- 680km on the day driver shortages
- 626km passenger loadings (this is considered to be mostly a consequential or secondary causal factor to driver shortages)
- 1,170km due to passengers operating the emergency handles and/or detraining (taking unwell)
- 54 km due to train failures
- 190km due to overhead line (OHL) electrical trips
- **TOTAL = 2,720 km**

6.3.6 In the graphs below a number of comparisons are made across the Metro network looking at three timeframes: before 10.00 am; 10.00 am to 1.00 pm and 1.00 pm to 8.00 pm. On the X-axis various locations are listed and the Y-axis the number of average trains per hour. A year-on-year comparison is displayed with 2015 shown in blue and 2014 shown in red.





Key to station codes:

Code	Station Name
CAL	Callerton Parkway
CHI	Chichester
LBN	Longbenton
MTW	Monument (East/West)
PLW	Pelaw
SBN	Seaburn
SGF	South Gosforth
WMN	West Monkseaton



From the three graphs it can be seen that before 10am the largest reductions in service delivered were experienced. The level of reductions from 2014 to 2015 before 10.00 am can be summarised as:

Airport line	28.5%
South Shields line	44.0%
North Tyne Coast	44.0%
Sunderland line	25.0%

The 2015 service levels or capacity between 10am to 1pm are closest to those delivered in 2014 and the period ranging from 1pm to 8pm somewhere between the two.

6.3.7 It is worthy of noting that despite attempting to make the timetable more attractive for drivers to volunteer to take up turns of duty, 1,158kms were lost in the train plan and a further 680km were lost due to driving turns remaining unfilled or vacant on the day. Put another way, a total of 1,838 kms were lost due directly to a shortage of drivers.

6.3.8 ***In considering the shortfall in the capacity provided and the consequence of this for passengers, it is clear that the main causal factors were the planned diminution in service levels added to the "on the day" lack of drivers to fill this diluted train plan. Both of these factors led to a sizeable yet foreseeable effect on the service provision especially on the morning of the GNR. The level of disruption and consequential crowding then created other problems such as passengers activating the train emergency stops and overhead line problems for the remainder of the day.***

***On the day delivery of services affected passengers very badly. The planned reductions, in particular those before 10.00 am, resulted in between a quarter to about a half of services reduced compared to the previous year.***

#### 6.4 Changes in passenger demand

6.4.1 An average Sunday for the Metro would experience a patronage level of around 32,000 passenger journeys. Other than the GNR days, September Sunday's would record about 1,000 less trips.



6.4.2 The number of Metro passenger trips recorded on each GNR day is shown below:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Passenger Patronage</u>
2010	89,974
2011	82,933
2012	81,494
2013	79,859
2014	82,870
2015	84,122

Whilst the 2015 patronage figure is higher than the previous four years, it is only a 1.5% increase on the 2014 figure and, therefore, well within any variation level that might be expected.

6.4.3 In 2010, the patronage figure was a higher level with a total of 89,974. In this year, there was no noticeable problem.

6.4.4 ***In considering the level of demand placed upon the Metro from GNR 2015, it is clear that the numbers were 'in line with expectations' and 'not excessive' and in any event, less than GNR 2010 when there was no noticeable problem. Accordingly, this factor is considered not to have played any part in determining the outcome from the event of this year's GNR.***

## 6.5 Overhead line problems

6.5.1 The Metro system uses a non-standard traction power supply via a 1500 volt dc overhead line (OHL) network.

6.5.2 This network has remained mostly unchanged since the Metro was launched in 1980 and consists of a relatively high number of local OHL sections each of which receives a supply of electricity from a substation.

6.5.3 Close to but not at South Shields terminal end station, the relevant part of the OHL network is called Chichester to Hebburn. Each of the two railway lines has its own individual supply denoted as H/C or C/H.

6.5.4 Each section has electrical overhead protection devices and these are rated at 1300 amps for electrical overloads. In other words should more than 1300 amps



be detected the overloads will operate and interrupt the supply of electricity into the section it protects.

- 6.5.5 In starting from a fully stopped position each Metro train (consisting of two Metrocars) will draw 1000 amps of electrical current. If two trains (a total of four Metrocars) were to run in any one electrical section as much as 2000 amps could be drawn from the OHL and could cause the overload devices to operate. The chances of this happening are relatively low as trains are spaced out.
- 6.5.6 The regular spacing of trains is ordinarily controlled to a large extent by the timetable which stops the bunching of trains.
- 6.5.7 When disruption occurs, reliance is placed on staff within the Metro Control Room to ensure an even spacing of trains takes place. The regulation is important and relies on the interventions and interactions of the System Controllers (in effect the signaller) and the Power Controllers.
- 6.5.8 On Sunday 13 September there were a total of nine overhead line overload trips. Of these, six had more than two trains in the section in some cases as many as four trains were present.

Five of the trips were on the C/H section.

Four of the trips were on the H/C section.

- 6.5.9 It is worthy to note that after delivery of the GNR in 2015 some staff within DBTW presumed the number of trips was a function of some kind of fault that existed during the event.

The two prevailing views within DBTW as to the cause were:

- a) A recent change to the Timed Overloads (TOTs); or
- b) A faulty feeder cable which failed several days after the GNR.

- 6.5.10 On the first theory this relates the Timed Overloads. These offer a different type of electrical protection should a less high current level (800 amps or more) be prolonged for 40 seconds or more. The assertion that these TOTs caused problems on the GNR day is easy to discount on the basis of data stored within



the SCADA system (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition). This data shows all nine trips were general overloads and none were timed overloads.

- 6.5.11 On the matter of the faulty cable, this was “in circuit” for the H/C section and could, therefore, only have influenced four out of the nine trips.

Further to this and of greater relevance is that each electrical section has protection in the form of the 1300 amp overload device at both ends. Due to relationship between physical distance, electrical resistance and the level of fault current drawn the geographical end of the section nearest the fault is the end of the section that will detect the fault.

In the case of the 4 x H/C trips, a review of SCADA data shows the fault was detected 3 times by the Chichester overload which was greater than 5km away from the location of the faulty cable. The faulty cable was only several hundred metres from the Hebburn end. Put another way, had the fault cable been the source of these 4 trips then the location seeing and reacting by operating its overload device would have been Hebburn.

- 6.5.12 For the one occurrence where the Hebburn substation overload did operate, 3 x trains were in this section.

- 6.5.13 In respect to the faulty cable causing any of the overhead line trips that day, it is reasonable to summarise that:

- It could not possibly have caused five of the nine
- It is extremely unlikely to have caused three out of the four remaining trips
- Of the one and last remaining trip, it is possible but given three trains were in the section it is far more likely this latter factor caused the OHL overload to trip.

- 6.5.14 Notwithstanding the comments made within this section (6.5), Nexus’ Principal engineer responsible for the overhead line system has identified that some greater resilience could possibly be introduced into the system around South Shields. This would be aimed at reducing overloads caused by the bunching of trains. It is thought the investment levels are in the tens of thousands.



6.5.15 ***In considering the overhead line problems experienced on the 2015 GNR day it can be established without doubt that the Time Overloads played no part. In regards to the alternative theory of the defective cable which failed three days later playing a part this could only have done so in one out of nine occasions. For the one possible occasion and on the balance of probability this was due to three trains running in the section at the time and therefore drawing current levels over and above those permitted.***

***Notwithstanding the comments above, Nexus' Principal Engineer has identified a potential opportunity to make more resilient the OHL electrical protection arrangements around South Shields.***

## 6.6 Passengers taking ill

- 6.6.1 Under normal conditions passengers can and do take ill on trains including the Tyne and Wear Metro at any time.
- 6.6.2 Experiences of other UK rail operators would suggest when large volumes of passengers are being carried and disruption occurs there can be an increase in passengers taking ill.
- 6.6.3 13 September 2015 was a warm day for the time of year. In and around the Metro system temperatures were reported to be as high as 18 degrees.
- 6.6.4 Whilst it is difficult to determine precisely from sources such as the Metro system Control Room logs it would appear there were a total of 7 occurrences of reports of one or more passengers taking ill or feeling unwell.
- 6.6.5 Of those recorded cases, three ambulances were requested from the North East Ambulance Service. In one of these the request for an ambulance was later cancelled when a nurse on board the Metro gave assistance to the passenger feeling unwell.
- 6.6.6 Two of the seven occurrences are worthy of further noting with details contained within sections 6.6.7 and 6.6.8.
- 6.6.7 At 13:22 Train 130 was standing mid-section or between Tyne Dock and Chichester stations. Some 19 minutes before there was some disruption when the overhead line overload protection tripped with 3 trains operating in this



section. With the power restored at 13:14 there was a further bunching of trains. Whilst stationary a train emergency door release was operated and an estimated 20 passengers “de-trained” onto the track. All trains in the area were stopped and the police assisted in clearing the area before services could resume. Whilst there is no record of any passengers taking ill or feeling unwell, it is likely this was a factor.

6.6.8 The second occurrence worthy of noting is recorded at 15:00 hours and involved a passenger on board Train 143 who suffered a fit at Jarrow. Around 3 minutes later at 15:03 another train near to Jarrow reported having come to a stand as the “passenger emergency button” had been operated. A passenger was reported as being ill. An ambulance attended the site and gave assistance to these two passengers. Later in the day the North East Ambulance Service advised the Metro Control that whilst on site at Jarrow a further 11 people sought assistance.

6.6.9 From the information available it would appear that none of the recorded cases of passengers being unwell were of a serious nature.

6.6.10 In its policy position on the subject of “on-train crowding” the UK rail safety regulator, The Office of Rail and Roads (formerly Office of Rail Regulation), describe that “there is no conclusive evidence linking over-crowding with anything other than low level health and safety risk to individual passengers.”

6.6.11 ***Notwithstanding the policy position of the ORR, the perceived level of risk allied to the volume of passengers on services during special events, some of whom may have been feeling unwell, still makes this a matter where efforts could be further focussed. Most obviously preventing over-crowding by a better planned level of service and over and above this and before next year’s GNR a review of some practical measures would be of value.***

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

7.1 This review has established there was an intentional, sizeable reduction in passenger carrying capacity for Metro services on the day of the 2015 GNR.

7.2 The year-on-year reduction in timetable plan equated to 7.5% and emanated from DBTW’s inability to encourage drivers to work on this day.



- 7.3 There is no evidence to suggest that this was escalated to director level within DBTW. The plan was not openly or transparently conveyed to Nexus.
- 7.4 On top of the reduced level of timetabled services, further driver shortages occurred on the day. From experience of the last four years this should have been anticipated and the fact that it was not catered for in planning for the event is of concern.
- 7.5 Both these factors were more prevalent before 10:00 hours. From this point onwards the delay to trains caused passenger over-crowding and poor regulation of services, especially towards South Shields. The latter issue then resulted in problems with the overhead line supply overload protection as too many trains were being operated in close proximity.
- 7.6 The manner in which the origins of this chain of events occurred, and the fact that there was no communication of these changes to Nexus or to the Directors of DBTW can only be described as being deliberately misleading.

## **8. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 8.1 This section contains recommendations aimed at avoiding a recurrence of the events on 13 September 2015 where the Tyne and Wear Metro service fell short of its normally positive track record of supporting the GNR.

### 8.1.1 Recommendation 1

DBTW should undertake a robust review of its planning and delivery arrangements for all future GNRs. This review should carefully consider the trends in patronage and capacity offered in previous years and ensure that all future events are planned with sufficient passenger capabilities. This review should involve the event organiser, local authorities and other relevant organisations.

### 8.1.2 Recommendation 2

DBTW should work with the TUs and make use of the existing Traincrew Agreement. The main output from this action is to ensure there is sufficient driver resource for all the required shifts on future GNR. The resource levels need to meet the passenger demand profile, including catering for pre 1000 hour services.



8.1.3 Recommendation 3

DBTW should initiate actions within its own organisation aimed at ensuring that if significant Metro delivery problems exist, these matters are effectively escalated to a more senior level in a prompt manner.

8.1.4 Recommendation 4

DBTW should review its arrangements for dealing with passengers feeling unwell/ taking ill in the context of special event days.

8.1.5 Recommendation 5

Aimed at avoiding disruption from unnecessary OHL overload trips, DBTW should brief, train or otherwise improve the knowledge and understanding of the relevant Metro Control Room staff to ensure that effective train regulation takes place during special events, times of disruption and any other time this may be required.

8.1.6 Recommendation 6

DBTW and Nexus should put in place firm arrangements with respect to the handover of draft timetables. These arrangements should include, but not be limited to:

- a clear indication as to whether or not the proposed draft timetable meets the Operating Specification;
- a clear indication of how the capacity of the proposed draft timetable compares to previous actual arrangements;
- a clear indication where any spare (to be directed on the day) trains are shown on the timetable (or some similar methodology); and
- the inclusion of a section highlighting the level of delivery risk.

8.1.7 Recommendation 7

Nexus should review the effectiveness of its draft timetable reviewing arrangements.

8.1.8 Recommendation 8



Nexus should undertake a cost benefit analysis on whether alterations to the OHL around South Shields may make this asset more resilient.

8.1.9 Recommendation 9

Nexus should review Annex 1 of the Operating Specification with a view to removing any sources of ambiguity.

## North East Combined Authority

### Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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**Date:** 1 December 2015

**Subject:** North East Combined Authority Budget 2016/17

**Report of:** Chief Finance Officer

#### **Executive Summary**

The purpose of this report is to seek the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on proposals for the 2016/17 NECA budget, as part of its consultation process. A summary report on the Draft 2016/17 Budget presented to the Leadership Board on 17 November and the more detailed report on the Tyne and Wear Transport Budget presented to the Tyne and Wear Sub-Committee on 24 November and an extract from the TNEC report covering Transport costs in Durham and Northumberland are attached as appendices.

#### **Recommendations**

It is recommended that the Committee receive the report for information and comment. Views will be considered as part of the consultation process.

# North East Combined Authority

## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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### **1 Background Information**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on proposals for the 2016/17 NECA budget, as part of its consultation process. The summary report on the Draft Budget presented to the Leadership Board on 17 November covering all aspects of the NECA budget, the more detailed report on the Tyne and Wear Transport Budget presented to the Tyne and Wear Sub-Committee on 24 November and an extract from the Transport Budget report to the TNEC meeting also on 24 November, covering transport budget information for Durham and Northumberland are attached as appendices.

### **2 Proposals**

- 2.1 The budget proposals for 2016/17 as they currently stand for both Transport and non-Transport activity are set out in the reports attached as Appendices 1, 2 and 3. An update will be provided at the meeting on discussions to date and any new information on funding following the Spending Review announcement on 25 November.
- 2.2 The Committee is asked to consider these proposals and provide comments which can be taken into account as part of the consultation process for the 2016/17 budget.

### **3 Next Steps**

- 3.1 The main budget for 2016/17 will be presented to the Leaders Board for agreement on 19 January 2016, with follow-up reports likely at further meetings as details of the proposed Devolution deal are available.

### **4 Potential Impact on Objectives**

- 4.1 Impacts on objectives are set out in the individual reports contained as appendices.

### **5 Finance and Other Resources**

- 5.1 The financial and resource implications are set out in detail in the individual reports contained as appendices.

### **6 Legal**

- 6.1 The legal implications are set out in the individual reports contained as appendices.

### **7 Other Considerations**

# North East Combined Authority

## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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### 7.1 Consultation/Community Engagement

The budget is subject to a period of consultation which includes this committee as well as other committees, officer groups and the North East Chamber of Commerce.

### 7.2 Human Rights

There are no human rights implications arising from this report.

### 7.3 Equalities and Diversity

There are no equalities and diversity implications arising from this report.

### 7.4 Risk Management

Risk management implications are set out in the individual reports contained as appendices.

### 7.5 Crime and Disorder

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

### 7.6 Environment and Sustainability

There are no environment and sustainability implications arising from this report.

## 8 Background Documents

8.1 Background reports attached as appendices.

## 9 Links to the Local Transport Plans

9.1 The transport budget will help support the delivery of Local Transport Plans.

## 10 Appendices

- 10.1 1. Report to the Leadership Board 17 November 2015 – Draft Budget 2016/17 and Transport Levies
2. Report to the Tyne and Wear Sub-Committee 24 November 2015
3. Extract from the Budget Report to Transport North East Committee

## 11 Contact Officers

11.1 Paul Woods, Chief Finance Officer, NECA, 07446936840,  
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## 12 Sign off

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

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# North East Combined Authority

## Leadership Board

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**DATE:** 17<sup>th</sup> November 2015

**SUBJECT:** Draft Budget 2016/17 and Transport Levies

**REPORT OF:** Head of Paid Service and Chief Finance Officer

### 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out the key budget issues, principles and proposals that are likely to be included in the 2016/17 Budget Report for the North East Combined Authority (NECA) for consideration by the Leadership Board on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2016. Identifying them in this report forms the basis for consultation on NECA's Budget, as required in its constitution. Not all of the information needed to complete the budget is currently available, in particular the details of Government grant funding, which will be announced after the Spending Review on 25<sup>th</sup> November and possibly as late as 16<sup>th</sup> December.
- 1.2 The financial and governance implications associated with the devolution agreement will also impact positively on the Budgets in future years, particularly in relation to the responsibilities of NECA and NELEP and any elected Mayor. The budgets for 2016/17 and 2017/18 will need to be set before the results of any mayoral election are known. The formal confirmation of the Devolution Agreement and any additional funding for 2016/17 is due to take place early in the New Year, probably before the end of March, although the date is not yet clear.
- 1.3 Further information about the detailed content of the budget is currently being developed, including information still to be announced or confirmed about grant funding and its proposed uses. As further information becomes available it will be included in future reports, including information provided to Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The more detailed information, once available, will be reflected in the January report or reports in March and future meetings of the Leadership Board as funding is confirmed and spending can be agreed, taking into account comments that emerge from consultation.
- 1.4 This is the second formal Budget process that has been undertaken since the Combined Authority was established in April 2014. NECA is required by law to set its Revenue Budget and Transport levies for 2016/17 by 15<sup>th</sup> February 2016 at the latest. It is also necessary to agree the level of any contributions from constituent councils towards non-transport costs, so that the councils can take the levies and contributions into account in setting their own budgets for 2016/17.

# North East Combined Authority

## Leadership Board

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- 1.5 It has been agreed that the Leadership Board will set the Base Revenue Budget, Initial Capital Programme and levies at its scheduled meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2016. This will provide the information about levies and contributions to the NECA budget in good time for the seven constituent councils to include it within their budgets. As additional revenue and capital funding for 2016/17 and future years is confirmed, the Leadership Board can agree revisions to its Revenue and Capital Budget at its future meetings, in particular a special meeting in March will be able to agree additional spending funded by additional resources, giving time to consult on detailed proposals.
- 1.6 This budget report sets out the indicative level of resources planned to be used in 2016/17 to help deliver the Objectives of NECA and the North East Strategic Economic Plan. It is a policy led budget, which has also to be set in the context of the national position of austerity, which is expected to require further significant savings to be achieved in local authority revenue spending over the next four years; as well as reflecting the potential new capital funding opportunities presented by the devolution agenda.
- 1.7 In the current year additional funding is needed in order to provide the internal and external capacity to progress the various work streams related to the Devolution agenda, including work relating to the Health and Social Care Commission and public service integration. It is proposed that a budget of up to £0.5m be established for this purpose, with any release of the funding for specific proposals to be agreed under the delegated decision making process, with further details to be reported in the January Budget Report.
- 1.8 At this point it is envisaged that –
- Capital investment in transport, infrastructure and economic development appears likely to increase significantly in 2016/17, potentially by £25m in respect of Local Growth funded schemes if the indicative grant allocation is agreed in full, plus up to £30m in the event of a devolution deal being agreed, and the first year of an £89m investment programme in the event that our latest Enterprise Zone bid is agreed. The capital programme report in January will include known projects and funding allocations. We expect that more detail of projects to be funded from the Strategic Investment fund will be included in a report in March and future months. Tyne and Wear Sub-Committee will be considering the proposed Metro Asset Renewal Programme, which currently attracts 90% grant funding from DfT;
  - The budget could potentially include additional funding for investment in employability and skills, partly funded from successful bidding and alignment of funds with c£180m of European Social Funding (ESF) to be available from

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2015 to 2020; and investment into innovation, SME competitiveness and the low carbon agenda through successful bidding and alignment of funds with European Regional and Development Funds (ERDF) of c£200m;

- The provisional Transport Revenue Budget and Levies for 2016/17 are estimated to be almost £86.7m, which is a cash reduction of -£2.5m (-2.9%) compared with the current year, to be delivered mainly through efficiency savings and use of reserves while reductions in discretionary transport budgets and services are explored for consultation in 2016 for implementation from 2017; and
- The only significant fees or charges to be set by the NECA as part of the 2016/17 budget relate to Metro Fares, where an increase in line with RPI inflation is envisaged for implementation on 2 January 2016. Tyne and Wear Sub-Committee will consider options about the price of the Gold Card and child fare concessions at its November meeting and their recommendations will be reflected in the consultation document; and the increase in the Tyne Tunnel Tolls, which were due to be increased in January 2016 to be maintained in real terms since they were last set in 2013, will be now considered for implementation in April 2016.

## 2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Leadership Board –

- a) receive this report for consideration and comment;
- b) agree the budget approach of setting out a detailed budget for 2016/17 as another transitional year, while seeking to develop a medium term financial plan during 2016, which will take into account the outcome of the additional funding secured through the devolution agreement as well as any austerity savings required to be made;
- c) agree that the following points and proposals form the basis of consultation about the NECA 2016/17 Budget : -
  1. The Revenue Budget and Capital Investment Programme of the NECA and NELEP will be developed to deliver the Strategic Objectives of NECA and the Objectives set out in the Strategic Economic Plan, as highlighted in Section 3 of this report;
  2. Resources will be identified and secured to support the capacity of the NECA and NELEP to secure the resources and deliver the actions needed

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to deliver the SEP strategic objectives. Councils' current funding contributions will be maintained at least at their current level, and the intention is that additional capacity that is required both in 2015/16 and future years, will be funded from additional external funding, including additional devolution funding; interest on cash balances; savings on existing budgets; and reserves, where this is possible:

3. The Transport Budget and Levy for Tyne and Wear is indicatively proposed to be set at £65.12m, which is a reduction of £2.08m (-3.1%) from the 2015/16 levy, achieved by efficiency and other cost savings and use of reserves in 2016/17 and reductions in discretionary transport budgets and services from 2017. This reduction is subject to there being no significant cuts to the Revenue grants received by Nexus from DfT. If the Metro Rail Grant is subject to a reduction in the spending review, the impact of this and any alternative savings options will need to be considered in setting the Budget and Levy in January;
4. If the Tyne and Wear Levy is reduced by £2.08m, the grant to Nexus funded by the levy is proposed to be £62.5m, a saving of £2.0m (-3.1%) achieved from efficiency savings and use of reserves next year and potentially by cuts in discretionary transport services from 2017, with a saving of £0.080m in the NECA Tyne and Wear transport budget;
5. The impact of the cuts in Government Funding to Nexus and constituent councils; as well as options for delivering the Bus Strategy will be taken into account in a Strategic Review of all discretionary expenditure during the first half of 2016 to form the basis of a consultation on any proposals for services needed from 2017/18 onwards. This will have regard to the relative strategic priority of transport services and other services provided by councils;
6. The indicative Transport Budget and Levy for Durham County area is £15.342m, which is a reduction of £0.735m (-4.6%) on the original budget for 2015/16. This reduction is due to anticipated reduced payments to bus companies for Concessionary Fares (£0.166m), planned cost savings primarily on subsidised bus services (£0.441m) and general budget realignment (£0.128m);
7. The indicative Transport Budget and Levy for Northumberland County area is likely to be around £6.159m, which is an increase of £0.258m (4.3%) on the original budget for 2015/16. This is due mainly to increased

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costs of concessionary travel and the reinstatement of a proposed saving to the Scheme following an audit of the use of disabled passes;

8. Proposals for the uplift in Metro fares to cover inflation cost pressures have been developed to constrain the average increase that does not exceed the July 2015 RPI inflation index. Proposals are being considered by the Tyne and Wear Sub-committee at its November meeting in relation to the price of the Gold Card and children fares. An increase in the Tyne Tunnel Tolls to maintain the level of the tolls in real terms and minimise the annual deficit on the Tunnels account, will be delayed from 1 January to April or June 2016;
  9. The detailed budget report in January will include the outcome of consideration of the level of resources needed to provide capacity to deliver the objectives of NECA. At this stage it is envisaged that current contributions from constituent councils (Corporate costs (£300,000), Inward Investment (£140,000) and LEP Match funding (£250,000)) will be maintained at this level; with any additional expenditure in these areas funded by increases in other funding, budget savings and additional interest on revenue balances/cash flow. This additional funding, including the additional funding for Inward Investment Activities will be the subject of the Budget report in March 2016; and
  10. NECA will need to set out a balanced budget for 2016/17, maintaining a sufficient but minimal level of reserves to manage risk and will set out a treasury management strategy for borrowing and lending which will comply with the Prudential Code;
- d) Agree that a narrative document be prepared from the content of this report and the comments and decisions of the Leadership Board, which will set out the budget proposals in an appropriate format for consultation; and
  - e) Agree that a budget provision of up to £0.5m be established to be available in the current year in order to progress urgent activity related to the Devolution agreement work streams. The funding to be found from temporary use of reserves, interest on cash balances and any savings on budgets in the current year.

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### 3 THE POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 The Leadership Board have made clear the importance of a policy led budget, within the context of the national programme of austerity measures, to underpin the delivery of the NECA's policy priorities including the delivery of the Strategic Economic Plan.
- 3.2 The capital and revenue resources of the Combined Authority and the NELEP will be targeted to achieve the priorities set out in the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) and the Transport Levies that the Combined Authority will set will help meet the statutory transport responsibilities of the Combined Authority, which can also contribute to priorities in the SEP.
- 3.3 The Combined Authority has agreed three broad Policy priority areas –
- **Transport**
  - **Employability and Inclusion**
  - **Economic Development and Regeneration**

The proposed Devolution agreement with Government, signed by the Combined Authority Leadership Board on 23 October, brings a radical devolution of funding, powers and responsibilities for employment and skills, transport, housing, planning, business support and investment from central government to the North East. The proposed agreement builds on the ambitions set out in the North East Strategic Economic Plan.

- 3.4 The North East Strategic Economic Plan which was published in April 2014 is focused on delivering 'More and Better Jobs'. It identifies six strategic themes aimed at addressing the challenges facing the area and delivering the objectives of the SEP. These strategic themes are –
1. **Innovation:** central to the ambition of better jobs and a more competitive business base, delivering medium term benefits as managers invest in new products, processes, markets and technologies supported by an ambitious open innovation system.
  2. **Business support and access to finance:** the key driver for more jobs and a strong private sector, addressing market failures to support a stronger indigenous businesses, with better access to finance, and able to progress expansion plans in national and international markets.
  3. **Skills:** providing a demand led system, reflecting the need of employers, including for high level skills in support of better jobs, with access to high quality training facilities for both general and specialist training.
  4. **Inclusion:** central to ensuring no one is left behind, providing targeted and tailored support to neighbourhoods and groups facing major challenges in accessing training and employment opportunities, which let everyone fully share in the benefits of a growing economy.

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5. **Economic assets and infrastructure:** developing the places for business to invest and people to live, developing new opportunities with towns and cities, coast and country, and heritage assets.
  6. **Transport and digital connectivity:** which serves and connects people and businesses, letting people move around for both work and leisure, and connecting the North East to the national and international economy.
- 3.5 The Revenue Budget and Capital Investment Programme of NECA will contribute to the achievement of these objectives, as illustrated below.
- 3.5.1 It is vital that the local resources available are used to best effect on projects that make a demonstrable contribution to economic growth in the region within the context of an agreed plan and that opportunities to increase the level of available funding are explored and developed further to maximise the opportunities of future funding bids. It is therefore important that the governance arrangements established to make decisions on resource allocation are able to properly reflect the priorities of local people and businesses.
- 3.5.2 The establishment of a Strategic Investment Fund is a critical element to co-ordinate and make best use of the resources available. The proposed Devolution agreement would add £30m a year into the Strategic Investment Fund, which would also be increased by a successful Enterprise Zone bid that can fund the necessary interventions from retained business rate growth; and any additional Local Growth Funding grant. This will be the subject of future reports, with an update on available funding in the January Report and approval of specific projects being considered by the Leadership Board once funding is confirmed in future reports from March 2016 onwards.

### European Funding

- 3.5.3 The proposed Devolution agreement states that the Government will delegate to the North East Combined Authority project selection powers for the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund. The Combined Authority will be granted Intermediate Body status to deliver these delegated powers. This will allow the North East to integrate and align investments with other aspects of the devolution deal, to select projects for investment, to improve performance and maximise economic impact. The Government will work with the Combined Authority to agree the detail of this delegation and, subject to agreement; it is expected to begin from April 2016.
- 3.5.4 A key action will be the creation of the capacity needed to undertake the European Funding activity including any new responsibilities for European funding. The current activity, which is supported by the LEP executive team, will need to be expanded. The cost of this capacity is expected to be met from LEP core budgets, European Technical Assistance funding and in-kind secondment(s). There is the potential need for matching funding and this will need to be identified as part of the budget process.

### 3.6 Innovation Theme

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- 3.6.1 In the context of the Adonis Review challenge to develop the North East as “*an exemplar of smart specialization and open innovation systems and practice*”, and significant evidence work to understand our innovation assets and challenges, the SEP sets out a strategic approach to investment of Local Growth Fund (LGF), European Structural and Investment Fund (ESIF) and other resources to facilitate effective innovation activity.
- 3.6.2 It prioritises investment into building innovation leadership, developing the effectiveness of our hubs and networks and delivering strategic investment to foster innovative businesses, clusters and a wider innovation culture. Within the Innovation Theme the following specific projects investment are planned for 2015/16 and 2016/17:

### **Local Growth Fund**

Project	Total value	2015/16	2016/17
Centre for Innovation in Formulation, led by the Centre for Process Innovation (CPI), based at NetPark	£7.4 m	£0.82 m	£4.65m
Low Carbon Energy centre, to be based at Newcastle Science City	£5.6 m	£0.44m	£2.36m
Newcastle Life Sciences Incubation Hub to be based at Newcastle University	£5.6 m	£0.35m	£4.50m
NETPark Infrastructure Phase 3	£6.8 m	£0.31m	£2.11m
Sunderland Enterprise and Innovation Hub, to be hosted at Sunderland University	£3.5 m	£2.00m	£1.77m

- 3.6.3 Innovation activities will be also supported from other key programmes in the SEP/ESIF through liaison with other theme leads - including from:
- Business support targeting innovation support to NE businesses
  - Access to finance, in particular the funds planned within Jeremie 2 for Proof of concept and prototyping
  - Low Carbon Innovation projects in areas like energy and low carbon vehicles
  - High level skills

## **3.7 Business Support Theme**

### **Aims**

- 3.7.1 The Business Support and Access to Finance Programme will, through the work of the NELEP, the Combined Authority and their partners, support a dynamic and entrepreneurial Combined Authority area in which businesses and individuals have the ambition and confidence to develop and grow.
- 3.7.2 The programme is intended to be delivered in the short and medium term through its three inter-related intervention areas. Each intervention area has its own programme management and governance arrangements. These arrangements need to link effectively with each other. They also need to link

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with the programme management approach for the Innovation and Skills Programmes.

### The Programme

3.7.3 The programme has three strategic priorities for investing in and growing our businesses:

1. **Access to finance:** Increasing GVA and employment in North East businesses through the provision of a high-quality, demand-led business development programme. Through this component, the NELEP, the Combined Authority and partners will ensure the right mix of financial products is available to support business formation and growth, generating additional employment and GVA in the Combined Authority area.
2. **Business Support:** Ensuring North East businesses have access to finance necessary to support their growth and expansion plans. Through this component, the programme will support business growth and increase entrepreneurial activity by providing businesses in the Combined Authority area with those services that enable them to improve productivity and increase employment and trade
3. **Trade & Tourism:** Increasing the economic benefits from external markets through exports and tourism. The programme will increase the number of businesses exporting and the North East's presence in key international markets.

### Interventions and Projects

3.7.4 Within the North East LEP Business Support Programme, the following specific interventions and projects are planned for commissioning or delivery in 2015/16:

#### Local Growth Fund

<b>Project</b>	<b>Total value</b>	<b>2015/16 Investment</b>
North East Growth Hub	£0.5m	£0.5m

#### European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)

3.7.5 In addition to the LGF Growth Hub award, the Business Support and Access to Finance theme programme is being developed and relies heavily on successful bidding for European Funding for delivery. Key projects for ERDF include Access to Finance from SMEs to support growth and innovation and coordinated business support. Key projects for EAFRD focus on tourism, market towns and the rural growth network.

### Trade & Tourism

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3.7.6 Whilst the trade element of the Business Support Programme is reasonably well defined, further work is underway to identify how best to promote our key regional assets.

### **Inter-relations with other SEP Programmes**

3.7.7 Business support activities will be also supported from other key programmes in the SEP/ESIF including from:

- Innovation support providing specific business support for NE businesses, particularly through activities to support bringing new products and business processes to the market and including development of incubation space (through ERDF).
- Support for Low Carbon and Sustainability projects which increase the role of the low carbon energy economy and energy generation sector, including programmes to support business energy efficiency, low carbon supply chains, resilience and renewable energy generation (all through ERDF).
- Support for intermediate, technical and high level skills (all through ESF) and including specific activities for start-up, entrepreneurship and self-employment.
- Enterprise Advisers, to be funded through the Local Growth Fund.
- Inward investment support provided by the local authorities, UKTI and coordinated through the Combined Authority.
- Programmes of employability and skills improvements to overcome barriers which prevent access to the labour market (all through the European Social Fund (ESF)).

3.7.8 Liaison between the Business Support Board and the Innovation, Skills and Employability and Inclusion Programmes (governance structures and executive support) is ongoing to ensure that the provision through these programmes is appropriate, joined up where necessary and contributes to SEP Business Support objectives.

## **3.8 Skills Theme**

### **Aims**

3.8.1 The Skills Theme aims to shift the skills market in the North East towards higher skill levels and greater demand for higher skills, with an emphasis on economic demand, be it existing employer needs, projected shortages, or new skills sets for emerging opportunities, and to create a landscape where companies (and individuals), realise the benefits of training and see the returns on their investment. The main objective of the programme is to deliver an investment plan against three key priority areas for Skills:

1. Oversee and influence investment in skills supply and demand to enable the skills system to deliver better economic outcomes. Establish clear, evidenced based policy priorities for investment and action on skills. The main activities for the NELEP will be to:
  - Create and implement the investment framework for £113m of ESF, manage a complex set of Opt-in arrangements and commissioning

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routes for the skills programme. Direct and secure other resources to core priorities, e.g. Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), private sector.

- Use the Skills pilot to shift provision funded through the National Adult Skills Budget to deliver more economically focussed outcomes for learners in the north east. Improve performance management of delivery of mainstream skills provision in the Area.
  - Direct working with employer groups and provider base to better link supply and demand and enable improved responsiveness to investment opportunities, in particular the increasing number of opportunities arising from the Skills Funding Agency (SFA).
2. Focus on Young people – deliver a North East Education Challenge to improve educational outcome and school quality. Deliver a programme of Enterprise advisers as an early adopter area for national policy.
  3. Skills Capital – Ensure high quality training facilities which help engage employers and learners are available to support a higher skilled workforce. On-going programme management of the LGF investment in the skills capital programme for the North East. Support the appraisal process for the 5 shortlisted skills capital projects and ensure a robust pipeline for slippage and future funding.

### The Programme

3.8.2 The headlines to the Skills Programme in 2016/17 will be:

- Education Challenge
- Skills Pilot
- Deliver the LGF capital programme
- Enterprise Advisers Scheme

Project Title	Total project cost (£m)	LGF 2015/16 (£m)	LGF 2016/17 (£m)
Tyne Met College - STEM and Innovation Centre	1.20	1.00	-
Facilities for Marine and Offshore Engineering, South Tyneside College	3.35	1.10	-
Rural Skills Development, East Durham College	11.11	9.32	0.68
Port of Blyth Offshore and Wind Energy Training Facility (BEACH)	1.20	0.40	-

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- 3.9.1 Over the next year, the investment in Employability and Inclusion will be based on the roll-out of the initial phase of the next round of European Social Fund (ESF). This funding will:
- Provide additional and more intensive support to help people to develop the skills needed to move towards work, enter work (including self-employment), and to progress in work
  - Help older workers, workless people and those facing redundancy to upgrade their skills, learn new skills or retrain to enter, re-enter or stay engaged with the labour market and adapt to new market conditions including through targeted apprenticeships linked to economic opportunities
  - Support activities to reduce the number of young people not in employment, education or training and those at risk of disengaging and embed opportunities to raise ambition
  - Support activities to tackle the multiple barriers faced in a holistic and integrated way to avoid problems becoming entrenched through specific targeted interventions
  - Targeted activities to support bottom-up social inclusion through community focused actions in particular geographic locations with high levels of deprivation, poverty and exclusion
  - Targeted activities for those with protected characteristics and from specific communities who face multiple barriers and facing high levels of exclusion from opportunities and/or poverty
- 3.9.2 As part of this initial phase, up to £1.7 million will be released to support the delivery of the Mental Health Trailblazer. Announced as part of the North East Growth Deal, the trailblazer will work with Government to design and develop mental health and employment integration to inform future national and local support for people with mental health conditions. This represents a significant opportunity for NECA to demonstrate its capacity and capability to work in new ways with the Government and develop an initial platform of devolved powers.
- 3.9.3 Another strategic priority is to ensure that young people are equipped and qualified to access the opportunities which will be available in a successful modern economy. To this end, NECA is coordinating the North East Youth Contract. Five of the local authorities within the Combined Authority successfully secured £4.5 million from the Government's Youth Contract programme. This resource is being used to launch a high-profile campaign to encourage employers to provide a chance for young people to succeed; provide employers with dedicated advisers to help simplify the process of recruiting young people; developing a new and shared "Young People's Commitment" that will provide a clear offer of support to all young people who are unemployed or NEET for 3 months, in return for their commitment to fully engage with the scheme; and strengthening the network of Employment Advisers and Peer Mentors for those young people with the greatest needs.

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### 3.10 Economic assets and infrastructure

3.10.1 Local authorities are continuing to invest resources in a variety of infrastructure projects that are essential if the region and its businesses are able to compete in an increasingly competitive global environment. Recently, significant resources have been applied to key developments across the region including the Enterprise Zones in Northumberland, Sunderland and on Tyneside all of which have attracted interest and investment from private sector users.

3.10.2 Significant additional infrastructure funding will be secured through the Devolution agreement and from the results of our bid for additional Enterprise Zones, which should be announced this month, as well as future bids for Local Growth Fund and other funding opportunities. It is important that we progress the development of project pipelines working with other authorities and with private sector partners towards the development of a strategic investment plan for the region. The aim will be to develop a plan that shows how resources will be used to build on the opportunities to grow the economy and demonstrate a clear alignment between the different planned investments including those associated with transport, economic development and business growth; housing and energy and digital infrastructure.

3.10.3 The Growth Deal announced last year included substantial infrastructure funding from 2015/16 and 2016/17. This will be considerably enhanced by the funding secured from the proposed Devolution deal; which included an opportunity to bid for a five year Local Growth Funding package; as well as potential new enterprise zones as part of the current bidding round, which is due to be announced shortly.

3.10.4 Government funding schemes and other programmed investments by government agencies continue to play a crucial role in supporting the efforts of local public and private sector partners to provide the environment in which businesses are able to grow and create the jobs needed in the local economy. The successful Growth Deal bid announced in July allocated a total of £298.3 to support economic growth in the region, including £24m towards three strategically important economic infrastructure projects that will enable the region to build on the opportunities such as those presented by Hitachi's investment in Newton Aycliffe and £28.9m towards five infrastructure developments that will support the growth of innovation in the region (listed in the table associated with paragraph 3.6.2 above).

### Local Growth Fund (LGF) Projects

Project Title	Total Cost	LGF 2015/16	LGF 2016/17
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	(£m)	(£m)	(£m)
Swans Wet Berth Infilling	18.00	0.40	6.10
Infrastructure for Merchant Park	13.00	8.36	1.64
North East Rural Growth Network	22.50	1.75	2.14
<b>Totals</b>	<b>53.50</b>	<b>10.51</b>	<b>9.88</b>

3.10.5 The new European Structural and Investment Fund programme with an estimated £380m available over the programme period (2014-2020) will also provide resources that can be used to co-fund investment in the region's economic infrastructure, particularly that associated with the low carbon sector as well as strategic sites and premises for SMEs, and to support the wide policy programme of the SEP. An element of match funding for ESI funds will be required from other funds. A proposal to use European resources as a platform for a capital investment fund (building on the JESSICA model) supported by the European Investment Bank and private investors represents a significant potential opportunity for the future.

3.10.6 It is vital that the local resources available are used to best effect on projects that make a demonstrable contribution to economic growth in the region within the context of an agreed plan and that opportunities to increase the level of available funding are explored and developed further to maximise the opportunities of future funding bids. It is therefore important that the governance arrangements established to make decisions on resource allocation are able to properly reflect the priorities of local people and businesses.

3.10.7 The establishment of a Strategic Investment Fund is a critical element to co-ordinate and make best use of the resources available. This will be the subject of future reports, with an update on available funding in the January Report, with approval of specific projects being considered by the Leadership Board once funding is confirmed in future reports from March 2016 onwards.

### 3.11 Transport and Digital Connectivity

3.11.1 Excellent transport links are fundamental to the economy of the North East Combined Authority area. The importance of transport connectivity is highlighted in the North East Local Enterprise Partnership's Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) as a crucial element in our growth agenda, helping to close the gap in the employment rate with other regions of England, link people to jobs and key services and enable businesses to move their goods quickly and efficiently.

3.11.2 The Combined Authority has a duty to ensure good public transport provision. Public transport plays an essential role in connecting people to jobs and key services. Promoting the use of more efficient modes of public transport also facilitates sustainable growth. Public transport accessibility in the north east is

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generally good. However, better connections to key employment sites from areas of deprivation and improved fares and ticketing options are required.

- 3.11.3 Nexus, the Tyne and Wear Passenger Transport Executive, along with Durham and Northumberland county councils aim to improve quality of life by creating better public transport networks. Nexus is currently pursuing three major programmes; the Bus Strategy, smart ticketing and Metro: all change.
- 3.11.4 The Combined Authority also has a key role to play in encouraging investment in our wider transport infrastructure. In addition to advocacy for a transatlantic connection from Newcastle International Airport Limited and close working with the Highways Agency and Network Rail to encourage further investment in our strategic road and rail networks a focused package of investment on local networks to facilitate further investment by government in our national infrastructure is a key component of our Strategic Economic Plan.
- 3.11.5 The transport proposals in the North East SEP contain investment for both the A1 and A19 corridors, with packages designed to complement existing investment such as the current A1 Western Bypass Lobley Hill to Coalhouse junction scheme, and to facilitate improvements to important trunk road junctions, such as the A19 at Testos and Silverlink.

### Growth Deal Transport Projects

Project Title	Total project cost (£m)	LGF Total	LGF 2015/16 (£m)	LGF 2016/17 (£m)
A19/A194/A1300 Lindisfarne Roundabout	4.00	3.48	0.72	2.76
Central Metro Refurbishment	7.88	2.51	2.51	0.00
Northern Access Corridor - Osborne Road to Haddrick's Mill	17.93	4.43	0.50	3.93
Local Sustainable Transport Fund Package	7.52	7.50	3.80	3.70
A19 employment corridor access improvements (North Tyne)	4.70	4.70	0.70	2.20
A191 junctions including Coach Lane and Tyne View Park	1.50	1.50	0.80	0.70
Newcastle Central Station to Stephenson Quarter	10.00	6.00	1.00	3.00
A1056-A189 Weetslade roundabout improvements and A1-A19 link (A1056)	4.80	4.33	0.68	1.40
Six Majors - South Shields Transport Hub	13.60	6.90	1.60	4.83
Six Majors - Sunderland Low Carbon Zone	13.50	5.95	2.80	3.20
Six Majors - A1058 Coast Road	7.20	6.52	4.04	2.48
Six Majors - A167 Park and Ride corridor	7.46	4.99	0.00	4.09
Six Majors - Northern Access Corridor (Cowgate to Osborne Rd)	8.10	4.09	2.00	2.09
Six Majors - Horden Rail Station	7.10	3.34	0.00	3.34

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- 3.11.6 NECA is working with NELEP and the delivering councils to identify ways that funding flexibilities can enable early delivery of approved projects and the development of plans and bids for future projects.
- 3.11.7 While the Transport Revenue Budget and levies proposed for 2016/17 will reduce in cash terms, as they contribute to the delivery of national funding cuts, this will be achieved through efficiency savings and use of reserves to protect service outcomes, as well as meeting the increasing costs of statutory concessionary travel.
- 3.11.8 At a time when transport services are having to be cut in many parts of the country the protection of transport service outcomes alongside the investment in improvements to transport and highways infrastructure will help contribute to the outcomes of Inclusion, Transport and Connectivity.
- 3.11.9 We have an existing broadband improvement project covering much of the North East through the Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) initiative. The Combined Authority will be looking to support this to maximise its coverage by using money from the European Programme from 2015.

## **4 BACKGROUND INFORMATION – BUDGET PROCESS**

- 4.1 Levying Bodies regulations require Transport Authorities to set their Budgets and Levies by 15<sup>th</sup> February each year. Traditionally levies have been set in January to ensure that this statutory deadline is met, but also to give constituent councils information about the transport levies as early as possible to enable them to reflect it in their budgets. As well as transport levies the Budget will set out any contributions from Councils to meeting the non transport costs of the Combined Authority and will set out information about the Capital Investment Programme of the Combined Authority and how the programme is to be funded.
- 4.2 As the accountable body for the North East Local Enterprise Partnership (NELEP), the Budget will include information about the funds available to NELEP and the NELEP's proposed Budget for 2016/17. The budget will need to reflect Spending Review decisions about the level of grant given to support LEP costs as well as the guidance and the resource requirements needed to meet grant conditions.
- 4.3 It is good practice for all organisations to develop a Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and it would be preferable to develop the 2016/17 Budget for NECA in the context of as much information as possible over a five year Medium Term Plan period. For NECA, uncertainties of Government funding for 2016/17 and future years, both in terms of potential grant cuts as part of the national Austerity measures and additional funding from the Devolution proposals, make it impossible to develop a medium term plan budget in January while allowing sufficient time for consultation.

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- 4.4 It is therefore proposed that the 2016/17 base Revenue Budget and Capital Programme is developed as a transitional base budget on the basis of known information, to meet the statutory timetable requirements for setting Transport Budget and Levies and contributions from constituent councils. The base Revenue Budget and Capital Programme can be increased in March and during the year by the Leadership Board to reflect any additional expenditure and funding after the appropriate consultation has taken place.
- 4.5 Ambitious major transport and infrastructure projects and programmes supported by funding secured by the Devolution agenda can have a long planning, design and implementation period. Development of projects will take place over the next few months to form the programme needed to help achieve the Strategic Long Term policy objectives of the Combined Authority. It is proposed that a longer term strategic view of investment over a 15 to 20 year period be developed. It is anticipated that this will take significant time and resources to put in place, so an update on the process will be given in January. Developing longer term plans will assist with future bids to secure the additional resources needed to achieve the SEP objectives.
- 4.6 A key decision in the Revenue Budget is what the level of the Transport Levy will be for 2016/17 and future years for Tyne and Wear and for Durham and Northumberland and the level of the contribution from the 7 councils for non-transport costs, including the contribution to fund capacity and corporate costs.
- 4.7 The constitution of the Combined Authority requires an early consultation on Budget Proposals, giving at least two months for the consultation process to be completed. This report will start the consultation process, which will include consideration of the budget report by Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Transport North East Committee, the seven constituent councils, consideration by NELEP and a consultation with the North East Chamber of Commerce.
- 4.8 Leaders have made clear the need for a budget to underpin the delivery of policy priorities including the delivery of the Strategic Economic Plan, which must also take into account the constraints on revenue budgets imposed by national austerity measures. Initial technical briefings and discussions on the budget process and timetable have taken place with all councils and this has resulted in the high level proposal for 2016/17 set out in this report. Further details will be developed and fine-tuned in partnership with the NELEP, councils and delivery organisations over the next few months. This additional detailed work and the feedback from consultation will then be reflected in a detailed 2016/17 Budget Report for consideration in January 2016.
- 4.9 The timetable for developing the 2016/17 Budget and the Medium Term Financial is very tight and involves a number of steps for discussion, consultation and development of the Budget, as can be seen from the draft timetable set out in Appendix A. Further consideration needs to be given to the

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various steps in the process and the route through the various Officer/Leaders meetings, NECA Transport Committees, Overview and Scrutiny Committee, NELEP Board and the NECA Leadership Board. In some case meeting dates have still to be confirmed and these will be confirmed and included in the schedule when they are known.

### **5 CONTEXT OF AUSTERITY MEASURES**

- 5.1 The budget is being developed in the context of significant revenue funding cuts for local government as part of the delivery of the national austerity measures, which is expected to require significant cuts over the next four years. The revenue grant levels for local government will be subject to the outcome of the Spending Review to be announced on 25<sup>th</sup> November. The Chancellor recently announced that the Department of local Government and Communities was one of four Departmental settlements that had been agreed, with an average funding cut of 30% over the parliament. It is still unclear when the detailed allocations of grant for councils and Nexus in 2016/17 will be announced and some figures may not be known until late in December, possibly as late as 16<sup>th</sup> December and at this stage it is not yet known how much information will be provided about future years' grant funding.
- 5.2 The Government has made more resources available nationally to help deliver improvements to infrastructure transport and economic development through Growth Deal Funding and the bid previously submitted by NELEP and NECA was particularly successful, with indicative funding amounted to £289m including £79m provisionally allocated for 2016/17. The grant confirmation letters are expected to be signed off shortly after the Spending Review, hopefully in time to be fully reflected in the January Budget report.
- 5.3 The Summer Budget indicated that public spending cuts in 2016/17 would be lower than that previously anticipated, but that there would be continuing significant funding cuts over the next four years. The recent announcement that Revenue Support Grant (which includes funding for concessionary bus travel) could be cut completely by the end of the Parliament, with councils retaining 100% of their business rates also raises significant uncertainty and the potential for additional cuts falling on the councils in the NECA area unless a satisfactory equalisation adjustment can be put in place.
- 5.4 At present the seven constituent councils in NECA receive Revenue Support Grant (RSG) of £427m, which is 4.45% of the national total of £9.6bn. The seven councils contribute £301m of Business rates to the Government as their central share, which is only 2.7% of the national total of £11.3bn. As business rates will increase with inflation the amount that could be transferred to councils should increase slightly. As the national RSG total is cut further the transfer of business rates will be significantly more than RSG. This means that to be fiscally neutral the Government will have to cut other grants – such as New

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Homes Bonus, Public Health and other S31 grants, although the details of which grants would be cut has not yet been announced.

- 5.5 The implications of the announcement of cuts in funding will be analysed and reported to the Leadership Board in January. Councils have estimated cuts in RSG of around £100m next year, with a reduction in spending power averaging around 4% or so. The assessment of cuts in future years will be considered as part of a Strategic review of the Funding for Transport in 2016, taking into account the options now available for NECA for the delivery of the bus strategy. Any options for cuts in discretionary services from 2017/18 onwards would be subject to a consultation process next year.

## 6 DEVOLUTION AGREEMENT FUNDING

- 6.1 The Devolution Agreement is the subject of a separate report. There are key elements of this which will impact significantly on funding for 2016/17 and future years. Measures which will or could impact on the 2016/17 budget include –

- A new £30 million a year funding allocation over 30 years, to be included in the NECA Investment Fund and invested to boost growth;
- An opportunity to bid for a single allocation of the Local Growth Fund to support a programme of investment, including an element of flexible revenue funding, committed over a 5 year period;
- A scheme which will enable the Combined Authority to retain all business rate growth that would otherwise have been paid as central share to government, above an agreed baseline, for an initial period of five years. Government and the Combined Authority will also discuss wider localisation of business rates;
- The North East will receive additional Enterprise Zones and/or extension of existing zones, subject to the current bidding round for further Enterprise Zones;
- Devolve a consolidated local transport budget with a multi-year settlement to be agreed at the Spending Review, including all relevant local highways and sustainable travel funding;
- The Spending Review will identify a fair level of revenue funding for those functions over the Spending Review period, in the form of a place-based funding settlement for the North East Combined Authority
- The costs of the Mayoral Combined Authority will be met from within the overall resources devolved to the Combined Authority.

## 7 BUDGET PROPOSALS

### 7.1 Capital Investment / Expenditure

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- 7.1.1 The approved capital investment programme in the current year is £115.963m, mainly made up of Metro Asset Renewal Programme and Local Growth Deal projects, summarised in Appendix 3. Initial estimates for 2016/17 indicate that this is likely to rise to over £136m, mainly as a result of the additional funding for transport and infrastructure announced as part of the Growth Deal. The programme is expected to increase significantly as a result of a successful Enterprise Zone bid and the funding announced as part of the Devolution Agenda.
- 7.1.2 The Local Transport Programme Integrated Transport Block has been announced for 2016/17 at £13.949m (subject to any revision following the Spending Review), the same level as the grant in 2015/16. The basis for distribution will be subject to discussion at the next meeting of the North East Combined Authority Transport Officers Group.

## 7.2 Transport Revenue Budgets and Levies for 2016/17

- 7.2.1 Revenue transport budgets in 2015/16 amounted to £89.177m. Indicative changes identified so far for Durham, Northumberland and Tyne and Wear would involve a net reduction in this budget of £2.5m (-2.9%), while protecting service outcomes in 2016/17, but with cuts in services anticipated from 2017. This would give an estimated budget and levies for 2016/17 of £86.7m. Given the significant national higher pressures of funding cuts, this demonstrates the importance and high priority given to Transport in the region.
- 7.2.2 The 2016/17 budget will need to reflect the requirement to maintain the Regional Transport Team. The team is currently resourced using a mix of funding sources, including a topslice of the allocation received for Local Transport Plan activity, capital funding from the programme management element of the LGF and contributions from individual local authorities and the LEP. The Combined Authority Transport Group is developing a proposition on the level of resource required for the team and the way in which it should be funded. This will reflect the new governance and working arrangements established for the Combined Authority and the range of transport responsibilities it now holds. This work will be used to inform the detailed budget proposal that will be considered by the Leadership Board in January.

### Durham County Council

- 7.2.3 The budget and levy for public passenger transport activity in County Durham is expected to be in the region of £15.342m for 2016/17. This compares with an original budget of £16.076m for 2015/16 and a revised forecast for 2015/16 estimated at £15.131m. The budget and levy for 2016/17 is summarised in the table below.

### **Durham Transport Budget and Levy 2016/17**

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	<b>Gross Expenditure</b>	<b>Gross Income</b>	<b>Net Expenditure</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Grant to Durham</b>			
Concessionary Fares	11,728,380	(9,000)	11,719,380
Subsidised Bus Services	4,610,862	(1,788,664)	2,822,198
Bus Stations	453,258	(311,100)	142,158
Bus Shelters	31,040	(44,460)	(13,420)
PT Information	182,614	(94,568)	88,046
Staffing	594,614	(16,368)	578,246
<b>Total Grant</b>	<b>17,600,768</b>	<b>(2,264,160)</b>	<b>15,336,608</b>
Share of NECA Transport Costs	4,939	0	4,939
<b>Transport Levy</b>	<b>17,605,707</b>	<b>(2,264,160)</b>	<b>15,341,547</b>

- 7.2.4 The overall bus network in County Durham remains fairly stable. There are no significant commercial changes expected in 2016/17 and only a small number of planned contract renewals. However, in contrast to last year's growth we are now seeing a marginal decline in overall patronage figures; we are also anticipating some modest pressure on contract costs due to the introduction of the National Living Wage.
- 7.2.5 The budget for subsidised bus services has been reduced by £400,000 in line with Durham County Council's Medium Term Financial Plan for 2016/17. The budget saving will be realised through a combination of efficiency savings and a reduction in costs following contract retendering. The focus of spend continues to be on maintaining the level of accessibility in rural and semi-rural areas and supplementing the daytime commercial network with early and later journeys.
- 7.2.6 The budget for concessionary fares continues to be subject to pressure from fares increases. However, a combination of the effects of the rise in entitlement age, a stabilisation of concessionary travel journeys and successful negotiations with bus operators in relation to reimbursement costs have led to a modest reduction in this area of the budget for 2016/17.
- 7.2.7 The other main area of work for the transport team in Durham will be to continue to deliver efficiency savings against the home to school transport and adult social care transport budgets. A full review of transport entitlement, commissioning and procurement is ongoing, together with a pilot scheme looking at post 16, health and mainstream transport under the governments Total Transport initiative

### **Northumberland County Council**

- 7.2.8 The Budget and Levy for public passenger transport activity in Northumberland is expected to be in the region of £6.159m for 2016/17. This compares with a budget of £5.901m in 2015/16.

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7.2.9 The indicative budget for 2016/17 has increased to reflect inflationary pressures in delivering the Concessionary Travel Scheme and the reinstatement of a proposed saving to the Scheme following an audit of the use of disabled passes. The budget for Bus Services will be protected at its current level in cash terms, and no significant investment in the county's bus stations is planned for 2016/17.

### Tyne and Wear

7.2.10 A proposal is being developed in more detail for consideration by Tyne and Wear Sub Committee which would see the Transport Budget and Levy for Tyne and Wear being set at £65.120m, if there is no significant reduction in the Metro Rail Grant. This is a reduction of £2.080m on the Levy in 2015/16, achieved by efficiency and other cost savings in the former ITA and Nexus Budgets and the use of former ITA reserves. This will maintain service outcomes while further improving the value for money provided to districts and help them to meet national funding cuts.

7.2.11 The distribution of the Levy within Tyne and Wear is based upon population and the levy will reflect changes in population as well as the cut in the overall amount. The indicative levy for 2016/17 for each of the Tyne and Wear districts is shown below.

District	Population (2014 Mid Year Estimates)	2016/17 Levy	Saving compared to 2015/16
Gateshead	200,505	£11,671,345	(£397,749)
Newcastle	289,835	£16,871,122	(£437,299)
North Tyneside	202,744	£11,801,677	(£397,403)
South Tyneside	148,740	£8,658,118	(£304,843)
Sunderland	276,889	£16,091,813	(£568,531)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,118,713</b>	<b>£65,120,000</b>	<b>(£2,080,000)</b>

7.2.12 This reduction would bring the overall annual transport levy reduction since 2010 to £13m, achieved through efficiency savings and use of reserves, whilst protecting service outcomes to date. This level of saving while protecting service outcomes is a significant achievement, particularly in the light of the cost pressures in respect of Concessionary Travel and outcomes in other regions around the country where there have been some significant cuts in services. However it is now highly likely that to set a balanced budget in the medium term, cuts in services would need to be implemented from 2017.

7.2.13 The levy is used to fund NECA costs as well as providing a grant to Nexus to fund transport services. The allocation of the levy is proposed as follows.

	2015/16 £	2016/17 £	Change £

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NECA Transport Costs	2,700,000	2,620,000	(80,000)
Grant to Nexus	64,500,000	62,500,000	(2,000,000)
Total Levy	67,200,000	65,120,000	(2,080,000)

7.2.14 Savings on the former ITA element of the NECA budget include savings in pension and capital financing costs, reduction in support costs following the creation of NECA and some use of reserves. The Nexus savings will be achieved by efficiency savings and use of reserves and budget cuts which minimise the impact on service outcomes in 2016/17. The use of one off savings in 2015/16 of up to £1m will help to fund the cut in the levy in 2016/17.

7.2.15 The Nexus Budget is balanced by planned use of reserves pending the delivery of further savings in future years, which will be subject to a Strategic Review of Transport funding next year. This will identify the level of the Levy that Councils can afford and the cuts in discretionary services that would be needed to set a balanced budget, for consultation next year. Further details of the NECA Transport and Nexus Budgets will be reported to Transport North East Committee and Tyne and Wear Sub Committee for consideration.

### **7.3 Economic Development / NELEP Capacity**

7.3.1 The NELEP core team is part funded from a Government contribution matched by a contribution from the constituent authorities. The Government has still to announce the continuation of their £250k grant in 2016/17. Match funding will continue to be provided and is funded by equal contributions from the seven constituent authorities. It is important to secure certainty about the available funding over the medium term period, to ensure that effective capacity can be maintained to deliver the SEP project and programme related activity. Additional funding sources are also being identified to cover project and programme related activity.

7.3.2 The NELEP has significant loan funds and an update on the estimated level of funds available next year will be reported to the January meeting.

### **7.4 NECA Corporate Costs**

7.4.1 The NECA budget for Corporate Costs was increased to £300,000 in 2015/16. It is now clear that forecast expenditure to the year-end will exceed this level, and the balance of costs in 2015/16 will need to be funded from interest on cash balances, savings in other budgets and reserves. An exercise is underway to identify a revised estimate of costs for 2015/16 and the level of the capacity required in 2016/17 and future years. This includes the capacity needed to meet the additional responsibilities that will be placed on NECA as part of the Devolution agenda.

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- 7.4.2 In the current year additional funding is needed in order to provide the internal and external capacity to progress the various work streams related to the Devolution agenda, including work relating to the establishment of the Health and Social Care Commission and public service integration. It is proposed that a budget of up to £0.5m be established for this purpose, with any release of the funding for specific proposals to be agreed under the delegated decision making process, with further details to be reported in the January Budget Report. The funding will be found from temporary use of reserves, interest on cash balances and any savings on budgets in the current year.
- 7.4.3 The main areas of cost relate to support and input from the Interim Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer and Legal costs, Chief Finance Officer and Finance costs, HR support, Internal and External Audit, administration and co-ordination costs continued from previous years and other operating costs. At this stage it is proposed that the current contributions from constituent councils be maintained at the current to a level of £300,000 (£42,857 per authority on an equal shares basis), with additional costs being met from additional funding external funding, including additional interest on cash flow on cash balances.

### 7.5 NECA funding Flexibilities

- 7.5.1 A number of opportunities have been identified following the creation of NECA to deliver improved funding flexibilities to help achieve economic objectives within the SEP, to deliver treasury management savings for constituent authorities and to boost resources availability to help achieve the SEP objectives.
- 7.5.2 The flexibilities of proposed treasury management arrangements by NECA should help increase surplus resources which can be used to support economic development initiatives and provide capacity to support delivery and the development of major projects and future funding bids. These proposals are currently subject to consideration by the Directors of Resources group and any specific proposals will be included in the January budget report.
- 7.5.3 NECA should also be able to assist with more flexible cash flow management of funding to enable capital investment to be accelerated where this is possible to help achieve the earlier delivery of SEP objectives.

### 7.6 Fees and Charges

- 7.6.1 The main fees and charges that feature as part of the NECA / Nexus Budget relate to Metro Fares, the Gold Card for concessionary Travel on Metro and the Tyne Tunnel Tolls.
- 7.6.2 In the past, in order to meet budget targets and to align with national rail fare increases, Metro fares have traditionally been reviewed with changes coming into effect from January. At this stage, the proposal being worked up for

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consideration by the Tyne and Wear Sub-Committee is to increase Metro fares from 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2016 by a weighted average of 0.4%; this figure is slightly below the level of the Retail Price Index of 1.0% (as at July 2015).

- 7.6.3 This increase is necessary in order to help meet the financial targets required by the Nexus Medium Term Financial Forecast and subject to approval by the Tyne and Wear sub Committee, an estimated additional £0.530m is expected to be generated in 2016/17. This represents increased revenue from fare changes in isolation and does not include any potential changes in the underlying trend of Metro usage, including the potential for an increase in demand associated with the Pop Pay as You go product. A stretch target for Metro revenues will be considered further and reflected in the January 2016 Budget report.
- 7.6.4 The Tyne and Wear Sub Committee will also consider the price of the Gold card, which was significantly reduced in 2014 from £25 to the current price of £12 and will consider the level of the child concessionary fares currently £1.10. for the all Day Ticket and 60p for a single ticket. Their recommendations will be included in the consultation process.
- 7.6.5 In terms of the Tyne Tunnel Tolls, the toll for cars of £1.60 was set in January 2013 and the tolls for Heavy Good Vehicles (HGV) of £3.20 were set in January 2014. The tolls are due to rise to maintain the level of tolls in real terms, keeping pace with inflation as measured by the Retail Price Index (RPI), with increases limited to whole 10p figures and the ratio between HGV and Car tolls being preserved at 2:1. RPI figures are expected to increase over the next few months to reach a level triggering an increase in tolls in summer 2016 to £1.70 for cars and £3.40 for HGVs. This increase would help cover the increase in the payments to the concessionaire which have already increased in line with inflation, and keep the annual deficit in the Tunnels account to a minimum level.

## 7.7 Reserves and Contingencies

- 7.7.1 The General Reserve of NECA was set at a relatively low level of £350k for 2014/15. This fell to £279k at the end of 2014/15 and it looks likely that this reserve will be drawn upon further to fund corporate costs in 2015/16. The revised estimate of the likely outturn level of reserves at the end of 2015/16 is currently being assessed and is estimated to be between £150k and £200k. The required level of the Corporate Reserve will be reassessed based upon a risk analysis taking into account the resources available to meet corporate costs next year and may need to be restored to a higher level, which could be achieved by use of additional interest on revenue balances.

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- 7.7.2 The original Tyne and Wear Transport budget for 2015/16 also included a level of contingency. This will be reduced over the next three years to part fund the proposed cut in the Levy from 2016/17. Other significant reserves are ringfenced for the financing of the Tyne Tunnels, for capital investment or being held on behalf of the Region for the North East Smart Ticketing Initiative (NESTI).
- 7.7.3 Nexus are planning to use some of their general reserves help balance their budget over the next three years. The figure will depend on the spending review outcome and other budget decisions by TWSC.

## 8 Potential Impact on Objectives

- 8.1 The budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy will reflect the policy objectives of the Combined Authority including the delivery of the Strategic Economic Plan. Future reports will set out revenue and capital budget proposals that will help deliver the objectives of the Combined Authority

## 9 Finance and Other Resources

- 9.1 The financial and other resources are summarised in this report, where they are known. Further detail that are known about the impact of the Spending Review in terms of funding cuts and additional funding to be available under the Devolution Agreement and successful bids for Enterprise Zones will be identified in the January Budget Report.

## 10 Legal

- 10.1 The NECA is required by virtue of the Transport Levying Bodies Regulations 1992 to issue the transport levy before 15 February preceding the commencement of the financial year in respect of which it is issued.
- 10.2 In accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Rules of Procedure of the NECA's Constitution, at least 2 months before the calculations on the Revenue Budget and transport levy are required to be finalised, the Leadership Board will produce initial outline proposals to the NECA's Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The accompanying information will include details of how it is intended to consult with the Constituent Authorities, stakeholders and residents as well as the timetable for the consultation and preparation of the final proposals. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee, after considering the consultation proposals and timetable can make appropriate recommendations to the Leadership Board in that regard.
- 10.3 Once the consultation process has been completed, details of the final proposals in relation to the Revenue Budget and levy will be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Leadership Board when considering

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the final proposals will take into account the recommendations and/or observations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Leadership Board must approve the final overall budget proposals unanimously.

### **11 Other Considerations**

#### **11.1 Consultation/Community Engagement**

11.1.1 The NECA constitution requires that consultation on its budget proposals to be undertaken at least two months prior to the budget being agreed. It is proposed that the 2016/17 Base Budget Proposals be reported to the Leaders Board on 17 November to start a consultation process, which will include the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the North East Chamber of Commerce. New proposals to be considered as potential budget increases later in the year would also be subject to a consultation process.

11.1.2 NELEP will be considering its budget from November to January. Consultation on any specific Transport proposals with service impact in Durham, Northumberland and Tyne and Wear will be undertaken by individual councils/delivery organisations. Overview and Scrutiny Committee will consider the budget process and the key proposals at its meetings on 1<sup>st</sup> December.

11.1.3 In order to assist with the consultation process, it is proposed that a narrative document be prepared from the content of this report and the comments and decisions of the Leaders board of 17 November, which will set out the budget proposals in an appropriate format for consultation.

11.1.4 With recommendations for Transport budgets and Levies being considered by committees in December, comments on the initial proposals should be received by 30<sup>th</sup> December if they are to be reflected in the reports to the Transport North East Committee and by Durham and Northumberland County Councils. Comments on all budget proposals should be received by 4 January 2016 in order to be taken into account in producing the Budget report for the NECA Leaders Board meeting in January. Additional comments received after these dates could be taken into account by the Leaders Board in taking their decision on 19th January.

11.1.5 The late confirmation of funding means that new funding for 2016/17 will have to be reported to future meetings of the NELB and a consultation process for the use of that funding will need to be put in place.

#### **11.2 Human Rights**

Any human rights issues will be reflected in the future reports on budget proposals.

#### **11.3 Equalities and Diversity**

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There are no specific issues arising directly from this report.

### 11.4 Risk Management

11.4.1 Appropriate risk management arrangements will be put in place and reported as part of the Budget Report in January. Key issues will be the level of reserves and mitigation measures that can be put in place.

### 11.5 Crime and Disorder

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

### 11.6 Environment and Sustainability

There are no specific issues arising directly from this report. The Budget reports will set out environment and sustainability implications.

## 12 Background Documents

12.1 NECA constitution. Growth Deal announcement – July 2014. Devolution Agreement – October 2015. NECA 2015/16 Budget Report – January 2015.

## 13 Links to Plans in the Policy Framework

13.1 The Budget Report itself will reflect all of the NECA Plans and Policies and links to the policies are set out in the report.

## 14 Appendices

14.1 Appendix 1 : Updated Budget Timetable

Appendix 2 : Summary of Headline Budget Figures.

Appendix 3 : Summary of Capital Investment Indicative Figures

Appendix 4 : Summary of NELEP / European Funding

## 15 Contact Officers

15.1 Paul Woods, Chief Finance Officer. Paul.Woods@northeastca.gov.uk, Tel: 07446936840

## 16 Sign off

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

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**Leadership Board**

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### Appendix 1 : Budget Timetable

DATE	EVENT	ACTION
March 2016	NECA Leaders Board	Consider additional Budget proposals, including those funded from additional devolution funding
January – February 2016	Further Consultation	Consultation on additional funding proposals to be considered in March
? January 16	NELEP Board	Final Budget Report
19 January 16	NECA Leaders Board	Formally Agree Levies / Budget
8 January 16	Paper circulation	Final Budget report Published
December	Meeting with North East Chamber of Commerce	Consultation on Budget and Levy Proposals for January 2016 Meeting
1 December	NECA Overview and scrutiny Committee	Consider Budget Report as part of Consultation Process date to be confirmed
24 November	Transport North East Committee	Consider/Agree Transport Budget / Levy Proposals for consideration by Leadership Board
17 November	NECA Leaders Board	Consider and agree Draft Budget Report for Wider Consultation

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### Appendix 2 : Summary of Headline Revenue Budget Information 2015/16 and 2016/17 (Indicative)

	2015/16 Revised Estimate – Net Revenue Expenditure	2015/16 Revised Estimate – Net Revenue Expenditure
	£000	£000
<u>Transport</u>		
Tyne & Wear (Grant to Nexus)	64,500	62,500
Tyne & Wear (non-Nexus)	2,700	2,620
Northumberland	5,901	6,159
Durham	15,131	15,342
<b>Transport Sub Total</b>	<b>88,232</b>	<b>86,621</b>
LEP Executive Core Team – NECA contribution	250	250
Combined Authority Corporate Costs Budget	300	300
Inward Investment	140	140
<b>Total</b>	<b>88,922</b>	<b>87,311</b>

The NELEP are considering their budget figures next month and the figures for use of NELEP funds will be updated when information is available. Detailed figures will be included in the January report

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### Appendix 3 : Summary of Headline Capital Expenditure Estimates 2015/16 and 2016/17 (Indicative)

	2015/16 Programme	2016/17 Indicative
	£m	£m
Local Growth Fund – Transport Schemes	30.150	45.670
Local Growth Fund – other	23.760	33.730
Metro Capital Programme	46.261	44.177
LTP Integrated Transport Block, (excluding LTP ITB contribution for match funding, shown above)	12.083	11.309
Tyne Tunnels Capital Programme	3.709	2.000
<b>Total</b>	<b>115.963</b>	<b>136.886</b>

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### Appendix 4 : Summary of NELEP / European Funding

#### North East Investment Fund

The £55m North East Investment Fund managed by the North East LEP includes resource of £25m from the Growing Places Fund (GPF) and £30m from the Regional Growth Fund (RGF). The fund supports capital projects that encourage economic growth and create jobs in the North East LEP area.

##### **Growing Places Fund £25m**

All of the £25m is allocated with projects continuing to draw down funds in line with their agreed profiles of spend. Loan repayments have already commenced for a number of projects and will continue in 2016/17 and beyond. Projects supported cover private and public sector led developments including North East Enterprise Zone infrastructure investment.

##### **Regional Growth Fund £30m**

As part of the government's RGF Round 3, the NELEP secured funding of £30m, which jointly funds the NE Investment Fund. All funding is now allocated to projects and must be drawn down by the end of the 2015/2016 financial year. A number of development projects have already been completed and loan repayments have commenced in line with their loan agreements.

#### NE Growth Deal 2015/2021

The North East LEP has secured £289.3 m from the Government's Local Growth Fund to support economic growth in the area – with £53.9m of new funding confirmed for 2015/16 and an indicative allocation for 2016/17 of £78.7m, which has still to be formally confirmed.

A full summary of the North East Growth Deal is available from the following link on the NELEP website;

<http://www.nelep.co.uk/media/7313/north-east-growth-deal.pdf>

#### European Funding Summary

##### European Structural and Investment Funds

###### Context

The European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) 2014-2020 are the European Union's main funding programmes supporting jobs and growth across Europe. Four ESIF funds are active in the North East, including European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), European Social Fund (ESF), European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF).

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Whilst for the 2014-2020 programme period these are being managed through national Operational Programmes, Government is keen to ensure this funding is focused on local priorities which align with the Strategic Economic Plan. The North East LEP area European Structural and Investment Funds Strategy sets out areas for investment which match the local priorities as set out in the SEP with the European objectives of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. The strategy, currently being finalised, therefore addresses a wide range of potential activities including innovation, business support and access to finance, sustainable and low carbon growth, employability and inclusion, and skills.

Local sub-committees have been established in each local LEP area to provide advice to the Managing Authorities on local strategic fit and deliverability, using the ESIF Strategies as the framework for investment. These sub-committees sit within the national governance framework with the national Growth Programme Board established to fulfil the function of the Programme Monitoring Committee for ERDF and ESF investments. EAFRD has retained a separate national Growth Programme Board and EMFF is being managed at a national level.

### Successful delivery of the programme

Local partners including the North East Combined Authority and North East LEP have a role in supporting delivery of the programme to ensure these successful meet local need and national requirements.

European Structural and Investment Funds largely operate on a call and project application basis. This involves local partners submitting applications for funding to deliver projects, which meet the agreed local strategy and national Operational Programme. To ensure that these applications successfully meet the European framework and local need are deliverable and successful requires additional supporting capacity. This has been provided through individual organisations included a number of local authorities under the current programme. As such support is integral to successfully delivering the funding programmes it can draw on Technical Assistance funding through the ERDF and ESF programmes. For the 2014-2020 programme the Government has made available up to 5% of the Technical Assistance budget available to local partners. Technical Assistance has been drawn on by a number of local authorities and the North East LEP in the current programme and a range of proposals were submitted to the relevant call in 2014 for future use. Advice from the Managing Authority and local sub-committee is for this to be taken forward through a single project application. Partners are working on this currently drawing on identified match funding resource from individual local authorities and the Local Enterprise Partnership budget as set out in the applications to date.

Further to this role in supporting project applications, the devolution deal and proposal for Sustainable Urban Development in the North East both bring additional responsibility to the North East Combined Authority. This due to undertaking the relevant 'urban authority' and 'intermediate body' role. This enhances the ability for local decision making in line with the overall programme. To fulfil this responsibility

# North East Combined Authority

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the Combined Authority can also draw on the Technical Assistance funding, again providing 60% or 50% of the required resource to deliver the activities, the match funding for this role remains to be identified following initial discussions with the Managing Authorities. Following advice from Managing Authority colleagues, this may represent around 3-5 FTE posts.

### Match funding opportunities – achieving SEP ambitions

The European Structural and Investment Funds represent a strong opportunity to deliver on strategic local aspirations and potential to match fund locally available resources to achieve greater results for the area. There has been a strong, positive response to the initial call areas; however, significant opportunities remain within the programme. Alignment of the approach taken for locally available strategic funding with the ESIF programme will enable projects to achieve better outcomes and achieve local strategic aims. There is need for match funding in some areas where this is likely to prove more challenging despite strong strategic rationale for intervention and across both capital and revenue activities. Match funding relating to revenue activities is in many cases proving more challenging to achieve. This is particularly true in meeting aspirations around innovation, low carbon growth and sustainability as well as ESF activities under inclusion, employability and skills

### Other European funding

Whilst the main focus to date has been in maximising the opportunities available through the European Structural and Investment Funds Strategy, European funding includes a wide range of other sources. These include European-level programmes such as Horizon 2020 for innovation, LIFE for sustainability and low carbon and Erasmus+ for education and skills and transnational programmes. Despite a number of examples of successful and positive projects to date, this funding has been underutilised and opportunities to integrate these sources into future will be built into future proposals.

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# North East Combined Authority

## Transport North East (Tyne and Wear) Sub-Committee

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**DATE:** 24 November 2015

**SUBJECT:** Draft Transport Budget and Levies 2016/17

**REPORT OF:** Chief Finance Officer

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides the Transport North East (Tyne and Wear) Sub Committee a summary of the latest information about the draft transport budgets and transport levies for 2016/17 for consideration and comment in order to inform the recommendations to be made in the report to the NECA Leadership Board meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Transport North East (Tyne and Wear) Sub-Committee is recommended to:

- a) Note the contents of this report and identify any issues or points to be taken into account in preparing the Budget report to the Leadership Board in January;
- b) Note the transport net revenue budget and Levy of £65.120m proposed for 2016/17 as set out in section 2;
- c) Note the need to set a balanced budget for Nexus over the medium term, which would involve reducing the annual net cost of services by an estimated £7m or more from 2017/18; and
- d) Endorse the proposal to carry out a strategic review of the Transport Budget in Tyne and Wear, taking into account the outcome and impact of the Spending Review, with a view to identify options for reducing service budgets for consultation in 2016 for implementation from 2017 onwards.

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## Transport North East (Tyne and Wear) Sub-Committee

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### 1 Background

- 1.1 This report sets out a summary of the proposed Tyne and Wear Transport Revenue Budget and Levies for 2016/17 in order that recommendations can be agreed for inclusion in the budget report to the 19 January 2016 Leadership Board meeting. This is a requirement of the NECA constitution and needs to comply with regulations relating to the allocation of Transport Budgets and Levies. Not all of the information needed to complete the budget is currently available, in particular details of Government grant funding, which will be announced after the Spending Review on 25 November and possibly as late as 16 December.
- 1.2 A key external pressure facing councils is the impact of austerity measures and the Spending Review is expected to set out grant reductions for local government of between 25% to 40% over the next 4 years, in addition to the substantial reductions that were made in the last parliament. This includes cuts to the funding that Government has previously provided for Concessionary Travel and other transport services. Councils are facing difficult decisions about all services and the Transport Levy is part of the budget of Tyne and Wear councils, and it will need to be considered for reduction both next year and potentially in future years as well.
- 1.3 Due to uncertainty about external funding, the Leadership Board will set a one year Budget and Transport Levies for 2016/17 at its meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2016. This was explained in the report to the Leadership Board on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2015, which set out draft high level budget proposals for consultation. Following informal consultation with members and councils, an overall Transport budget and Levy for Tyne and Wear for 2016/17 of £65.120m is proposed, which represents a reduction of £2.080m (-3.1%) compared with the current year.
- 1.4 Officers consider that this level of savings can be delivered next year mainly through efficiency savings; use of one off savings achieved in the current year, and use of reserves with minimal impact on service outcomes. However, this will add to the significant underlying budget deficit in Tyne and Wear, which is currently being funded from use of reserves to protect service outcomes in line with the budget strategy agreed by members in previous years. This will mean that service budgets will need to be reduced from 2017 in order to achieve a balanced budget over the medium term.
- 1.5 Once the outcome of the 2015 Spending Review is known, and the impact on funding for Tyne and Wear councils can be assessed, this information will be considered by NECA and its constituent Councils as part of Strategic Review

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## Transport North East (Tyne and Wear) Sub-Committee

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in the first half of 2016 that will seek to identify:-

1. the estimated level of resource available through the Levy for Transport services over the next four years, taking into account competing service priorities;
  2. how the money that is available is to be used to best achieve the Transport Objectives of NECA and in Tyne and Wear;
  3. What changes in transport services are needed and how the impact on service users can be minimised.
- 1.6 The options and proposals that emerge from this review will form the basis for consultation before decisions are taken next year about the budget for 2017/18 and future years.
- 1.7 This report gives members the opportunity to shape the detailed budget proposals for 2016/17 that will form part of the Budget Report to the Leaders Board on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2016, after consideration of the views received from consultation.

### **2 Transport Net Revenue Budget and Levy 2016/17**

- 2.1 The proposal for Tyne and Wear would see the Transport Budget and Levy for Tyne and Wear being set at £65.120m, assuming no significant reduction in the Metro Rail Grant. This is a reduction of £2.080m on the Levy in 2015/16, achieved by efficiency and other cost savings in the former ITA and Nexus Budgets and the use of reserves. This will maintain service outcomes next year, while further improving the value for money provided to districts and help them to meet national funding cuts.
- 2.2 The distribution of the Levy within Tyne and Wear is based upon population and the levy will reflect changes in population as well as the cut in the overall amount. The share of a £65.120m Transport Levy for 2016/17 for each of the Tyne and Wear districts is shown below.

**Table 1: Share of Proposed 2016/17 Transport Levy between Districts – Tyne and Wear**

<b>District</b>	<b>Population (2014) Mid Year Estimates</b>	<b>2016/17 Levy</b>	<b>Saving compared to 2015/16</b>
	People	£	£
<b>Gateshead</b>	200,505	11,671,345	(397,749)
<b>Newcastle</b>	289,835	16,871,222	(437,299)
<b>North Tyneside</b>	202,744	11,801,677	(397,403)
<b>South Tyneside</b>	148,740	8,658,118	(304,843)

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## Transport North East (Tyne and Wear) Sub-Committee

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<b>Sunderland</b>	276,889	16,117,638	(542,706)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,118,713</b>	<b>65,120,000</b>	<b>(2,080,000)</b>

- 2.3 This latest Levy reduction would bring the overall reduction in the annual transport levy since 2010 to £13m, achieved through efficiency savings and use of reserves, whilst protecting service outcomes to date. This level of saving while protecting service outcomes is a significant achievement, particularly in the light of the cost pressures in respect of Concessionary Travel and outcomes in other regions around the country where there have been some significant cuts in services. However in order to set a balanced budget in the medium term, it is clear that cuts in service budgets will need to be implemented from 2017.
- 2.4 The levy is used to fund NECA transport costs (formally the Tyne and Wear ITA) as well as providing a grant to Nexus to fund transport services. The allocation of the levy is proposed as follows.

**Table 2: Allocation of Transport Levy**

	2015/16 £	2016/17 £	Change £	%
NECA Transport Costs	2,700,000	2,620,000	- 80,000	- 3.0%
Grant to Nexus	64,500,000	62,500,000	- 2,000,000	- 3.1%
Total Levy	67,200,000	65,120,000	- 2,080,000	- 3.1%

- 2.5 Savings on the former ITA element of the NECA budget include savings in capital financing costs, a reduction in support costs and some use of reserves. The Nexus savings will be achieved by efficiency savings and use of reserves and budget cuts, which minimise the impact on service outcomes in 2016/17. The use of one off savings in 2015/16 of up to £1m will help to temporarily fund the cut in the levy in 2016/17.
- 2.6 The Nexus Budget is balanced by planned use of reserves pending the delivery of further savings in future years, which will be subject to a Strategic Review of Transport funding next year. This will identify the level of the Levy that Councils can afford and the cuts in discretionary services that would be needed to set a balanced budget, for consultation next year.

### **NECA – Centrally Held Tyne and Wear Transport Budget**

- 2.7 This budget relates to activity inherited from the former Tyne and Wear ITA. The vast majority (89%) relates to financing charges on historic debt. Additionally, there is budget provision to pay for support services/Transport SLAs, other supplies and services, the external audit fee and a repayment to the Tyne Tunnels for use of reserves in 2013/14 to pay off the pension deficit.
- 2.8 It is proposed that this Budget for 2016/17 be reduced from £2.700m to

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£2.620m with a saving of £80,000 (3%). Since 2005/06 this budget has reduced by over 40% from £4.499m to its proposed level. The indicative budget for 2016/17 is summarised in the table below.

**Table 3: Centrally Held Transport Budget**

	2015/16 Revised Estimate	2016/17 Estimate	Change
	£000	£000	£000
Support Service / staffing	250	245	-5
Administration and Governance	43	43	0
Financing Charges	2,394	2,333	-61
Contingency / Devolution	110	110	0
<b>Total Spending</b>	<b>2,797</b>	<b>2,731</b>	<b>-66</b>
Use of Transport Reserve	-97	-111	-14
<b>Contribution From LEVY</b>	<b>2,700</b>	<b>2,620</b>	<b>-80</b>

- 2.9 The Contingency/devolution budget are one-off items in the budget funded from savings in 2013/14, which increased the level of the transport reserve transferred to NECA. They are funded from the use of the Transport reserve. The base budget excluding these items is a balanced budget. The Tyne and Wear (former ITA) Transport Revenue reserves are estimated to reduce from £0.588m at the start of 2015/16 to £0.380m at the year end. It is possible that the costs relating to Devolution workstreams may be incurred in the current year rather than next year, which would reduce the reserve earlier.

### Grant to NEXUS to Provide Transport Services

- 2.10 A summary of the draft Nexus budget for 2016/17 and the use of the Grant from Nexus is set out below, with further details given in Appendix A.

**Table 4: Summary of the Nexus Net Budget**

	Gross Expenditure	Gross Grants and Income	Net Expenditure
	£000	£000	£000
<b>Grant to Nexus</b>			
Concessionary Travel	49,065	(1,461)	47,604
Metro	93,128	(75,718)	17,410
Ferry	1,556	(556)	1,000
Rail	213	(240)	(27)
Subsidised Bus Services	17,445	(6,134)	11,311
Bus Infrastructure	2,450	(585)	1,865
Retail and Information	4,388	(661)	3,727
Corporate planning	3,185	(1,130)	2,055
<b>Sub Total Operations</b>	<b>171,430</b>	<b>(86,485)</b>	<b>84,945</b>
Net Movement in Capital Financing Reserve		(20,801)	(20,801)
Capital Financing	2,349		2,349

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## Transport North East (Tyne and Wear) Sub-Committee

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<b>Total Nexus Budget</b>	<b>173,779</b>	<b>107,286</b>	<b>66,493</b>
Planned Use of Reserves			3,993
<b>Transport Grant</b>			<b>62,500</b>

- 2.11 The operations budgets include capital financing costs, in particular the Metro Budget. There is a net movement of the capital financing reserve of £20.801m, which reduces net operational expenditure. After taking into account the reimbursement of revenue forgone from the Concessionary Travel budget for the carriage of Gold Card holders, this would bring the net expenditure on Metro into a small surplus.
- 2.12 Nexus will draw £3.993m from its revenue reserves, which are estimated to be £12.2m at the start of next year (based on Nexus' Period 6 financial monitoring report for the current year, considered elsewhere on this agenda).
- 2.13 Without the possibility of generating £5m of savings from implementing the Bus Quality Contracts Scheme in 2017/18, and having had its grant from the NECA reduced by £2m in 2016/17, Nexus' budget deficit will grow to an estimated £7m in 2017/18, if action to address the budget imbalance is not taken. Therefore, in order to deliver a balanced budget in the medium term, cuts in services will need to be implemented from 2017. This will be considered as part of a Strategic Review in 2016, which will identify options for reductions in service budgets for consultation during 2016 and implementation from 2017 onwards.
- 2.14 More detailed information about the Nexus budget for 2016/17 is set out in Appendix A.
- 2.15 The discretionary spending within the 2016/17 budget that will be part of the Strategic Review and may be at risk from 2017 includes: –

	<b>£m</b>
Secured Bus Services	11.3
Bus infrastructure	1.7
Retail, Info & Customer Services	4.4
Shields Ferry	0.8
Discretionary Concessionary Fares	11.8
Capital Financing	2.3
	<u>32.3</u>

- 2.16 The two major items of Nexus' gross expenditure that are excluded from the above table are the ENCTS and Metro (save for part the discretionary concessionary fares budget which funds 'revenue forgone' for the carriage of Gold Card holders and Under 16's on Metro). Funding the ENCTS is a statutory obligation placed on Nexus and as already highlighted in paragraph

# North East Combined Authority

## Transport North East (Tyne and Wear) Sub-Committee

2.11, Metro generates a small surplus once income it receives from the concessionary fares budget is taken into account.

- 2.17 After a planned use of reserves of £3.993m in 2016/17 it is estimated that Nexus' revenue reserves would be £8.2m as at 31 March 2017 (based on the 2016/17 indicative budget and the budget deficit as per Nexus' Period 6 financial monitoring report for the current year, considered elsewhere on this agenda). Nexus estimates that it needs to retain a core reserve of £5m to manage uncertainties, cost pressure and other unexpected calls on its revenue budget. In addition, Nexus holds capital reserves, currently forecast to be circa £21m at 31 March 2016 which are earmarked to fund capital investment in Metro.

### Tyne Tunnels

- 2.18 The Tyne Tunnels are accounted for as a ringfenced trading account within the accounts of NECA, meaning that it is wholly funded from the tolls and Tyne Tunnels reserves, with no call on the levy or government funding at all.
- 2.19 In 2015/16 the original budget for the Tunnels account had a planned deficit of £1.4m to be funded from the Tunnel Reserve Account. Increased traffic flow in year resulted in increased income. With savings in financing costs, the net outturn for the Account in 2015/16 is estimated to be a reduced deficit of £0.383m. A summary of the Tyne Tunnels account is set out below.

**Table 5: Tyne Tunnels Budget**

	<b>2015/16 Revised</b>	<b>2016/17</b>
	£	£
Tolls Income	(27,456,700)	(29,243,000)
Contract Payments to TT2	21,658,100	22,277,300
Employees	36,000	36,800
Pensions	55,700	57,600
Support Services	100,000	90,000
Supplies & Services	35,000	35,000
NTC Community Fund	10,000	5,000
Financing Charges	6,419,100	7,465,200
Interest Income	(200,000)	(200,000)
Miscellaneous Income	(34,000)	0
Repayment from ITA for use of reserves	(240,000)	(240,000)
<b>(Surplus)/Deficit on Tyne Tunnels Account</b>	<b>383,200</b>	<b>283,900</b>
<b>Tyne Tunnels Reserves b/f</b>	<b>(28,173,800)</b>	<b>(23,790,600)</b>
NESTI Expenditure	1,000,000	1,000,000
Capital Expenditure funded from Revenue	3,000,000	750,000

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## Transport North East (Tyne and Wear) Sub-Committee

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Tyne Tunnels Reserves c/f	(23,790,600)	(21,756,600)
(Of which earmarked for NESTI)	2,614,000	1,614,000
Tunnel Reserves at Year end (excluding NESTI)	<b>(21,176,600)</b>	<b>(20,426,600)</b>

2.20 Tyne and Wear Sub Committee will consider the scheduled toll increase of 10p for cars and 20p for HGVs, with effect from a revised date of 1 April 2016 (as opposed to 1 January 2016) or from 1 June 2016, subject to the increase in the RPI Index enabling the increase to occur. The increase in the level of the Shadow Toll paid to the operator TT2 has already taken place and came into effect from 1 January 2015. The increase in tolls is needed to maintain the tolls in real terms and keep the budget deficit on the Account in 2016/17 down to around £0.284m. An increase with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 has been assumed in the Budget estimates, which would generate income of £1.6m. An increase from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2016 would generate income of £1.4m, increasing the deficit by around £0.2m. The annual budget deficit will be funded from the Tyne Tunnel Reserves, which are there to meet annual deficits, fund capital expenditure on the tunnels and to help pay off the tunnel debt.

### **3 Next Steps**

3.1 Further consultation on the 2016/17 budget proposals will be taking place during December. The Leadership Board will meet to agree the 2016/17 NECA Budget and Transport Levies on 19<sup>th</sup> January, taking into account the recommendation from this committee as well as any comments made during the consultation process.

### **4 Potential Impact on Objectives**

4.1 The report sets out the proposed transport finance and resourcing of the Combined Authority to support the delivery of its objectives. For 2016/17 the proposals are aimed at minimising any impact on service outcomes and should have no adverse impact on the delivery of Transport Outcomes. However, the reduction of the levy will potentially have adverse effects from 2017 onwards, which will be identified and consulted upon in 2016.

### **5 Finance and Other Resources**

5.1 The finance implications are set out in detail in the body of the report. The reserves identified in the report are considered to be appropriate to manage risks relating to transport activities of NECA.

### **6 Legal**

# North East Combined Authority

## Transport North East (Tyne and Wear) Sub-Committee

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6.1 The Authority has a duty to ensure it can deliver a balanced budget. The Local Government Act 2003 imposes a duty on an Authority to monitor its budgets during the year and consider what action to take if a potential deterioration is identified.

6.2 The treatment of transport costs and their funding through levies are set out in the NE Combined Authority Order and in the Transport Levying Bodies (amendment) Regulations 2014.

### **7 Other Considerations**

#### **7.1 Consultation/Community Engagement**

The budget proposals for 2016/17 are currently subject to a period of consultation which includes the North East Leadership Board, Treasurers/Finance Directors meetings, Chief Executives meetings, meetings with individual Councils to discuss detailed budget points, consultation with the North East Chamber of Commerce; budget consultation by constituent councils and consideration by Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

#### **7.2 Human Rights**

There are no specific human rights implications arising from this report.

#### **7.3 Equalities and Diversity**

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

#### **7.4 Risk Management**

Financial risks associated with the authority's transport activities, and actions taken to mitigate these, will be factored into strategic risk management processes for the Combined Authority. A key issue is the uncertainty of the impact of Austerity Measures on grants that Nexus and the Councils receive. This will be taken into account at the January Leaders Board. Reserves will be set to help manage risk and will take into account potential risks.

#### **7.5 Crime and Disorder**

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

#### **7.6 Environment and Sustainability**

There are no specific environment and sustainability implications arising from this report.

# North East Combined Authority

## Transport North East (Tyne and Wear) Sub-Committee

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### **8 Background Documents**

- 8.1 Leadership Board 20 January 2015 - Budget Report 2015/16
- Leadership Board 17 November 2015 - Draft Budget Report 2016/17

### **9 Links to Plans in the Policy Framework**

- 9.1 This report has links to the delivery of the Transport plans in the Policy Framework.

### **10 Appendices**

Appendix A : Information relating to Nexus Budget

### **11 Contact Officers**

- 11.1 Paul Woods, Chief Finance Officer, paul.woods@northeastca.gov.uk  
07446936840

### **12 Sign off**

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

# North East Combined Authority

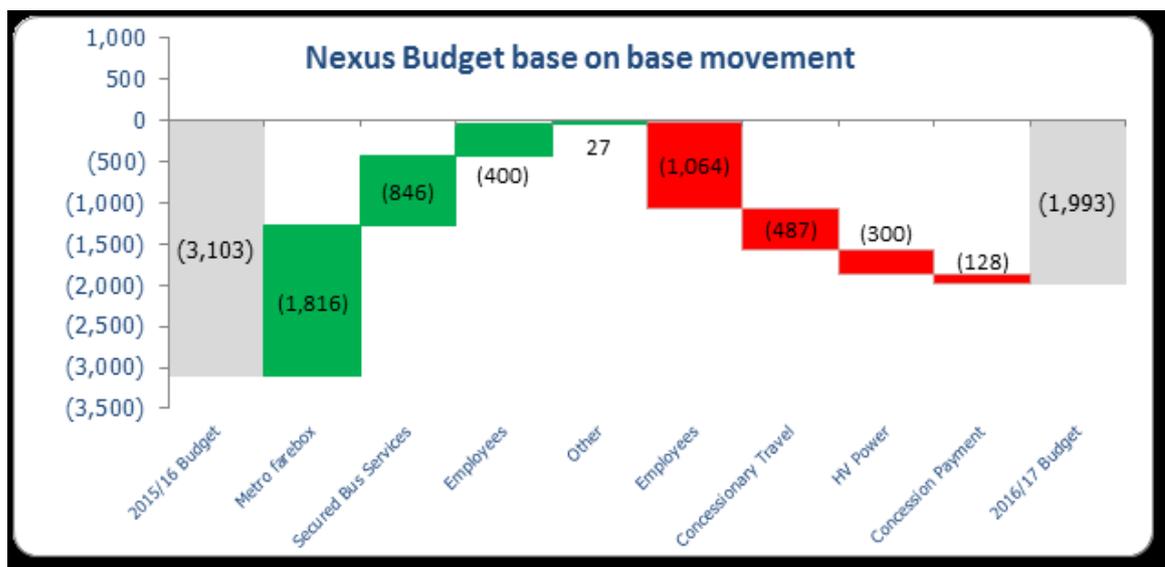
## Transport North East (Tyne and Wear) Sub-Committee

### APPENDIX A

#### Nexus Indicative Budget 2016/17

Nexus' indicative budget for 2016/17 was prepared before the outcome of the QCS Board was known and therefore, is currently predicated on a 'standstill' basis i.e. service outcomes will be protected, growth and other cost pressures will be contained and headroom has also been made to reduce the inherent deficit by £1m when compared to the base deficit set for the current year.

The graph below shows the movement 'base on base'.



The cost pressures, shown in red relate to:-

- Employees – reflecting the impact of recent changes in employer national insurance contributions for employers offering 'contracted out' pension schemes; a 1% provision for pay inflation (as per the Chancellors summer 2015 budget announcement) and pay progression for employees on APT&C grades
- Concessionary Travel – a small uplift in costs is required for ENCTS payments due to bus operators as part of the two year negotiated settlements previously reported to the Sub-Committee; however, the majority of this budget pressure relates to the creation of a provision to take account of potential reductions in the sale of scholars passes to local authorities
- High Voltage Power – despite recent reductions in energy consumption, the cost of HV Power continues to increase, putting an estimated cost pressure of £0.3m on the 2016/17 budget

# North East Combined Authority

## Transport North East (Tyne and Wear) Sub-Committee

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- Concession Payment – this reflects the contractual obligation Nexus has to increase the cost of payments made to DBTW under the terms of the Metro Operating Concession. At this stage, it is assumed that Metro Rail Grant (revenue) will be in line with previous projections based on the long term funding agreement with the Department for Transport dated 2 February 2010

The areas where Nexus is able to generate additional revenues and/or make savings (at standstill) are shown in green and relate to:-

- Metro Farebox – where growth in passenger numbers and revenues earned in the current year are expected to continue into 2016/17 which together with marketing campaigns and the fares proposal being considered elsewhere on this agenda are expected to increase Metro's income by £1.8m when compared to the 2015/16 base estimate
- Secured Bus Services – where the base estimate for 2016/17 is effectively being adjusted, taking into account efficiencies made in this area since 2014/15
- Employees – the financial impact of Nexus' senior management restructure, implemented between January and April 2015 did not feature in the 2015/16 base budget. The savings generated are a permanent feature of the base moving forward and have been accounted for in the 2016/17 budget

Paragraph 2.13 of the covering report indicates that without the possibility of generating £5m of savings from implementing the Bus Quality Contracts Scheme in 2017/18, and having had its grant from the NECA reduced by £2m in 2016/17, Nexus' budget deficit will grow to an estimated £7m in 2017/18, if action to address the budget imbalance is not taken. Therefore, in order to deliver a balanced budget in the medium term, cuts in services will need to be implemented from 2017. This will be considered as part of a Strategic Review in 2016, which will identify options for reductions in service budgets for consultation during 2016 and implementation from 2017 onwards.

As highlighted in the table at paragraph 2.15 of the covering report, included within the 2016/17 indicative budget are a range of service areas, all of which the NECA has some discretion in directing Nexus to provide.

It should be recognised however, that some areas of expenditure would be difficult or impractical to curtail immediately e.g. the amount expended on paying off Nexus' pension deficit, unfunded depreciation (which is a proxy for loan redemption payments which feature as the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) in local authorities' budgets), office accommodation at Nexus House etc.

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## Transport North East (Tyne and Wear) Sub-Committee

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In the context of up to £7m of budget cuts needing to be found by 2016/17, it should be recognised that this represents around 22% of Nexus' current levels of discretionary expenditure.

Despite Nexus maintaining service outcomes since it embarked on its pursuit of the Bus Quality Contracts Scheme in 2011, it is important that members of the Sub-Committee understand that a 22% cut in discretionary expenditure will be additional to a range of efficiency savings already achieved by Nexus. Examples include cutting its staffing establishment by over 20% since 2011; reviewing areas of its business in order to identify and remove inefficiencies; the achievement of procurement efficiencies in some of its contract terms and the consolidation of a range of budgets with investment in new technologies and the upgrade of the Nexus asset base driving additional efficiencies.

Further commentary in relation to what is contained within these areas of discretionary expenditure is detailed below:-

- Secured Bus Services - £11.3m, comprising the following types of secured bus services:-
  - i. All day services
  - ii. Scholars services
  - iii. Works / Early Morning services
  - iv. Evenings and weekend extensions
  - v. Route diversions
  - vi. Taxibus and Community Transport
- Bus Infrastructure - £1.7m, comprising staffing, cleaning, maintenance and security of bus interchanges, stations and shelters.
- Retail, Information and Customer Services - £4.4m, comprising staffing, cleaning, ticketing, publicity, information and customer contact services.
- Shields Ferry - £0.8m, comprising staffing, fuel, maintenance, cleaning and security.
- Discretionary concessions and fares - £11.8m, comprising the Gold Card Scheme, the Child Scheme, Teen Travel and ENCTS payments for the carriage of pass holders on Nexus Secured Bus Services. In addition, the indicative budget proposal for 2016/17 also recommends a freeze in the fares currently levied on both the Gold Card Scheme and the Child Scheme; the Sub-Committee are being provided with further options which will be considered as part of the fares proposal for 2016 on a separate agenda item. In addition, there are discretionary elements of the ENCTS which could be withdrawn or curtailed e.g. the companion pass, post 23:00 hour boardings and boardings pre 09:30 hours for the purposes of attending medical appointments.

# North East Combined Authority

## Transport North East (Tyne and Wear) Sub-Committee

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- Capital Financing - £2.3m, comprising unfunded depreciation and pension deficit payments (both of which are included in the cost of services outlined above as well as forming part of Metro's gross expenditure requirement) and revenue contributions to capital which has in recent years been used to fund the delivery of the Bus Strategy as well as providing match funding for investment in smart ticketing and other initiatives e.g. local contributions to LTP and LSTF funded projects.
- Metro Fares – the indicative budget proposal for 2016/17 contains a 0.4% weighted average fares increase against a backdrop of July 2015 RPI of 1.0% (and is being considered on a separate agenda item); however, the NECA has discretion to increase fares at a higher rate if it so desired.
- Support Services – all of Nexus' services (including Metro) are underpinned (and include) nearly £7.0m of expenditure on a range of support services e.g. Corporate Planning, Estates, Marketing, Finance, Internal Audit, Human Resources, ICT, Legal, Health and Safety etc.

## Extract from Transport North East Committee Report 24 November 2015

## Indicative NECA Transport budgets 2016/17 – Durham and Northumberland

**Durham County Council**

- 1.1. The budget and levy for public passenger transport activity in County Durham is expected to be in the region of £15.342m for 2016/17. This compares with an original budget of £16.076m for 2015/16 and a revised forecast for 2015/16 estimated at £15.131m. The budget and levy for 2016/17 is summarised in the table below.

**Durham Transport Budget and Levy 2016/17**

	<b>Gross Expenditure</b>	<b>Gross Income</b>	<b>Net Expenditure</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Grant to Durham</b>			
Concessionary Fares	11,728,380	(9,000)	11,719,380
Subsidised Bus Services	4,610,862	(1,788,664)	2,822,198
Bus Stations	453,258	(311,100)	142,158
Bus Shelters	31,040	(44,460)	(13,420)
PT Information	182,614	(94,568)	88,046
Staffing	594,614	(16,368)	578,246
<b>Total Grant</b>	<b>17,600,768</b>	<b>(2,264,160)</b>	<b>15,336,608</b>
Share of NECA Transport Costs	4,939	0	4,939
<b>Transport Levy</b>	<b>17,605,707</b>	<b>(2,264,160)</b>	<b>15,341,547</b>

- 1.2 The overall bus network in County Durham remains fairly stable. There are no significant commercial changes expected in 2016/17 and only a small number of planned contract renewals. However, in contrast to last year's growth we are now seeing a marginal decline in overall patronage figures; we are also anticipating some modest pressure on contract costs due to the introduction of the National Living Wage.
- 1.3 The budget for subsidised bus services has been reduced by £400,000 in line with Durham County Council's Medium Term Financial Plan for 2016/17. The budget saving will be realised through a combination of efficiency savings and a reduction in costs following contract retendering. The focus of spend continues to be on maintaining the level of accessibility in rural and semi-rural areas and supplementing the daytime commercial network with early and later journeys.
- 1.4 The budget for concessionary fares continues to be subject to pressure from fares increases. However, a combination of the effects of the rise in entitlement age, a stabilisation of concessionary travel journeys and successful

negotiations with bus operators in relation to reimbursement costs have led to a modest reduction in this area of the budget for 2016/17.

- 1.5 The other main area of work for the transport team in Durham will be to continue to deliver efficiency savings against the home to school transport and adult social care transport budgets. A full review of transport entitlement, commissioning and procurement is ongoing, together with a pilot scheme looking at post 16, health and mainstream transport under the governments Total Transport initiative.

### **Northumberland County Council**

- 2.1 The Budget and Levy for public passenger transport activity in Northumberland is expected to be in the region of £6.159m for 2016/17. This compares with a budget of £5.901m in 2015/16. The budget and levy for 2016/17 is summarised in the table below.

	<b>Gross Expenditure</b>	<b>Gross Income</b>	<b>Net Expenditure</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Concessionary Fares	4,675,450	-12,940	4,662,510
Subsidised Bus Services	1,999,740	-696,340	1,303,400
PT Information	3,400	0	3,400
Staffing	189,680	0	189,680
<b>Total Grant</b>	<b>6,868,270</b>	<b>-709,280</b>	<b>6,158,990</b>
Share of NECA Transport Costs	4,939	0	4,939
<b>Transport Levy</b>	<b>6,873,209</b>	<b>-709,280</b>	<b>6,163,929</b>

- 2.2 The indicative budget for 2016/17 has increased to reflect inflationary pressures in delivering the Concessionary Travel Scheme and the reinstatement of a proposed saving to the Scheme following an audit of the use of disabled passes. The budget for Bus Services will be protected at its current level in cash terms, and no significant investment in the county's bus stations is planned for 2016/17.

## North East Combined Authority

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**DATE:** 1<sup>st</sup> December 2015

**SUBJECT:** Transport Related Barriers to Education, Employment and Training: Call for Evidence - Written Submissions

**REPORT OF:** Monitoring Officer

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The purpose of this report is to consider written evidence submissions for the policy review of transport related barriers to education, employment and training. The policy review will contribute to the North East Transport Plan (estimated completion date October 2016). The Plan will specifically be delivering 'More and Better Jobs'. This written evidence has been submitted following a Call for Evidence issued during the summer.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Scrutiny Committee is asked to receive the written evidence to contribute towards the policy review and to consider how it wishes to carry out further stakeholder engagement.

# North East Combined Authority

## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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### 1. Background Information

- 1.1 The North East Combined Authority Scrutiny Committee is undertaking a review to further understand the impact of transport in the combined authority area and, in particular, any problems people face preventing them from getting into employment, travelling to work, school or college.
- 1.2 The terms of reference for the inquiry are:
  - An assessment of current transport projects to help people get to interview, jobs, training etc.
  - The potential impact of future spending cuts and how to maintain accessibility of public transport
  - An assessment of the different problems across the NECA area (Durham, Newcastle, Gateshead, Sunderland, South Tyneside, Northumberland, North Tyneside) (e.g. the particular needs of rural areas).
- 1.3 The review will seek to generate debate around how to provide services to people who rely on public transport to get to work and training.

### 2. Call for Evidence

- 2.1 The Scrutiny Committee has been taking oral evidence at formal scrutiny meetings. So far, the Committee has held sessions with Nexus, Stagecoach and with providers of Local Sustainable Transport projects. In order to ensure that a wide range of interested parties could submit evidence to the review, a Call for Evidence was issued to individuals and organisations to submit written evidence to the Scrutiny Committee.
- 2.2 The Call for Evidence was intended to provide members of the community the opportunity to submit their views, opinions and experiences. General comments were invited and, additionally, specific questions were posed as follows:
  - (a) The accessibility of public transport (i.e. whether people can travel at reasonable cost, in reasonable time and with reasonable ease)?
  - (b) The availability of public transport and the extent to which it is adequate to access employment sites?
  - (c) What alternative transport approaches could be considered to support people being actively engaged in work?

### 3. Themes Emerging from Written Submissions

# North East Combined Authority

## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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3.1 The consultation period ran from 27<sup>th</sup> August to end October 2015. 40 replies were received and have been sub-divided as follows:

- (a) Training providers / educational establishments – 4
- (b) Members of the Public – 11
- (c) Commuters – 16
- (d) Travel Advisors – 2
- (e) Voluntary Groups – 6
- (f) Providers – 1

Three replies are from people living outside the NECA area. Across the 7 Local Authority areas the replies are distributed as follows:



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3.2 An initial analysis shows the following themes emerging:

Barrier	Examples of problems caused	Possible solutions
Cost of public transport (particularly for young people / learners)	<p>Can be £5 per day for learners</p> <p>Barrier to part time work / those on benefits</p> <p>Perceptions that it is as economical annually to run a car</p> <p>Travelling across zones adds to cost</p> <p>Exacerbated by the end of the Educational Maintenance Allowance for young people &amp; lower wages for those on apprenticeships</p>	<p>Discounted tickets - although this can be very helpful in the short term, the benefits are not necessarily sustained</p> <p>Clients registered to access concessionary rates on public transport for the days when they are actively involved in the training or placement</p> <p>Expand / sustain schemes such as LSTF offering information / financial support / alternatives modes of transport</p>
Location of bus stops / access of buses to employment sites	<p>Employment sites are often located close to the strategic road network due to the transportation of goods. As a consequence of this, the staff travel patterns are heavily reliant on the private car. Due to this, Public Transport services are often reduced / limited, as the patronage figures are not viable.</p> <p>Individual experiences include : Distance from workplace / crossing busy roads / bad weather with no shelter</p>	<p>Future planning for new employment sites in locations with adequate public transport.</p> <p>Re-locate bus stops</p> <p>Extend bus routes to employment venues</p>
Shift Workers – limited public transport outside of normal working hours	Cannot get to work outside 'normal' hours unless using private	Revenue support for demand responsive services including shared

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	vehicle.	taxis or community transport
Infrequency of service	Less frequent service during holiday periods and different service on weekends	Revenue support for additional / extended service, shared taxis or community transport etc
Not running to timetable	If running late, buses miss certain bus stops to catch up  Commuters miss connections	Local Authorities and bus operators to work together on punctuality improvement partnership  Nexus to work with contractor to improve punctuality / reliability
Geographic coverage	Travel is difficult from and within rural areas to get to employment sites  Gaps in coverage, even in populated areas  Low travel horizons among those who are out of work or training	LA's to provide additional revenue support  Re-opening closed lines  Extend the metro
Services and timetabling at peak commuting times	How infrastructure copes with high demand at peak times	
Lack of coordination across boundaries or service providers	Bus services are not designed to connect on time to allow a direct transfer  Bus companies are 'rivals'  Travelling across boundaries very expensive and limits employment opportunities  It can be necessary to pay two or even three different transport providers.	Example of Transport for London which offers all students under 18 free travel across all London Borough's with a single public transport provider.  Smart ticketing for integrated ease of travel, PAYG travel

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<p>Quality of journey (ease of use, packed carriages, cleanliness, noise, accessibility, safety)</p>	<p>Annual pass not able to use the barriers which slows down journey time.</p> <p>Less able-bodied people unable to travel peak times due to crowding</p>	
<p>Reliability (rolling stock, weather, fire alarms, fault with lines, track problems)</p>	<p>Problems with Metro reduces confidence levels even when external issues e.g. weather</p>	<p>Infrastructure improvements and investment Incorporating other transport modes such as car clubs, cycle hire etc.</p> <p>Better cycle and walking links from residential to employment areas can be cost effective</p>
<p>Communication (informing passengers of delays etc)</p>	<p>When the system fails in peak hours difficult to use links to the other operators who will not accept the tickets already bought for the metro - people have to pay twice.</p> <p>Refunds difficult to receive and complicated</p> <p>Lack of knowledge about public transport services leading to adverse perceptions of journey length and connectivity</p>	<p>Need real-time information</p> <p>Public Transport Information via Smart Phones and other technology streams</p> <p>Social Media Outlets being utilised and harnessed to provide update travel info</p>
<p>Health consequences of different forms of transport</p>	<p>Level of priority given to pollution in transport considerations</p>	<p>Public awareness</p> <p>Monitoring of pollution hotspots</p>
<p>Potential impact of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• future spending cuts</li> </ul>	<p>Will accessibility of public transport worsen?</p> <p>Concessionary Travel and</p>	

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• devolution</li></ul>	the rising population age – is concessionary travel becoming unaffordable  Devolution ‘Asks’ for Transport for NECA region – how will these affect future funding decision on public transport	
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#### 4. Next Steps

- 4.1 The written evidence set out as an Appendix to this report will be analysed fully in the formation of conclusions for the review. In the meantime, it is proposed to hold a Policy Review Inquiry Day in the next few months to allow for a full discussion on the issues raised in both the oral sessions and in the written submissions.
- 4.2 Witnesses and relevant stakeholders will be invited to participate in this session.

#### 5. Potential Impact on Objectives

- 5.1 Reducing transport-related barriers to employment will assist in the Combined Authority in delivering its objective to maximise the area’s opportunities and potential.

#### 6. Finance and other resources

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

#### 7. Legal

- 7.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

#### 8. Other Considerations

##### 8.1 Consultation / Community Engagement

Relevant stakeholders will be consulted on the issues and proposals.

##### 8.2 Human Rights

There are no human rights implications identified at this stage.

# North East Combined Authority

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### 8.3 Equalities and Diversity

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

### 8.4 Risk Management

There are no specific risk management implications arising from this report.

### 8.5 Crime and Disorder

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

### 8.6 Environment and Sustainability

There are no specific environment and sustainability implications arising from this report.

## 9. Background Documents

9.1 Scrutiny Committee Policy Review Scoping Report 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2015

## 10. Links to Plans in the Policy Framework

10.1 The report has no direct links to the Policy Framework.

## 11. Appendices

Evidence Submitted to the Call for Evidence

## 12. Contact Officers

Karen Brown, Scrutiny Officer [karen.brown@sunderland.gov.uk](mailto:karen.brown@sunderland.gov.uk)

## 13. Sign Off

Monitoring Officer ✓

Head of Paid Service ✓

Chief Finance Officer ✓

## Transport – Barriers to Employment

### Call for Evidence – Written Submissions

The North East Combined Authority Scrutiny Committee is undertaking a review to further understand the impact of transport in the combined authority area and, in particular, any problems people face preventing them from getting into employment, travelling to work, school or college.

The terms of reference for the inquiry are:

- An assessment of current transport projects to help people get to interview, jobs, training etc.
- The potential impact of future spending cuts and how to maintain accessibility of public transport
- An assessment of the different problems across the NECA area (Durham, Newcastle, Gateshead, Sunderland, South Tyneside, Northumberland, North Tyneside) (e.g. the particular needs of rural areas).

The Scrutiny Committee is taking evidence in 2015/16 and individuals and organisations were invited to submit evidence to the Scrutiny Committee. This paper includes all submissions made to the review.

#### **Evidence Submitted from Training Providers / Educational Establishments**

Our learners range from 16-23 and attend traineeship and study programmes out of both Turbine and SASMI. As part of their course they do work experience in the supply chain behind Nissan e.g. Johnson Control, Calsonic, Blue Arrow to name a few. Indeed we have numerous learners who filter through into Nissan from our courses.

*Q1. The accessibility of public transport (i.e. whether people can travel at reasonable cost, in reasonable time and with reasonable ease)?*

Our learners use public transport from various areas outside and including Sunderland. Our concern is the nearest bus stops are located a long way from Turbine and the supply chain i.e. the slip roads off the A1231. In adverse weather conditions and doing 12 hour shifts, we are putting our learners at risk tackling the roundabout over the top of the A1231 with access to Barmston Lane. This and various other reasons are why we feel the bus companies need to reconsider extending the route into Turbine.

Another example is where the learners arrive into Turbine via Washington Road (A1290). Again the trek down and into Cherry Blossom Way leading onto Nissan Way, is extremely long and there are isolated open areas where there is no protection from the elements and given the autumn/winter is upon us, we feel that the least we can do is try and put a case forward for our learners to receive the best support and due care for their safety to and from their learning/work.

*Q2. The availability of public transport and the extent to which it is adequate to access employment sites?*

Those on work experience doing 12 hour shifts, starting at 7:00 who live in South Shields will NOT be able to arrive in time as the first bus doesn't arrive until 7:08. This and point 1 above should be taken into consideration.

*Q3. What alternative transport approaches could be considered to support people being actively engaged in work?*

With the UK's skills shortage being at the forefront of our mission to provide employable and ready-for-work candidates to the likes of Nissan, Johnson Control etc, we feel it necessary that a case be put forward to the appropriate authorities. We would request that the bus companies extend the route into Cherry Blossom and Nissan Way and at times that service not just the supply chain, but also any provider like ourselves who are trying to close the skills shortage gap.

Surely it is our responsibility to make sure that learners arrive safely and on time both for their tuition and when they are doing their work experience in the supply chain. We want them to have the best opportunities for the world of work and yet we cannot provide them with adequate transport into a very busy area of Sunderland where there are various global suppliers to the industry and where the sixth largest automotive manufacturer is situated.

We hope this can be taken into consideration when speaking to the bus companies.

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We've recently been in discussion with a rep of GoSmarter about the lack of transport around Turbine Park in behind Nissan and amongst the suppliers we deal with i.e. Johnson Controls, Calsonic, Unipres etc. She herself uses public transport and knows only too well that when she has visited the employers/suppliers in that area, that the bus service is not adequate.

I know she is talking to Go North East this morning about it and she mentioned that any requests to extend a bus service has to be taken to the transport commissionaire and this can take 6 weeks.

We moved our delivery over to Turbine Business Park at the end of June and we have over 35 trainees/apprentices currently attending our programmes, some of which use public transport which doesn't go anywhere near this, in some cases the learners have to get off the bus just off the slip road on the 1231 and cross over an extremely busy roundabout and walk a good way to their classes.

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I am a provider based in Bishop Auckland. The cost of travel is preventing some of my learners attending the courses for 3 days a week. The majority of learners are paying an average of 5 pounds a day which is a major barrier.

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As an organisation we run training courses from our offices in Bishop Auckland and place clients in much needed work placements in order to ready them for employment. Due to the infrequency or lack of public transport coupled with the high cost, we have been unable to take number of

clients from the Dales areas. Clients' access to available jobs and placements is also geographically severely restricted for these reasons.

In our experience people who get part time work are earning little more than their benefits and so paying excessive bus fares can be a factor that will prevent a client accepting a job.

Suggestions for alternative travel approaches:

- When contracts are awarded there could be a process by which clients can be registered to access concessionary rates on public transport for the days when they are actively involved in the training or placement.
- Establish a shared taxi/bus scheme whereby clients could access empty seats on school buses or taxis at a reasonable rate.
- Extending the above by putting on a demand led mini bus service that would cover the areas badly served by public buses and could be booked by anyone accessing training or work placements from a range of registered providers.

The above suggestions could also be extended to young people who are accessing first tier employment.

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### Evidence from the Association of Colleges

Over 100,000 young people and adults per year are enrolled on high quality vocational and academic courses and Apprenticeships at the ten Further Education Colleges which are located in the NECA area. The Colleges recognise that an excellent transport system is of critical importance in supporting a growing economy and to ensure that the NECA area can attract new investment and people.

However against a backdrop of the statutory education participation age being raised to 18 – coupled with severe cuts in public funding for Further Education (for example, the Adult Skills Budget having been cut by 24% between 2014/15 and 2015/16) - the ten Colleges in the NECA area are currently investing a significant amount of resources to ensure that as many young people and adults as possible have the opportunity to attend college without transport being a barrier. In some cases the cost of this travel exceeds £1000 per learner and it is necessary to pay two or even three different transport providers.

So whilst some progress has been made in recent years there does still appear to be room for improvement in developing a more cohesive transport strategy in the NECA area in order to ensure that travel cost and accessibility is not prohibitive to young people and adults when seeking to engage in educational and employment opportunities.

For example current arrangements make it particularly difficult for college students to travel across county boundaries and in some circumstances within the same county. In contrast an excellent example of a cohesive strategy is Transport for London which offers all students under 18 free travel across all London Borough's with a single public transport provider.

Taken as a whole it is estimated that the majority of FE college students travel to college using public transport and are therefore dependent upon the punctuality and reliability of this service. It appears that one of the largest factors in causing delays is a lack of capacity in the infrastructure – particularly at peak times - to cope with patterns of demand.

In addition to enabling young people and adults to access education provision it is recognised that effective transport networks are a key to economic growth and in ensuring that this ultimately generates opportunity and prosperity for all.

To ensure that the travel system is “intelligent” and functions correctly, well trained staff are required to design, create and maintain it. So in addition to being key stakeholders in the NECA area’s transport system colleges have a key role to play in supporting the development of skills needed to design, develop and operate the transport system.

Just one example of this is Newcastle College’s Rail Academy which is the only facility of its kind in the country. This offers the region a vital resource in developing the trained staff of the future for both the backbone and development of a regional ITS structure. In addition, this facility is augmented, with other provision within the college to provide training to transport infrastructure staff.

In order to address the aspirations of NECA and to develop an ITS, further development and training of key personnel will be required to build on this initial momentum. In addition Newcastle College is developing its capacity and expertise to enable it to offer training and development in new areas including logistics, traffic flow management and multimodal networks which combine Information Technology and Telecommunication Systems and include cyber security, data systems and on-line information.

Colleges in the NECA area would welcome the opportunity to discuss their thoughts further and to work in collaboration with NECA to address the issues which have been identified above.

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**Evidence from Members of the Public**

The only comment I would like to make is that about two or three years ago, our village lost its only bus service due to the fact that Darlington Council decided to discontinue the contributions to their subsidised and supported bus services. In this case, Arriva decided it wasn't a commercially viable service using incorrect figures to support their decision and relied on the council's financial support. There are many elderly residents in the village and those without their own transport are faced with a half-mile walk along a narrow country lane, part of which doesn't have a footpath, to the nearest main road and bus stop. Young people going to and from school or college are similarly affected.

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In the Teesdale area public transport is not what it should and could be, buses that often turn up very late or more often the case not at all, if they are running late from Durham they just cut out continuing to Cockfield and Evenwood, these areas are becoming more and more cut off and isolated. Not everyone drives or owns a car and a large number of people especially the younger generation and the older residents of these villages rely on public transport, it is essential that services are maintained and are reliable.

Residents of these villages have lots of cause for complaint some have no service at all and those of us who have are thankful but please treat us with respect let us keep what services we have and turn up when at the appropriate time.

This year over the festive period our villages will have no public transport for 4 days, we understand being none Christmas day and boxing day and we never have any on a Sunday anyway but 4 days is a bit extreme, the same thing happens over the Easter holiday we have none for 3 of the 4 bank holidays.

Living in the 21st century not very good for travel if you live in a rural area.

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I live in Sedgefield. The X1 service to Middlesbrough drives passed our local bus stop without stopping. This means that the mainly elderly residents of the village have to walk half a mile into the centre of Sedgefield to catch a bus. We have asked Arriva to consider stopping at our local stop and they refuse, even though this does not require any diversion or extra resources. The bus passes by there anyway. This affects the whole community. To 'rub salt into the wound' the bus stops at every single stop between Durham and Coxhoe, it only becomes an express service on its way to Middlesbrough. Arriva has not even considered that this could be a Request Stop. There is now only one bus (the 21A) that stops at our local stop.

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I have to travel from Ludworth just east of Durham city to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Gateshead regularly for treatment. There is no direct bus from Durham. I have to catch 3 different buses, the final bus being the X1 from Washington. The alternate route I could take again involves 3 buses via Peterlee. There used to be a bus from Hartlepool via Wingate, Wheatley Hill, Thornley, Ludworth and Haswell to Easington Lane where the necessary service X1 starts and is every 10 minutes. Can either a direct bus from Durham to the Q.E or a link from the forgotten villages to Easington Lane be considered?

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Would you please consider Devonshire Road in the Haughton area of Darlington. It is a small estate with mainly elderly, and some residents that have difficulty walking it makes a lot of the residents out of breath as most of it is on a slight incline. It is quite a way to walk from the estate to the main road and quite treacherous in bad weather. Then if they manage to get to the main road it is still quite a walk for an elderly or infirm person to walk to the nearest bus stop. As I am 84 and my husband is 88 and partly disabled I know what a help this would be to the people of this estate as they would not be so housebound. At the very least, the bus stop on the main road could be moved nearer to the entrance to the estate to help elderly residents.

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I live in Chilton, near Ferryhill. We are a community of mainly elderly people and we now have no direct bus service to Bishop Auckland. Even though it is only 20 minutes journey time, it takes approximately an hour to travel there as we have to go through Ferryhill. The direct bus route was taken off a few years ago. This affects people using Bishop Auckland hospital and people who work in Bishop Auckland Asda.

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Public transport in this region is a joke.

It is run for the benefit of the transport companies not for the benefit of the people.

I live in a small village called Brafferton just 5 miles from Darlington. We used to have a bus twice an hour when we moved in 38 years ago, then it was reduced to 1 an hour, and last year we lost

the bus altogether. Even when it did run it started too late for people to get into Darlington in time for work and stopped before 6 so you could not get home. Hurworth and other small villages round Darlington still have buses but with this same problem. Secondly is the cost, if it was not for our bus passes we would always use the car as at £3 each, each way for a 15 minute journey it is far too expensive.

We have just returned from Spain landing at Malaga airport and used the train to Fuengirola cost for a 30 minute journey "2.70 euro" about £2.10 ----- 30 minutes on a train from Darlington is York cost £22.80 if you just turn up (WE JUST TURNED UP IN MALGA) more than 10 times the price.

Buses from Fuengirola to where we were staying ran every 30 minutes running till midnight cost 1.55 euro about £1.20. This was for a 30 minute ride. Notice the comparison for a journey into Darlington ran the Spanish way the cost should be 60p. The Spanish are supposed to be bankrupt yet they seem to be able to run an efficient service for their public transport system, furthermore their trains were very clean and new, were fully accessible for the disabled travellers, all doors had ramps which automatically extended onto the platform.

Finally the bus that was removed from Brafferton was the 5A. This still runs but does not follow the route through the village instead it takes a short cut which saves 1.2 miles It must be very expensive to run buses if the saving in fuel of 1.2 miles is that good. I know that nothing will come of this but it does make me want to move from the UK more and more when I see how other countries look after their citizens.

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I live in Woodhorn, outside of Newton Aycliffe. There is one bus (the no. 7) run by Arriva which runs every 15 minutes. It is a good, efficient service and stops just at the top of the road.

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In approx 2012, the no 16 bus service that had taken in Ramsgate Rd, Sunderland was diverted along Rotherglen Rd to serve the people of Witherwack who had lost the no 7 bus service. This meant the people of Ramsgate Rd were left with no service at all.

The biggest complaint was from people from the wider area accessing the doctors surgery. A petition generated at the surgery was submitted to Stagecoach. Their response was to add a bus stop on the corner of Rotherglen Rd and Rhodesia Rd which is only slightly nearer the surgery. Difficulty is also felt when people from Ramsgate Rd are accessing the hospital, with many elderly people having to use a taxi service. (the no 16 bus serves the hospital).

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Members should be aware of the extreme difficulties in rural areas, the closure of Harbottle GP surgery in remote rural Northumberland exacerbated by absence of public transport, the sick and disabled are particularly disadvantaged in terms of access to affordable accessible public transport in rural parts. This effectively excludes groups in the communities served by this committee and the removal of mobility cars under Personal Independence Payments will only make the situation worse. For some people if they lose their independence through a mobility car, they may have no recourse to public transport due to availability and access issues. This will have an impact on care provision. Unlike this present government who has failed to do this vis a vis welfare reforms, local authorities should carry out an impact assessment of any changes on protected groups under the Single Equality Act.

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### Introduction

According to the National Planning Policy Framework, “The purpose of planning is to achieve sustainable development. 'Sustainable' means better lives for ourselves do not mean worse lives for future generations.” (1)

It is clear that during the last twenty years, transport development has not been sustainable, since, according to recent sources, the total number of deaths per year from air pollution, mainly due to transport, are 52,500 premature deaths in the UK. According to Public Health England (2), 29,000 of those deaths are due to PM2.5s, mainly associated with road vehicles, and the figure of 23,500 from nitrogen dioxide, nearly all of which is due to diesel vehicles, was recently released to the BBC (3). The pro rata deaths for the North East Combined Authorities transport area comes to 1,550 deaths per year.

If present transport policies and conditions are maintained, then it is anticipated that the total number of deaths in the NECA region from today until 2030 will be over 23,000. Clearly, this situation must not be allowed to continue, and radical change is needed in NECA's transport policy, in order to reduce that number of projected deaths significantly. These deaths are unnecessary. The total percentage of deaths in the UK due to air pollution is estimated to be 10.3% of all deaths over 25, which is nearing the proportion of premature deaths from smoking, which is 14%. However, the difference is that smoking is a voluntary activity, but breathing air pollution is unavoidable.

This document analyses the health consequences of different forms of transport, and recommends improvements in transport policy that can considerably reduce the detrimental health effects of air pollution.

### Air pollution health costs

Given the estimated number of future deaths in the NECA region, of over 23,000, a total life expectancy detriment (LED) can be calculated. The Public Health England report estimates that premature deaths due to air pollution lose on average ten years of useful life. What is the value that can be put on years of life lost? An article in 'Time' in 2008 quoted the value of 50,000 dollars as used by the worldwide insurance industry (4), but pointed out that a study by Stanford University put the figure as high as \$129,000 per year of lost life (5). Therefore, it would not be unreasonable to use a figure of £50,000 for every lost year of life. This implies that every death associated with air pollution costs on average £500,000, which is defined as the life expectancy detriment (LED), giving a total LED from now until 2030 of £11.5 billion. There is a relationship between the total cost to the NHS and the LED. It should be noted that the pattern of ill health associated with air pollution is similar to that caused by smoking, in other words: more cancers, strokes, and heart attacks, as well an increase in respiratory diseases. A comparison of the costs of smoking to the NHS and the LED suggests that the NHS costs are between 20 and 25% of total LED. So on that basis, the cost to the NHS in NECA over the next fifteen years, if air quality is not improved, would be between £2.3 and £2.9 billion.

LED can be broken down for different types of vehicle. A recent study in Durham City modelled the following percentages causing excess nitrogen dioxide:

8% petrol cars

22% diesel HGVs and LGVs

21% diesel buses

49% diesel cars

If this pattern of emission is typical, then from nitrogen dioxide alone we would anticipate 705 deaths in the NECA region per year, making 10,575 premature deaths over the next 15 years, for an LED of £5.3 billion. This is made up as follows:

Diesel HGVs and LGVs 2,326 (LED £1.2 billion)

Diesel buses 2,221 (£1.1 billion)

Petrol cars 846 (£0.4 billion)

Diesel cars 5,182 (£2.6 billion)

It should be noted that although 50% of cars are diesel, a diesel car produces nearly twelve times more nitrogen dioxide than a petrol car.

Health costs are also associated with PM 2.5s. Petrol cars emit only a trace of PM2.5s, but diesel vehicles are the main direct source, which accounts for at least one quarter of all PM 2.5s, leading to a total for the region of 3,263 deaths over fifteen years, and a corresponding breakdown is as follows:

780 deaths from goods vehicles

745 from buses

1,738 from diesel cars

Further deaths are associated with PM 2.5s created from brake linings and road debris.

It can be seen that diesel cars are a major player in the total number of deaths attributable to air pollution, namely 6,920 deaths over the next fifteen years in the NECA region, with an LED of well over £3 billion.

Had a policy of switching to diesel cars not been actively pursued after 1994 in order to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, the accumulation of deaths that we are facing would have been appreciably less (see the section on 100,000 unnecessary deaths).

Remedying the present air pollution crisis

The only viable long-term solution to reducing the number of deaths due to air pollution in the north east is to place much more emphasis on new rail, and cleaner buses, while at the same time discouraging the promotion of diesel cars. At a national level, it is recommended that all diesel cars, either old or new, should in future incur an additional road tax of £600 per annum, which to some extent would balance out their health detriment. If this occurs, then there will be a switch back to petrol cars.

Calculation of the additional environmental cost of increased CO2 is problematic. However, it is suggested that based on a carbon levy of £50 per metric tonne of oil, the additional environmental

cost from switching back from diesel to petrol will be considerably less than the air pollution health costs by retaining a higher proportion of diesel cars.

### Remedying the air pollution crisis

In the north east, the following railway lines should be restored as soon as possible.

1. Newcastle to Ashington.
2. The Leamside line from Heworth, via Washington and Durham, to Ferry Hill, and then extending via Sedgefield to Stockton on Tees.
3. Completion of the Metro loop from Sunderland and back to Heworth.
4. Electrification of the line to Hexham via the Metro Centre.
5. The reinstatement of the spur from Birkley to the Metro Centre.

What would be the cost of such improvement? The 2008 unpublished People In Motion report, commissioned by all five local councils in Tyne and Wear estimated a total of £1.3 billion for similar schemes, which at today's prices would come to £1.5 billion.

### Further health options

Reduction of exposure to air pollution must play a key role in the future lives of the people of the north east. Pollution levels within public vehicles and taxis would be considerably reduced by the mandatory use of Hepafilters, with visible monitors. There should also be restrictions on approaching schools with vehicles, particularly diesel, with a buffer zone of at least 100 metres, and Hepafilters in all classrooms should be mandatory. It should be noted that as early as 1997, the impact of air pollution on childhood cancer was recognised in a peer-reviewed article by the eminent epidemiologist E.G. Knox (6). In a further paper (7) in 2005 he concluded:

“Significant birth excesses were found within short distances of bus stations, railway stations, ferries, railways, and A, B class roads, with a relative risk of 2.1 within 100m, tapering to neutral after 3.0 km. About 24% of child cancers were attributable to these joint birth proximities. Roads exerted the major effect. Child cancer initiations are strongly determined by prenatal or early postnatal exposures to engine exhaust gases, probably through maternal inhalation and accumulation of carcinogens over many months.”

In conclusion, it must be recognised by public and statutory bodies that the UK population is now engulfed in a major air pollution crisis. If exposure to air pollution is not drastically reduced in the near future, then this silent killer will continue to be responsible for 10% of all deaths in the UK. The North East Combined Authority has an essential role to play in the reduction of current air pollution levels by developing a sustainable and ethical transport policy.

### Refs:

(1) 23rd March “Planning for Growth 2011” by Greg Clarke, Minister of State for Decentralisation, as annexe A to the “Planning for Growth” letter 31st March 2011.

(2) Public Health England Report <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/estimates-of-mortality-in-local-authority-areas-associated-with-air-pollution>  
10 April 2014.

(3) October 7th 2015 BBNC TV news and Radio 4 “Costing the Earth”.

(4) <http://content.time.com/time/health/article/0,8599,1808049,00.html>

(5) <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1524-4733.2008.00401.x/full>

(6) Knox, GE 1996 “hazard proximities of childhood cancers in great Britain from 1953-1980” Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health, vol 51, pages 151-159.

(7) Knox EG “Roads, railways, and childhood cancers” Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health, volume: 60, issue: 2, pages: 136-141 DOI: 10.1136/jech.2005.042036 Published: Feb 2006.

Since this document was first written, further information has come to light, which should be considered. These are contained in the following pages.

### 100,000 Unnecessary Deaths

In 1994, a government-appointed scientific panel (GASP) examined the fuel and carbon saving that could be achieved in the national transport economy by promoting diesel cars ahead of petrol. At the time, 7.4% of all cars on the road were diesel. As a result of their recommendations, by 2013, the percentage of cars that were diesel came to 34.5%. In retrospect it is clear that such a recommendation, although it created greater fuel efficiency, which resulted in reduced carbon emissions, the increased diesel cars produced far more nitrogen dioxide per vehicle than petrol cars. Based on the Durham City model already quoted, NO<sub>2</sub> output per diesel car is 11.63 times that for a petrol car. Diesel vehicle emissions now on average account for 25% of all PM 2.5 levels recorded. Petrol cars hardly emit PM 2.5s [personal communication, Prof Margaret Bell, Newcastle University]. When these figures are fed back into the Public Health England estimates of 23,500 annual premature deaths associated with NO<sub>2</sub>, and 29,000 deaths associated with PM 2.5s, then a highly-significant result is obtained.

Assuming a linear progression in the percentage of diesel cars between 1994 and 2013, we can attribute an extra 82,720 deaths from nitrogen dioxide, while from the increase in PM 2.5s the increase in attributable deaths by switching from petrol to diesel was 27,900, giving a total of 110,620. For the NECA region alone, the pro rata figure is 3,300.

It is understood that the Durham model is based on emission data from the DEFRA website, which in turn is based on Euro 5 and Euro 6 emissions standards. However, as has been pointed out in the Guardian:

“On average, real-world NO<sub>x</sub> emissions from the tested vehicles were about seven times higher than the limits set by the Euro-6 standard.

If applied to the entire new vehicle fleet, this would correspond to an on-road level of about 560 mg/km of NO<sub>x</sub> (compared to the regulatory limit under Euro 6 of 80 mg/km).”(1)

If indeed this is the case, then the number of unnecessary deaths over the past twenty years of 110,620 would be a significant under-estimate.

### Part III : Solutions

The information provided so far provides a firm basis for decision-making on future transport policies. But, further practical action has to be taken before concrete solutions are made. In the

light of the Volkswagen scandal, it is imperative that true measurements are made of the contribution of diesel vehicles to pollution, particularly NO<sub>2</sub> and PM 2.5s. If, as indicated, diesel vehicles are predominantly the cause of air pollution in our urban centres, then drastic action needs to be taken.

The Guardian, March 11th 2015:

“Councils around the country are beginning to take action to discourage their residents from buying diesel cars. Islington council will introduce a £96 per year diesel vehicle parking surcharge on 1 April. It will be the highest charge of its kind in the country and one of the first such schemes introduced.”(1)

However, such concern cannot be confined purely to diesel cars. As we have seen in the Durham report, buses accounted for 21% of all NO<sub>2</sub> emissions, so the logic of deterring diesel cars from urban centres should also apply to diesel buses, particularly if they have not reached the Euro-6 standard. It should be noted that Euro-6 for buses requires an 84% reduction in NO<sub>2</sub> over the Euro-5 standard, and a 50% reduction in PM 2.5s. At present, most of the the estimated 2,000 buses in the NECA region are not Euro-6. It is important to compare life expectancy costs between diesel cars, petrol cars, and diesel buses. It is estimated that a petrol car during its lifetime of ten years will contribute and extra £1,000 in life expectancy detriment (LED), while a diesel car would contribute £11,300, and diesel buses £470,000.

Based on the number of 637 person-trips per car per year (2008 figures see ref 2) whereas the number of person-trips per bus per year is estimated to be 83,000 (based on the People In Motion research report, which estimated that an extra 300 buses in the NECA region would generate an extra 25 million passenger trips per year). Comparison of these results demonstrates that trips based on the diesel car are more expensive than those on diesel buses, but trips based on petrol cars create less of an LED cost. On this basis, unless emission levels from diesel buses can be considerably reduced, the argument for increasing the number of buses in the public transport system is not sustainable.

The most effective and immediate solution to reducing air pollution is to discourage the purchasing of new diesel cars. It should be noted that the Finance & Leasing Association said that in 2014 74.2% of new cars were sold to private owners using credit, the majority on personal contract purchase (PCP)(3). It would be very difficult to bring in an immediate ban on diesel cars in urban centres, but a progressive ban, starting with air-quality management areas, would weight PCP purchases in favour of petrol cars, while at the same time responding to impending European fines.

Such measures will not decrease the total number of vehicles on the road, unless further selective action is taken. One possible solution is to introduce bus lane user exemptions (BLUE) whereby at peak times, cars containing two or more individuals will be allowed to use such bus lanes. Bearing in mind that the average occupancy for commuter cars is 1.2, then raising this to at least 2 will automatically reduce the number of commuting vehicles (4). Not only would this reduce traffic congestion at peak times, but it would also provide an important challenge to bus operators to make their network more efficient. The use of BLUE may have a major impact on the ability of individuals who cannot afford a car to get to work. For example, the bus journey time from Chopwell in South Gateshead to Newcastle is one hour each way, and probably longer during the rush hour. However, if there is a positive incentive for commuters to offer passenger seats to neighbours, this will provide a very important boost to acceptance of jobs in urban centres by those who live in rural areas.

In conclusion, the air pollution problem is now a major factor in all transport considerations. It has been made worse by previous government policy encouraging the replacement of petrol cars by diesel cars. Increasing public transport by increased number of buses will not resolve the air pollution issue, and indeed may aggravate it, until significant improvements have occurred in bus emissions. In the long-term, fast rapid transit augmented by the reinstatement and electrification of existing rail lines will make a positive contribution to the northern power-house. In the medium-term, replacement of older buses must be accelerated. In the short-term, diesel bans, starting with air pollution management areas, must be installed as soon as possible. The introduction of BLUE would make an immediate impact on traffic congestion at peak times. Reduction in exposure to air pollution (REAP) can be achieved by concentrating on good practice in the use of cars, particularly near schools, and an increase in public awareness, by transparent monitoring of where pollution hot-spots exist.

Refs:

(1)<http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2015/mar/11/have-diesel-cars-been-unfairly-demonised-for-air-pollution>

(2) Travel patterns section, Chapter 12 (transport) of “Social Trends 40:2010” produced by the Office for National Statistics. (see <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/taxonomy/index.html?nscl=Roads+and+Traffic>)

(3)<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/newsbysector/transport/11913856/Diesel-takes-a-knock-but-new-car-sales-accelerate.html>

(4) Table NTS0906 Car occupancy by trip purpose: England

(see <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/nts09-vehicle-mileage-and-occupancy>)

Many figures given in the text, though not quoted directly, are derived from calculations based on figures given in:

(5)[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/449104/ECUK\\_Chapter\\_2\\_-\\_Transport\\_factsheet.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/449104/ECUK_Chapter_2_-_Transport_factsheet.pdf)

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### **Evidence from Commuters**

I live in Longframlington and work in Newcastle, on the whole the X14 works for me. Only because I had to ask my employer if I could “adjust” my start and finish times to accommodate the bus times. I should start work at 8am but the bus does not get into Newcastle till after 8am.

My return bus is ok.

I don't work Saturdays but if I did the timetable is not conducive to Saturday working. We won't mention Sunday – no service at all.

The world we live in is just about 24/7 but our transport system isn't!

I am going to have a problem at Christmas. Most bus companies only run a Saturday service between Christmas and the New Year. The first bus on a Saturday gets into Newcastle at 08.41

which is no good unless you start at 9am (which I don't). I think more people nowadays start at 8am or 8.30am.

I know a lady in the village who only works in Morpeth but quite often has to walk 5 miles to Felton to catch a bus to Morpeth! Not good when Morpeth is only 12 miles away!

If I were to look for employment nearer to home I would still struggle to use a bus! There are no buses to Alnwick – only 6 miles away!

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I live in Newton Aycliffe, and work past Durham City, the only bus option I have is the no.7 route followed by another to take me out of the City.

Train service is unviable, Taxis too expensive, Cycling! would suggest a 26 mile bike ride, 5 days a week to be excessive. I've never had a driving licence.

My work is 'open' Mon to Fri 8am to 8pm, sat 8am to 6pm & sun 10am to 4pm.

- 1) It is impossible to get to work to start at 8am SAT or 10 AM SUN. This also applies (In the opposite direction) if I were to work beyond 50 meters of Darlington Town Centre.
- 2) The buses run daytime regular but as soon as tea-time comes (home time for most workers!) they change to 1 every 30 min then once an hour from early evening, the connecting bus services are not designed to connect on time to allow a direct transfer. so often a delay in journey is forced,;

Each of my journeys takes approx 1hr 15min, (one way, 2 buses for 13 miles!)  
However this has frequently taken over 2 hours when services withdrawn without public notification, max time taken 3 hrs 45 min (it was snowing!!)

To be in work on time for a 7:45 start, I have to get the 6am bus!, for an 8 hr day, plus travel I do nearer an 11 hour day, just as well I like the Job I do.

- 3) Ticket and timings and routes, there's no cooperation between rail and bus services or between 'rival' public bus services. (bar the overpriced "North East Explorer ticket")
- 4) Arriva control the routes in this area, no competition, Go Northern pretty much owns all the surrounding areas.
- 5) We have no public service to any regional shopping centres Metro, Teesside Park, outlets, Multiplex Cinema etc
- 6) Sales in shops start Boxing Day, we have NO public transport service, whereas in the UK's cities they seem to have their 'local' services running well.
- 7) We have no night time services at all.

The fixes are not as easy:

- The Newcastle metro, (or newer version) extended to cover the whole region 24/7.
- Long lost rail links reopened using better efficient engines
- A set and structure of a public bus/transport service that cares more about its passengers than its market share value

- better policing of anti-social behaviour, remembering not all people fight swear abuse, but every one need to get home safe secure and not be overcharged for the privilege of doing so, as we do live in a free tolerant multi-racial society, whether we like it or not.
- 

It would be of great help for people living in Chester le Street (like me) to be able to get a train that gets you into Newcastle for 9am. The current service (and these services are not nearly regular enough despite the £21.50 weekly pass being a fair(ish) deal for a train service) gets into Newcastle 9.03am and is always full to the brim.

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I'm responding to the above survey and my comments are as follows:

1. I commute daily from my home near Northumberland Park Metro station to my job at the Civic Centre
  2. The journey takes around 20 minutes in each direction plus waiting time
  3. My views on cost, ease and timeliness of transport are
    - a) Cost. I have an annual all-zone Metro pass bought through my employer who arranges for me to pay monthly, thus spreading the cost. I consider the cost very reasonable in relation to my income
    - b) Ease. In my view my Metro journey to work could not be easier. I live about 2 min walk from Northumberland Park Metro station and the Civic Centre is only about 2min walk from Haymarket Metro station. I accept that it is not always possible for me to get a seat for all or any of my journey, bearing in mind I travel at peak time.
    - c) Timeliness. Apart from occasional delays, I don't think my journey could be any faster
  4. Although I own a car, I would not even consider using to travel to and from work here.
  5. Before I started work at the Civic Centre in January, I worked at County Hall in Morpeth. The situation there was very different: without a car, I would not have found the journey between my home and there easy, timely or reasonable cost.
  6. I realise I am very fortunate compared to others
- 

1. The accessibility of public transport (i.e. whether people can travel at reasonable cost, in reasonable time and with reasonable ease)?

I use Nexus metro system on a daily basis to get to and from work, ( I also have to use it during the day of I am working in different office bases). The system has gradually gotten worse so much so there is a social media group on Facebook which is keeping a log of the actual daily events that people using the system have to contend with.

- Trains do not ruin to time table on any day – this impacts on my travelling time as I change trains en route. If one train is late or early in leaving or arriving at a station I often miss my connection. E.g. today the connection train left early so I have a 12 minute wait until the next one.
- Trains are too full during the peak times. I would think in any other sector of work health and Safety would be 'up in arms'. People are standing all of the time. People with any physical disability are at a total disadvantage and possibly could not actually get on the train.
- The noise and brightness on the trains are also an added unnecessary synthetic distraction which hinder the journey rather than enhance it.

- I experience disruption on a weekly basis. Reasons are: the weather affecting track adhesion, broken trains, fire alarms, rail network's fault with lines, adverse weather conditions.
  - Bus links to the stations are not great unless the station is a 'main' one.
  - When trains are not working the announcements on the system are slow and limited. When the system fails in peak hour the links to the other operators are diabolical and the other operators will not accept the tickets already bought for the metro system therefore people have to pay twice.
  - I purchase an annual pass but am not able to use the barriers they have recently erected as they are not programmed for my type of ticket. I have to wait for a member of staff to open the barriers for me. This adds to the length of commuting time as depending on how busy the staff are I can be waiting some time.
  - The tickets are not reasonably priced for the service offered. If the service actually worked then it would be a fair price.
  - The concessions for young people are minimal and as the system services 3 major Universities as well as colleges they have a captive audience.
  - The systems in place to get refunds, when trains are late are biased in favour of the company. They are difficult to navigate and it takes too long to receive a reimbursement.
  - The appeals procedure and on the spot fining are subjective and unfair.
2. The availability of public transport and the extent to which it is adequate to access employment sites?
- The bus transport links are great and using this mode of transport when travelling around for work within the locality I can access the majority of offices and sites. The Main one which has poor links is Cobalt Business Park. The links must have been planned by people who do not use public transport: the times are too close together for each bus leaving large gaps between the cluster and the services do not run or link to the metro stations well.
3. What alternative transport approaches could be considered to support people being actively engaged in work?
- One system run by the public sector – or to give the metro system to the collective of bus companies to run. Nexus is poor and unable to meet the needs of the commuters.

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The companies around Nissan are difficult to travel to and to get to work on time. The bus stops a long walk from the site and in a difficult location to access work.

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As residents of School Aycliffe, Co. Durham, myself and my wife are \*compelled\* to use a private vehicle for routine transport needs.

Currently the village is serviced by an hourly service to Newton Aycliffe \*between school hours\*, Monday to Friday, using a bus that normally transports school children to and from school and is able to infill with a public service between those times. This means that the last return service to School Aycliffe is at 14:30. Travel beyond Newton Aycliffe requires a change of bus to one of the main routes.

Travel via public transport to afternoon appointments beyond Newton Aycliffe is impossible as there is no return service available.

It is not possible to use public transport to travel to work \*anywhere\* as the first service is at 09:32. There are no public services available after 14:30, so return from work is impossible.

Additionally, the requirement to use two or more public services to travel to any of the major conurbations for work is doubly expensive.

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I wish to submit evidence for the Overview & Scrutiny Committee of public transport issues and how they could be overcome.

1. The Blyth & Tyne rail Line should be reopened to provide faster, easier journeys for job opportunities between Ashington, Blyth and Bedlington with Newcastle
  2. Quality contracts are needed to ensure a stable bus network in both rural and urban areas at affordable fares and region-wide smart ticketing
  3. Tyne & Wear Metro to be extended via the Leamside Line to Washington to provide better connections with Tyneside to give job opportunities to people in inner city areas
  4. Poor inter-regional links between Tyneside and the Tees Valley which could be overcome by reopening the Stillington line between Ferryhill and Stockton to passenger trains.
  5. Poor transport links between deprived inner city wards of Newcastle and new areas of employment opportunity in North Tyneside at Cobalt and Silverlinks.
  6. Poor transport links between West Gateshead areas of Blaydon, Ryton, Chopwell to employment opportunities on Team Valley.
  7. Problem of reduced bus services from Wideopen and Seaton Burn to Newcastle because most services now operate limited stop via the A1 by-pass.
- 

The metro system is an unreliable joke. Failed trains and delays every day inconveniencing passengers and businesses.

To really understand how people across the region feel about public transport - in this instance the Metro system which NECA are responsible for - try looking through the public responses to the @my\_metro twitter feed. eg:

[https://twitter.com/my\\_metro/status/654353188259282944](https://twitter.com/my_metro/status/654353188259282944)

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One main point I would like to raise is the times of metros arriving and buses leaving sites (and vice versa) that don't tally up resulting in longer waits for employees coming into and leaving work. I'm sure that timetables could be cross referenced to make public transport journeys even quicker and easier.

Bus costs for very short journeys seem very high also, particularly from Northumberland Park into Cobalt Business Park.

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Please accept this email as evidence for the NECA review of public transport.

I live in Corbridge, Northumberland and work in Durham City. I would love to get the train to work, but unfortunately it's not practical at present. The Newcastle to Durham link is excellent, but unfortunately the Tyne Valley line is exceedingly slow, taking around 45 minutes to get from Corbridge to Newcastle. This combined with travel to/from the stations at each end makes the journey simply too long to fit in with family life. The Tyne Valley trains are also very small (only two antiquated coaches) and I suspect they are probably full to bursting at peak times. Therefore I have to drive, using a lot more fuel than I'd like.

So my greatest wish regarding NE public transport is for significantly faster services on the Tyne Valley line.

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I regularly travel from Rothbury to Newcastle on the X14 Arriva bus.

In order to be in Newcastle at 9am, I must leave Rothbury at 6.39 am. For a journey of 30 miles, this is most extraordinary.

The bus that leaves after that is the 7.39am, which gets into Newcastle at 9.06am, which is too late for many people who need to be in their offices by 9am. This bus is also delayed frequently, and it often happens that many people are standing on it as there is not enough space for everyone to sit. Some buses have had loads that exceed the legal limit. It would help if there was a dedicated bus lane from north of Gosforth to the Haymarket, and if the bus could bypass the Regent Centre detour by dropping people off at the opposite end of the road (where access to the Regent Centre might be able to be provided by subway).

A more general question is why all buses from Rothbury to Newcastle must pass through Morpeth, adding a significant amount of time to a journey that would be long already without this detour.

Also, it is not possible to leave Newcastle any later than 6.28 pm to get a bus back to Rothbury. One late bus (say, leaving at 10 pm) would be a great addition.

There is no bus service to or from Rothbury on a Sunday, which has severely detrimental implications for tourism and for those who rely on public transport to get away in the weekend.

Compared to Arriva, the Spirit bus offers a much friendlier service which is prepared to listen to customers. It is a company run by a man who puts his heart and soul into public transport, and I would love to see more Government support for this outstanding service and commitment.

Alternative options would be to reopen a railway line to Rothbury, or to turn the old railway line into a cycle track.

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I would like the following to be considered as evidence submission -:

As an alternative transport approach, can I please suggest that the NELP's plans to re-open the disused Leamside line be pursued and if expenditure does not allow all the line to be re-opened, can the area around TurSDale be developed as a priority please ?

I am putting forward TurSDale because -:

It's close proximity to the Stillington industrial area  
TurSDale's own industrial area

The Durham Gate development in Spennymoor is relatively close.

I believe, if there was sufficient land available, this site has excellent potential for a Park & Ride for commuters

going to Durham, Newcastle and Darlington, thereby easing the traffic congestion on the A1(M).

I hope that you will find my evidence useful and I look forward to future consultations.

## Evidence for Transport with special reference to rural areas and examples of practicalities

### Main Themes:

#### Chapter

**2)** Need to attract as many visitors as possible onto rural routes in order to make them financially viable for rural users, including suggestions.

- LOOK AT SPIRITBUSES AND OTHER RURAL OPERATORS

**2,3)** Lack of travel information other than online – dropout of communications in rural areas.

- TAKE A VERY THOROUGH LOOK AT HOW MORPETH BUS STATION WORKS

AND HAVE A GOOD TALK TO THE PASSENGERS THERE.

- TRY FINDING OUT VARIOUS TYPES OF INFORMATION FROM THE ARRIVA WEBSITE

AND THINK HOW IT WOULD WORK FOR THE PEOPLE WHO DON'T HAVE VERY GOOD BROADBAND SPEEDS.

**4,5)** It is mostly women who have to use public transport in rural areas – need for information, facilities, and above all, security, especially in bus stations.

- COMPARE MORPETH AND ALNWICK BUS STATIONS

<u>Page</u>	<u>Page</u>	<u>Chapter</u>
<b>Summ</b>	Main text	
1		<b>Summary and Extracts</b>
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1	9	<b>2) Takeovers by large bus companies and centralisation of depots has had a devastating effect on the viability of rural bus services, + suggestions for increasing bus use (2.4-2.7)</b>
3	14	<b>3) Reliability and Winter Resilience</b>
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5	18	<b>5) Suitability of Services in Rural Areas, including alternatives</b>
7	24	<b>6) Three barriers to work - effects of charging for post-16 transport in rural areas</b>
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8	<b>1) Credentials</b>

9 **2) Takeovers by large bus companies and centralisation of depots has had a devastating effect on the viability of rural bus services, + suggestions for increasing bus use (2.4-2.7)**

9 2.1 I have seen the extremely damaging effect that the **closure of the rural depot** and the loss of local drivers has had on the viability and usefulness for passengers of the remaining service

9 2.2.2 If it were not for this team of drivers going out of their way to look after their passengers and get them to where they need to be, even in difficult conditions, I do not think that this route could have continued to be workable

9 2.2.3.1 Arriva have at last sent out mentors with new drivers on our route. This is superb.

9 2.2.3.2 look for passengers on the hail and ride rural routes

9 2.2.4 worked hard to impress on new drivers the importance of not leaving stops early and leaving passengers behind, because there isn't another bus for an hour or more, and there are no alternative forms of transport.

9 2.2.5 **All of these are making a great contribution to passengers being more able to rely on the bus service instead of having to find alternative transport.**

10 2.3.1 The withdrawal of depots to urban areas has rendered rural bus routes drastically less viable regardless of passenger numbers, because the **services are now running in the wrong direction**: the first journey running from town to country, ie. virtually empty, when the first journey should be full, taking workers from rural towns into urban centres for the day, and then

10 bringing tourists and other visitors back into the country.

The evenings are the same:  
the cost of running early and late services when rural people actually need them is instantly doubled.

2.3.2 maintain close contact with, and the best possible **support of local rural operators** in order to remedy this situation.

2.3.3 on our route, especially around Weldon Bridge and Rothbury, many **smartphones don't get a signal**

10 2.3.4.1 Hexham Bus Station is the only one which I have been to in Northumberland where timetable leaflets are made available

10 2.3.4.3 For all of the rural area between Newcastle and Berwick which Arriva serves, **the only accessible bus office is in Newcastle Haymarket**, which is also only open during office hours Monday – Friday (9-5 I think) and on Saturday mornings, so still inaccessible for rural commuters to pick up timetable leaflets because they are also in their offices by that time.

11 **SUGGESTIONS: (2.4 – 2.7)**

2.4.1 **TAKE A CLOSE LOOK AT THE ONE-YEAR OLD SPIRITBUSES OF ROTHBURY**, which is run on a purely commercial basis with no subsidy.

11 2.4.4 I think that it will be very important for you to talk to the local bus companies which keep services running in specific areas of the rural network, but please bear in mind that as small local companies, the owners and

11 managers are often part of the driving team too, and so might find it difficult to get away to attend meetings, certainly at short notice.

11 2.5.4 Ask house-builders to contribute, whether to a campaign to promote the use of buses, or directly to routes where they are building. Better bus services would make it easier to sell their houses,

11 2.5.5.1- **Work much more with tourist associations, employers, chambers of trade, tourist accommodation including hostels – next to nothing seems to have been done about this so far. The recently constituted Active Northumberland** should also be playing a big part in this. With its remit of Leisure, Libraries, Culture and Tourism, it should be promoting the use of bus services to get people out to different places for a change of scenery and activity even if they don't have a car.

12	e.g see my attached flier (p.) See also annotated map showing bus routes in relation to recreational access.(p.) 2.5.5.2 Encourage more bus use
	2.6.6 <b>There should be more visitor information presented from the bus user's point of view.</b> i.e, not just a bus network map with no clue as to what attractions might be on offer on the routes, and not just a list of destinations which, when checked, include a high proportion of attractions which <i>aren't</i> accessible by bus.
12	2.6.13 <b>Could you get bus users to do a few words or pictures about their favourite bus route or bus destination to put together as a pamphlet or online guide for visitors?</b>
12	
	2.7.1 There are other measures which could be taken to <b>encourage/stop discouraging people using buses:</b>
13	2.7.3 <b>Waive time restrictions for concessionary passes on rural routes if the commuter buses are not full,</b> so that older people can set off earlier so that they can then get <b>access to the main transport network in time to make use of it, and do not need so many services to be provided later in the morning</b>
13	2.7.4 <b>Make it a requirement in contracts with operators</b>
13	2.7.4.1 <b>that they maintain and develop communications suitable to the needs of <i>all</i> of their passengers,</b> and not just those with smartphones, 2.7.4.2 <b>to promote and increase bus use.</b>
	<b>3) Reliability and Winter Resilience</b>
13	
14	3.2.2 Unsuitable vehicles?
	3.2.3 No snow tyres?
14	3.2.4 Arriva based in Ashington beside the coast, and no supervisors anywhere near, unlike GoAhead, with buses and supervisors at Hexham bus station, right beside the uplands?
14	3.3.1 There should be better collaboration from the Council re. gritting and making sure that there are passing and, more importantly, turning places for buses in snowy weather.
14	3.3.2.2 retail workers, have to work on Saturdays and Sundays
14	
	<u>3.4</u> <b>have a hotline between bus drivers and local authorities</b> to report bottle-necks and treacherous conditions? Since they are driving the same route several times per day, bus drivers are surely the best-placed to report changing conditions as they happen, and I think that they would very much appreciate a means of doing this.
15	
15	3.5.1 <b>Information in winter weather:</b>
15	3.5.2 Last time that I tried it, the Arriva customer helpline was only available something like 9-5 Monday – Friday, so no use for rural commuters on our Thropton route wanting to check their journeys in the winter when they have to set off at 6.30 am to get into Newcastle for 9am.
	3.5.4 For those who do not have the means to carry a smartphone or laptop with them – probably those on low pay who have no choice but to use the bus – Twitter and any other online information is not accessible either.
15	3.5.5 Telephone numbers for local information from depots etc. are not given out.
15	

15	3.5.6 The only staffed bus station which I know of in Northumberland is GoAhead at Hexham. Berwick doesn't have a bus station.
15	<b>3.6.1 I RECOMMEND THAT YOU</b>
15	<b>3.6.2 TAKE A VERY THOROUGH LOOK AT HOW MORPETH BUS STATION WORKS</b>
15	<b>AND HAVE A GOOD TALK TO THE PASSENGERS THERE.</b>
15	<b>3.6.3 TRY FINDING OUT VARIOUS TYPES OF INFORMATION FROM THE ARRIVA WEBSITE</b>
15	<b>AND THINK HOW IT WOULD WORK FOR THE PEOPLE WHO DON'T HAVE VERY GOOD BROADBAND SPEEDS.</b>
15	
15	<b>4) Making contact with Passengers (including Women and Men: a problem of unequal engagement in consultations?)</b>
15	
16	<b>4.1.2 online information is not available to everyone, particularly if they are forced to rely on buses because they are on a low income.</b>
16	<b>4.1.4 If there were much more easily accessible information, especially in bus stations and not just online, and particularly about connecting services and wider bus networks,</b> not just the ones run by the predominant company using a particular bus station, it would probably encourage people to make many more bus journeys for a wider variety of purposes <b>e.g try out excursions on rural routes, and so make rural bus routes more financially viable</b>
16	<b>4.2.1 You really need to make every effort to reach the paying passengers,</b> ie. commuters and students (and visitors from nearby and abroad if possible), whose payments are the ones which will keep rural services financially viable.
16	<b>4.2.2 These groups are greatly disadvantaged in terms of time compared to their urban counterparts, because they spend so much of their time travelling, as often as not due to poorly connecting services.</b>
16	<b>4.2.3 They therefore have less time available to look at consultations etc.</b> which are across the wider community, rather than activities which are specific to their immediate community, so you definitely need to make more effort to communicate effectively with the paying groups.
16	
16	<b>4.3.1 Northumberland County Council has an online People's Panel</b>
16	<b>4.4.1 You need some sort of rolling information system</b> (for bus routes like Northumberland County Council has for bus shelters and bus stops) to identify need as soon as it happens, especially with the large amount of house-building and commercial development which is going on at present.
16	<b>4.4.2 If this doesn't happen,</b> new houses and employment will start by being populated by people who have to rely on cars, and it will therefore never be viable to introduce public transport to the new areas
16	<b>4.4.3 e.g. the new housing development at the old St. Mary's Hospital site north west of Stannington.</b>
16	<b>4.4.4 So far as I can tell at present,</b> most information-gathering seems to be reactive, slow, and only based on existing routes rather than the need for new ones, such as good connections
17	<b>4.4.6 precluding any rural person from looking for retail work in Newcastle</b>
17	<b>4.5 Women and Men: a problem of unequal engagement in consultations?</b>
17	<b>5) Suitability of Services in Rural Areas, including alternatives</b>

17	5.1.1	<b>Smartphones/smart-ticketing</b>
17	5.2	<b>Work much more closely with employers and <i>local</i> chambers of trade to develop, promote, and communicate news about public transport :</b>
	5.2.1	more parking spaces for their customers to be able to get to them, and more financially productive use of land in their area.
18	5.2.4.6	<b>Last year, 2014/15, I saw no Christmas timetable information at all posted on our buses</b>
18	5.2.4.9	<b>None of this is likely to encourage them to keep using buses, still less recommend them to anyone else.</b>
18	5.2.5	<b>I think that at the very least, operators should have some sort of off-line up-to-date information service available for as many hours as they have buses running, and certainly shouldn't be restricting it to 9-5 Monday to Friday, which is useless for most commuters, and particularly useless for those who have to work at weekends and evenings and are often people on low pay without a choice of means to travel or communicate.</b>
19	5.3.1	Perhaps more so than in urban areas, <b>rural bus services are mostly relied on by women</b>
19	5.3.3	If buses were relied on by men as much as by women and youngsters, would they be subject to such great cuts, would more effort be put into making them viable
20	5.4	<b><u>With modern working practises of 24/7, zero hours contracts with shifts at short notice, flexitime, people now need and use buses in a very different way from long-established timetables</u></b>
20	5.4.1	e.g. of my shift pattern, never the same two weeks running
	5.4.5	<b>For people in their first jobs and wishing to progress, it is important that they play a full part in the work and life of their team</b>
	5.5.1	<b>availability/suitability of direct or connecting services</b> , the latter if which might be viable if timetables were designed with this in mind.
20	5.5.2	<b>What are "peak times", especially in rural areas where journey times take much longer?</b>
20	5.6.1	<b><u>Overcrowded buses</u> with passengers standing are probably less safe and acceptable on long, steep, fast, rural routes with sharp bends, .e.g. the A 697</b>
	5.7.1	<b><u>Bus Stations</u></b>
20	5.7.2	<b>Extreme lack of information</b>
	5.7.3	<b>Lack of facilities, especially toilets</b>
	5.7.5.1	<b>Customer security, especially women</b>
21	5.7.6.1	<b>e.g of improved security and passenger use at Morpeth</b>
21	5.7.6.9	<b>The comparison of Alnwick bus station, which is a major point on the international tourist route, to Morpeth bus station, which probably doesn't figure greatly in the international tourist market, is devastating for Alnwick.</b>
21		<b>I STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT YOU COMPARE THE TWO.</b>
21	5.8.1	<b><u>Sunday Opening hours – especially if extended</u></b>
	5.9.1	<b><u>Walking</u></b>
21	5.9.5	Less suitable for <b>women</b> , especially in rural areas, and especially if required to wear elaborate hair/makeup/clothes for work
	5.9.9	<b>A few extra street-lights to fill the gaps</b> e.g. Pegswood to Morpeth
21	5.10.1	<b><u>Arranging a lift:</u> less opportunity in rural areas</b>

21	
21	5.11.1 <b>Taxis</b>
22	5.11.3 need to ensure that it is possible for taxi businesses who serve rural areas to remain financially
22	viable, because those based in urban areas cannot be relied upon to accept calls from rural areas, and take
22	too long to get there to pick people up in emergencies anyway.
	5.11.4 <b>The Council needs to do much more to support the viability of local taxi companies</b> e.g. not just
	taking the cheapest possible tender without looking at the wider effect on the local community and how it is
	served,
22	5.11.5 also doing much more to check licensing so that those who have paid to work in a particular location
	are not swamped by those who have not.
22	5.11.6 Proper and regular licencing checks are also important from the point of view of safety for those who
23	are undertaking <b>long and isolated journeys in rural areas by taxi so that there are local and familiar drivers</b>
23	<b>and taxi firms available to serve them</b> , rather than firms and drivers who are based out of the area and
	unknown in the community
23	
	5.12 <b>Community Transport</b> – not suitable for work shifts at short notice
23	
	5.13.1 <b>Cycling/mopeds</b> Too dangerous on long-distance fast country roads
25	
25	
	<b>6) Three barriers to work - effects of charging for post-16 transport in rural areas</b>
	6.1.1 No transport to weekend work
25	6.1.2 paying out money for transport to education when their urban fellows
	aren't,
	6.1.3 <b>now at a double disadvantage if they are looking to get the</b>
	<b>education that they need for higher paid and skilled jobs.</b>
25	
	6.2.3 <b>now cheaper for them to drive their two children twice a day</b>
	<b>between home and school than to pay the £600 per child per year</b> that it
25	would cost for them to use school
	6.2.5 <b>whichever parent is driving is also diverted from carrying out</b>
	<b>economic activity twice a day five days per week,</b>
	6.2.6 <b>which is also not helpful to a family trying to set up their children to go on to college or university.</b>
25	
	<b>APP. 1 Flyer: recommended routes for promotion</b>
	<b>APP. 2 Map: routes/destinations for promotion</b>
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1	<b>1) Credentials</b>
2	<b>2) Takeovers by large bus companies and centralisation of depots has had a devastating effect on the viability of rural bus services, + suggestions for increasing bus use (2.4-2.7)</b>
6	<b>3) Reliability and Winter Resilience</b>
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15	<b>Flyer: recommended routes for promotion</b>
16	<b>Map: routes/destinations for promotion</b>

## 1) Credentials

1.1.1 My main reference will be to the Thropton/Newcastle bus route which I have used for over 40 years, including five or six days per week for the last 11 years between Longframlington and Morpeth.

1.1.2 I also use the Arriva X15 route north of Morpeth on most Sundays and sometimes late evenings.

1.1.3 In 2014 I travelled most of the rural routes in Northumberland to see them for myself. [See *Northumberland County Council>All Services>Roads, Streets and Transport>Bus Travel in Northumberland>Experiencing Northumberland by bus map, + Route 74 Newcastle to Hexham via Darras Hall, Stamfordham, Matfen and Great Whittington, which is a superb drive through the history of rural Northumberland, and forms an excellent circular tour in combination with the direct Hexham-Newcastle buses*].

1.1.4 I spent 20 years working short contracts around Britain, so used buses in places such as Lincolnshire, suburban Bristol, central London, rural Worcestershire and Warwickshire, central Bedfordshire, Middlesbrough, and in and around Manchester, so I have had plenty of routes and operators to compare.

1.2.1 *Some* of the material in this response was also submitted to the Northumberland County Council Review of Subsidised Bus Services in March 2015, run by Kirsten Francis. [\[In blue\]](#)

1.2.2 This was the first encouraging review of bus services which I have seen, taking a holistic and inclusive approach to funding the bus network so that it can work for people, and not just a more cursory look at which bits of the budget were most cut-able.

1.2.3 It was a pity that, as usual with consultations, there did not appear to be adequate funding for effective publicity to reach the people who most needed to be consulted, e.g. the people on the buses, and, more tellingly, to process the responses if a larger number had been received due to more widespread publicity.

1.2.4 So far as I could tell, most of the publicity was done through Parish Councils and other bodies, who meet more or less infrequently, most of whose members have next to no experience of or even interest in buses, and who are ever more hard-pressed by responsibilities which are being passed down to them from Local Authorities, often with fewer resources to deal with them than the Local Authorities had.

1.2.5 Though Parish Councils are certainly a crucial part of the communications chain, and should always be consulted, it is unrealistic to assume that they can pay for the Parish Clerks, who often cover several different parish councils, to go out and put up publicity on noticeboards or bus shelters.

1.2.6 **Parish magazines might be a more cost-effective form of publicity, but this depends on coinciding effectively with their distribution dates and deadlines.**

## **2) Takeovers by large bus companies and centralisation of depots has had a devastating effect on the viability of rural bus services, + suggestions for increasing bus use (2.4-2.7)**

**2.1** Having used the Thropton/Newcastle route for so many years, since United had a bus depot in Rothbury with the drivers for the route based there, to Arriva's present day service which is based in Ashington, **I have seen the extremely damaging effect that the closure of the rural depot and the loss of local drivers has had on the viability and usefulness for passengers of the remaining service.**

**2.2.1** We have been lucky in one respect in that Arriva has retained a specific team of drivers to work on our route, and so they have got to know the route and the regular passengers very well.

**2.2.2** **If it were not for this team of drivers going out of their way to look after their passengers and get them to where they need to be, even in difficult conditions, I do not think that this route could have continued to be workable** under the regime of a large company such as Arriva, because it was **notable for the aging vehicles and number of breakdowns, unacceptable on any service, but particularly instrumental in discouraging bus use in an area where there were no alternative services**, the next bus not being due for another hour, and the distances so great that calling a taxi was completely unaffordable, and would take too long to get there anyway, because **there are few local taxi firms, and at commuting time, their vehicles are committed to doing school runs, which is at present the only way that they can stay financially viable.**

**2.2.3.1** **After many years of people being put off using buses** because new drivers were sent out on our route without being properly briefed on where the stops were and so going too fast to stop, or, in some cases since the Rothbury landslip, missing out some or all of the stops in Longframlington altogether because their supervisors and managers in the depot had given them incomplete or sometimes completely erroneous information because they didn't know where the stops were themselves, **Arriva have at last sent out mentors with new drivers on our route. This is superb.**

**2.2.3.2** The mentors are the regular drivers, and they show the new ones where to slow down to **look for passengers on the hail and ride rural routes**, where they might have to stop at road ends such as Espley Hall, or at bus stops which are set back from the road and obscured by vegetation, such as the one at Weldon Bridge.

**2.2.3.3** They also have a little knowledge of how passengers might have travelled before they even reach the bus route- e.g. a 4 mile walk or 2 miles cycling on dark winter mornings, or a lift from many miles further into the countryside, information which their managers are completely unaware of.

**2.2.4** Another great improvement over the last two or three years is that Arriva have clearly **worked hard to impress on new drivers the importance of not leaving stops early and leaving passengers behind, because there isn't another bus for an hour or more, and there are no alternative forms of transport.**

**2.2.5** **All of these are making a great contribution to passengers being more able to rely on the bus service instead of having to find alternative transport.**

**2.3.1** **The withdrawal of depots to urban areas has rendered rural bus routes drastically less viable regardless of passenger numbers, because the services are now running in the wrong direction: the first journey running from town to country, ie. virtually empty, when the first journey should be full, taking workers from rural towns into urban centres for the day, and then bringing tourists and other visitors back into the country.**

**The evenings are the same:** the last bus is running back empty from country to town, too late for most tourists to use it, instead of running back from town to country full of returning workers or revellers, and so **the cost of running early and late services when rural people actually need them is instantly doubled.**

**2.3.2** I think that it is very important to maintain close contact with, and the best possible **support of local rural operators** in order to remedy this situation.

Not only will they be rural businesses with buses running in the right direction for rural people, but they will have the best local knowledge of routes, dealing with local road conditions e.g. in winter, and passenger requirements, as well as the most appropriate and agile means of communication with their passengers.

2.3.3 e.g. Arriva relies very heavily on smart phone technology, but on our route, especially around Weldon Bridge and Rothbury, many smartphones don't get a signal, including the ones which some of the Arriva drivers use, and the taxi business which I use. The Arriva passenger helpline, based in Luton I believe, is only open something like Monday to Friday 9 -5, so is totally useless for rural commuters on a snowy morning who have to set off at 6.30 or 7 am to get the 25 or 35 miles into Newcastle by 9 am and need to find out whether the bus is running or not. Arriva do not give out a depot number for passengers to ring in such circumstances.

With a local company like Glen Valley Tours, it is likely that passengers will be able to ring up and get an answer.

2.3.4.1 **Hexham Bus Station is the only one which I have been to in Northumberland where timetable leaflets are made available (by Go NorthEast) – particularly important to have these available when timetable changes are being made, so that passengers aren't left stranded.**

2.3.4.2 Elsewhere, passengers have to leave the bus station and go to find them at the tourist information office or the library – usually at the other side of the town centre, such as Morpeth and Wooler, and with restricted opening hours, so no use for commuters.

2.3.4.3 For all of the rural area between Newcastle and Berwick which Arriva serves, The only accessible bus office is in Newcastle Haymarket, which is also only open during office hours Monday – Friday (9-5 I think) and on Saturday mornings, so still inaccessible for rural commuters to pick up timetable leaflets because they are also in their offices by that time. (There are some on a display stand in the bus station, but I think that these are taken in when the office is closed, and don't include all routes.)

2.3.5 All of this suggests to me that Arriva is only interested in serving people who have found the finances and skills to be technologically connected, and are therefore the cheapest to deal with, and that they are not interested in serving or promoting their services to the remaining people who really want them or have no choice but to put up with whatever crumbs are thrown to them.

### **SUGGESTIONS: (2.4 – 2.7)**

2.4.1 With this in mind, I strongly recommend that you take a close look at the one-year old **Spiritbuses of Rothbury**, which is run on a purely commercial basis with no subsidy.

2.4.2 They have very strong and up-to-date lines of communication with passengers, local businesses, other local bus companies, and road users in general (e.g. updating their facebook page with winter road conditions, news of events, pictures of views with the latest sunset etc. to attract tourists – a quick flick down their Facebook page, which you don't need to be member of to look at, will show you a great deal).

2.4.3 Being a new company, I believe that they also have the machinery ready to use smartcards, and like the bigger companies, are eagerly waiting for the rest of the system to catch up.

2.4.4 **I think that it will be very important for you to talk to the local bus companies which keep services running in specific areas of the rural network, but please bear in mind that as small local companies, the owners and managers are often part of the driving team too, and so might find it difficult to get away to attend meetings, certainly at short notice.**

2.5.1 Extract from submission to 2015 Northumberland Bus Review:

2.5.2 What are future demographic and business projections in the community – e.g. new houses, families with children, economic opportunities – if services do not remain, and are not kept in a state from which they can be developed, they will never be brought back, because people will make alternative but

probably less sustainable arrangements or go elsewhere, and render the affected communities unsustainable.

**2.5.3 Invest to save.** This should have been done decades ago. If it had been, we would have had a more sustainable, and probably even thriving and exemplary, public transport network, and communities where the whole range of people and working families could have a realistic chance of living.

**2.5.4 Ask house-builders to contribute**, whether to a campaign to promote the use of buses, or directly to routes where they are building. Better bus services would make it easier to sell their houses, because it could mean that households might only need one or even no cars for commuting, they would not need to spend so much time driving their children to educational and social activities, and it would make local market towns less congested by freeing up roads and parking spaces, which do less to contribute to funds now that parking is free.

This would give builders better green credentials as well as better sales.

**2.5.5 Do much more to get paying passengers onto buses** – i.e. commuters, students, visitors, whether from nearby towns or from abroad.

**2.5.5.1- Work much more with tourist associations, employers, chambers of trade, tourist accommodation including hostels** – next to nothing seems to have been done about this so far. The recently constituted Active Northumberland should also be playing a big part in this. With its remit of Leisure, Libraries, Culture and Tourism, it should be promoting the use of bus services to get people out to different places for a change of scenery and activity even if they don't have a car.

(e.g see my attached flier, currently distributing to local hostels, but at a very slow rate due to shortage of time and minimal printing budget. The receptionist at the Eurohostel in Carlisle Square, Newcastle, which probably has the highest number of foreign guests in the area, seemed to be very pleased to get this information.) [SEE FLYER AT END OF THIS SUBMISSION]

See also annotated map showing bus routes in relation to recreational access. [SEE MAP AT END OF THIS SUBMISSION].

**2.5.5.2- Encourage more bus use** from an early age – e.g in the summer holidays, when a significant number of bus users are away, do extra family promotions to allow families who couldn't normally afford it to get out into the country areas with their children.

**2.6.1** To make rural bus services viable, you need to be bringing as many visitors out from the urban centres to enjoy the countryside as rural commuters into the towns to work.

**2.6.2** There are a range of things which could be done, some with minimal budgets, but it would need operators, local authorities, and the other bodies mentioned in 2.5.5 to work effectively together. It shouldn't be left to a member of the public with no resources or design skills to spread the word about our beautiful bus routes and the destinations which they give access to.

**2.6.3** Not enough of our visitor information is aimed at the great numbers in our region who don't have cars and might not use computers.

**2.6.4** Many people need encouragement to try out new routes or transport connections, especially if they are not confident in reading timetables.

**2.6.5** There is a significant overlap between the large groups of regular bus users and regular library users, many of whom are also job-seekers using the computers at the libraries (and of course retired people, who can take more of the funding towards rural routes with their concessionary passes, and many of whom are in walking groups).

**2.6.6 There should be more visitor information presented from the bus user's point of view. i.e, not just a bus network map with no clue as to what attractions might be on offer on the routes, and not just a list of destinations which, when checked, include a high proportion of attractions which aren't accessible by bus.**

**2.6.7** We need a tourist map for bus users similar to the one at the end of this submission which I put up in our village bus shelter for the summer holidays, but with much more information about viewpoints,

visitor attractions, places where long distance paths cross bus routes, so that people who can no longer walk great distances can still do short sections.

**2.6.8** Could this region work to make this a top destination for all the bus users- those with concessionary passes, foreign visitors such as the large number of oriental visitors who come to stay in Newcastle and use the bus to visit Alnwick Castle, and the large fraternity of bus enthusiasts?

**2.6.9** Could somewhere like Berwick, in its strategic place linking our transport network with the Scottish one, hold a bus festival in the autumn for grandparents needing a break after their summer holiday child-minding duties, birdwatchers for autumn migrations etc?

**2.6.10** Google has excellent bus-stop information on their maps – could we do a project with them to add extra tourist information at relevant bus stops?

**2.6.11** Could we work with our outstanding and numerous local artists to promote bus stops for tourist attractions – e.g. Gallery 45 at Felton?

**2.6.12** Could we have a commemorative box to fill with locally designed mementos sold for bus stops next to tourist attractions – for bus enthusiasts and art collectors?

e.g. the 680 Hexham to Bellingham service now goes on to Bellingham Heritage Centre as well as stopping in the centre of the village.

(Northumberland has some of the best stone bus shelters, some in very attractive places, built in the 1980s by people on job creation schemes, and now being used by their grandchildren. There are also historic ones such as the Coronation bus stop at Longframlington, and I think that there is a distinctive one at Stannington too, as well as the much-campaigned-for new bus shelter at Rothbury. How many bus shelters now have no buses stopping at them?).

**2.6.13** **Could you get bus users to do a few words or pictures about their favourite bus route or bus destination to put together as a pamphlet or online guide for visitors?**

**2.7.1** There are other measures which could be taken to **encourage/stop discouraging people using buses:**

**2.7.2** Particularly in rural areas where no other sources of information are accessible, **make sure that the times displayed at the bus stops are complete and accurate.**

e.g. in Northumberland, it looks as though the County Council puts the times for the main stop on *all* of the stops in the village, so that at Longframlington, people go out at the time stated at the first stop, but the bus has already gone on to the main stop which the time actually applies to

and at Felton last year, the bus times at the Northumberland Arms were only displayed on the southbound side for Newcastle, and there was no information for the northbound side to Alnwick and Berwick, though this has been remedied now.

**2.7.3** **Waive time restrictions for concessionary passes on rural routes if the commuter buses are not full, so that older people can set off earlier so that they can then get access to the main transport network in time to make use of it, and do not need so many services to be provided later in the morning at the times which they are currently restricted to.**

**2.7.4** **Make it a requirement in contracts with operators**

**2.7.4.1** **that they maintain and develop communications suitable to the needs of *all* of their passengers, and not just those with smartphones,**

**2.7.4.2** **and that they work effectively to communicate with *all* of those who don't currently use buses in order to promote and increase bus use.**

### **3) Reliability and Winter Resilience**

**3.1** Reliability in winter is a huge issue on the Thropton/Morpeth route, and this was the case even before the Rothbury landslip forced the buses to divert over the moor.

In the very bad winter a few years ago, the Arriva buses did not come through Longframlington for days and days, although the GoAhead buses still managed to run to Allenheads, so of course it is another reason for passengers in our area not to rely on the bus to get to work.

**3.2.1 Possible reasons for lack of winter resilience on the Morpeth/Thropton Arriva buses:**

**3.2.2 Unsuitable vehicles?**

**3.2.3 No snow tyres** (I have heard that GoAhead do have snow tyres for the Allenheads route)?

**3.2.4 Arriva based in Ashington beside the coast, and no supervisors anywhere near**, unlike GoAhead, with buses and supervisors at Hexham bus station, right beside the uplands?

**3.2.5** Despite this, our Arriva journey appears to cost more than the GoAhead Allenheads journey.

**3.3.1 There should be better collaboration from the Council re. gritting and making sure that there are passing and, more importantly, turning places for buses in snowy weather.**

**3.3.2.1** e.g. At Longframlington the first bus often arrives *in front* of the snowplough, especially on a Saturday morning.

**3.3.2.2** - The Council needs to remember that many people, particularly those on the lowest pay who most rely on buses, such as **retail workers, have to work on Saturdays and Sundays**, and it is essential that the bus should be able to run to get them to work, so roads need gritting for workers at weekends too.

**3.3.3.1** In snowy weather the bus can often get as far as Longhorsley, because it can turn there, but it is less likely that Arriva drivers/managers will go the three or four miles further north to Longframlington, because although it is still on a wide part of the main A697, the steep bank is often slippery, and once it has left Longhorsley there is nowhere for the bus to turn between there and Longframlington if it gets into difficulties.

**3.3.3.2** If snow ploughs made sure that there was a bus turning place in Longframlington and other strategic points, it would make it more likely that bus services could continue in snowy conditions, perhaps even on to Rothbury and the end of the route at Thropton.

**3.4** Why not **have a hotline between bus drivers and local authorities** to report bottle-necks and treacherous conditions?

Since they are driving the same route several times per day, bus drivers are surely the best-placed to report changing conditions as they happen, and I think that they would very much appreciate a means of doing this. (On rural routes where they are regular drivers, they are also possibly a well-placed social service for frail passengers who might be struggling).

**3.5.1 Information in winter weather:**

**3.5.2 Last time that I tried it, the Arriva customer helpline was only available something like 9-5 Monday – Friday, so no use for rural commuters on our Thropton route wanting to check their journeys in the winter when they have to set off at 6.30 am to get into Newcastle for 9am.**

**3.5.3** Although we are directed online, someone in the IT industry told me that Arriva's Facebook is only updated Monday – Friday 9-5. If so, that is no use for keeping commuters up to date either.

**3.5.4 For those who do not have the means to carry a smartphone or laptop with them – probably those on low pay who have no choice but to use the bus – Twitter and any other online information is not accessible either.**

**3.5.5 Telephone numbers for local information from depots etc. are not given out.**

**3.5.6 The only staffed bus station which I know of in Northumberland is GoAhead at Hexham. Berwick doesn't have a bus station.**

There is a rest room for drivers at Morpeth bus station, and they often do interrupt their breaks to help people and ring the depot on their behalf, but they are probably more in need of their breaks than ever in bad weather.

3.5.7.1 There is supposedly a live information screen at Morpeth (rather expensive I believe, and looks very good, but fixed too high for anyone to read more than the departure time and final destination, so the details in smaller print about the intermediate stops are effectively unavailable).

3.5.7.2 The only “live” thing about it is the fact that the screen only shows the details of the buses which are timetabled to depart in the next hour or so on that particular day of the week. It isn’t actually connected to when the buses really are running as opposed to when they are supposed to run.

It is in fact very misleading, because if a bus is a minute or two late, the information disappears off the screen at the time that it was due to depart, and people then think that they have missed it and will have to wait an hour or so for the next one, so leave the bus station to look for something to do, and so miss the late-running bus when it does arrive).

**3.6.1 I recommend that you**

**3.6.2 Take a very thorough look at how Morpeth bus station works and have a good talk to the passengers there.**

**3.6.3 Try finding out various types of information from the Arriva website and think how it would work for the people who don’t have very good broadband speeds.**

#### **4) Making Contact with Passengers**

**4.1.1** Lack of information available: I am used to being able to find out information online, (on the public access computers at the library) but I only pick up some as I travel around the county and see buses pulling out of bus stations.

**4.1.2** As already mentioned, online information is not available to everyone, particularly if they are forced to rely on buses because they are on a low income.

**4.1.3** In rural areas the libraries often have quite patchy opening times, which might not coincide with the times when people who are reliant on buses can get there to use the public access computers.

**4.1.4** If there were much more easily accessible information, especially in bus stations and not just online, and particularly about connecting services and wider bus networks, not just the ones run by the predominant company using a particular bus station, it would probably encourage people to make many more bus journeys for a wider variety of purposes e.g try out excursions on rural routes, and so make rural bus routes more financially viable

**4.1.5** Suggestion: to publicise NECA region and encourage people to try out buses – have some sort of bus route challenge to see who can go the furthest/visit the most places etc (perhaps in aid of charity)?

**4.2.1** You really need to make every effort to reach the paying passengers, ie. commuters and students (and visitors from nearby and abroad if possible), whose payments are the ones which will keep rural services financially viable.

**4.2.2** These groups are greatly disadvantaged in terms of time compared to their urban counterparts, because they spend so much of their time travelling, as often as not due to poorly connecting services.

**4.2.3** They therefore have less time available to look at consultations etc. which are across the wider community, rather than activities which are specific to their immediate community, so you definitely need to make more effort to communicate effectively with the paying groups.

**4.2.4** These are the best, possibly the only, hope of keeping services viable for all of the other groups who need them.

**4.2.5** If a system could be found of distributing information where people are a captive audience and have time to discuss things i.e waiting at bus stations/ bus shelters, or sitting on the bus if bus operators could be persuaded to display clear and easily readable information about consultations etc. (unlike Arriva's notices with print only big enough to read from the front few seats), then this might be one of the most effective means of spreading the word.

**4.3.1** Northumberland County Council has an online People's Panel, and it asked them to contribute to the subsidised bus review in spring 2015 – could it also contact them to notify them of NECA consultations?

**4.3.2** One of the questions in NCC's spring 2015 subsidised bus review was whether we would like to be involved in future consultation regarding subsidised bus services. I ticked the box to say yes, and supplied my contact details, but NCC didn't send me any notification of this NECA consultation, which I think is a pity.

**4.4.1** You need some sort of rolling information system (for bus routes like Northumberland County Council has for bus shelters and bus stops) to identify need as soon as it happens, especially with the large amount of house-building and commercial development which is going on at present.

**4.4.2** If this doesn't happen, new houses and employment will start by being populated by people who have to rely on cars, and it will therefore never be viable to introduce public transport to the new areas because people will already have got cars and those without them won't have been able to move there.

**4.4.3** e.g. the new housing development at the old St. Mary's Hospital site north west of Stannington.

I have heard that people who have got new jobs at the pub there are struggling because there is no public transport.

**4.4.4** So far as I can tell at present, most information-gathering seems to be reactive, slow, and only based on existing routes rather than the need for new ones, such as good connections between e.g. rural Northumberland north of Morpeth and the “new” employment at Cramlington, which has never really happened in the forty years since Cramlington was developed, so rural people without their own cars have never been able to apply for jobs there.

**4.4.5** A refreshing change was the recent Arriva “Northumberland” consultation in the summer with proposals which addressed the transport needs for the new hospital in Cramlington.

**4.4.6** Unfortunately Arriva’s “Northumberland” consultation didn’t include mention of the changes which they then made to our Thropton route, one of which was to put the first bus on a Saturday half an hour later, which means that it doesn’t arrive in Morpeth until 8.33 and Newcastle until 9.11, thereby **precluding any rural person from looking for retail work in Newcastle**, including post-16s who might be looking for a Saturday job in order to save up some money for further education.

**4.5**

### **Women and Men: a problem of unequal engagement in consultations?**

Over the last five years, I have noticed a **differential response between women and men with regard to engaging in consultations.**

Though this includes some people who I have talked to when out and about, my observations are mostly drawn from those who I have talked to on the bus, particularly with regard to bus consultations and feedback to bus operators.

This means that it is a very small sample of people, and mostly on one particular route.

My main observation and general conclusion is that **male bus users** are or have been used to being in jobs and positions where they can have some influence on outcomes, and by using rural bus services, they might already have committed to a belief in the possibility of change by thus acting against the norm for rural men. **This might be why, though their numbers are smaller, I have generally found most of them to be ready to participate fully and proactively in consultations and other moves to improve bus services.**

**I have found that women bus users, particularly as they get older, are much more likely to give a response along the lines that “It’s a waste of time. It won’t make any difference because they have already decided what they want to do anyway, and the people who make the decisions don’t use buses and don’t care about us”.** (Apparently much along the same lines as the response of many women to the recent election campaign).

Even if they do think that they can make some difference, responding to a consultation might be very low on their list of priorities because after their long and often arduous bus journeys most of them still have to do the bulk of caring for home, family and neighbours, (as surveys and my own experience of talking to women who I serve in the supermarket shows) especially if their husbands are working very long days out of doors. **They simply might not have any time left in the day to respond to a consultation.**

**Somehow, you need to find ways of getting accurate information from these women, who form the majority of rural people for whom buses are essential,**

because if there is only one family vehicle their partner often needs it for their rural work while the women are commuting to work in retail/office/ other professions in town.

**5) Suitability of Services in Rural Areas, including alternatives**

**5.1** Careful thought needs to be given to ticketing methods:

**5.1.1** **Smartphones/smart-ticketing:** the same fares should be on offer regardless of how people pay.

**5.1.2** Even if they know how to use them, many young people will not be able to afford smartphones, especially if they or their families are looking for work.

**5.1.3.1** I have seen for myself that smartphones have many problems, so that **people also need to carry an alternative means to pay** – perhaps not possible for those on the lowest incomes if they have already paid for a smartcard.

**5.1.3.2** They might be stolen  
or the charge might run out.

**5.1.3.3** I have seen instances on our Thropton route, particularly at Rothbury and Weldon Bridge, where the signal drops out, and so could not be used to board the bus, and takes a very long time to load again, so even with those who have got on successfully, the inspector has had to wait for some time for the signal to reload in order to check the ticket, and has then had to do it very swiftly before the signal drops out again, so there certainly needs to be alternative methods for rural routes.

**5.1.3.4** As a supermarket checkout operator I am very much aware of the very large proportion of people who still won't use contactless payment, even if they have the means to use it.

**5.1.3.5** People who are on the lowest incomes, even if they could get access to a bank account, often use cash, often separated into different packets, as their best means of keeping track of how much money is available to them, and how much they can spend on any particular time at a particular time.

Smartcards or any form of non-cash payment makes it much more difficult for them to keep track of their money and stay within their budget.

**5.2 Work much more closely with employers and local chambers of trade to develop, promote, and communicate news about public transport :**

**5.2.1** In my experience, employers, whether large or small, have absolutely *no* interest in public transport until it fails, even though more use of public transport would leave more parking spaces for their customers to be able to get to them, and more financially productive use of land in their area.

(I agree that car-parking arrangements should be the same across the county to avoid more favourable trading conditions in certain locations, but should it really be free in areas where there is a good and commercially viable transport network? Car – parks are dead spaces at the heart of a town, and should only really be available to those who have no alternative but to use them).

**5.2.2** e.g. a couple of years ago I heard a story about a national employer who was giving staff a written warning each time that they were late for work, regardless of the reason, with the inevitable result that three late buses meant that they lost their job to someone who could be relied upon to be there when they were needed.

**5.2.3** When Arriva and other operators were preparing to make a great number of changes to timetables in Northumberland in September, I saw the list of changes on the Northumberland County Council bus travel page, printed it off, and gave it to our **personnel manager**. She accepted it with great eagerness, and stuck it up on the wall straight away beside the clocking-in machine.

**If I hadn't printed it off, I doubt that she or many other people would have known that the changes were happening, let alone where to find the details.**

5.2.4 This sort of **information is particularly crucial at Christmas time**, given that retailers cannot afford to be understaffed at any time of year.

5.2.4.1 Between Christmas and New Year Arriva usually runs a Saturday service on our route.

5.2.4.2 In 2013/14 they posted notices on the buses saying that the Christmas times would be different, and details could be found online.

5.2.4.3 Those who couldn't go online had to rely on ringing up – not always possible if answering hours are restricted and you are working extra hours in retail on the run-up to Christmas as well as spending time on travelling long distances.

5.2.4.4 I tried going online several times, but couldn't get at the information. When I queried this later, I was told that there had been problems with the new website.

5.2.4.5 Despite this, no extra information had been posted on buses.

5.2.4.6 **Last year, 2014/15, I saw no Christmas timetable information at all posted on our buses**, nor did I meet anyone else who had.

5.2.4.7 Without even asking around, I know of two people who had moved to our village and started using the buses who went out for the first Monday to Friday bus to get to work, and it never came because it was the later Saturday service, and there was nowhere available at that time to give them information.

5.2.4.8 The same happened to several of my colleagues, some of whom are new to using buses.

5.2.4.9 **None of this is likely to encourage them to keep using buses, still less recommend them to anyone else.**

5.2.5 **I think that at the very least, operators should have some sort of off-line up-to-date information service available for as many hours as they have buses running**, and certainly shouldn't be restricting it to 9-5 Monday to Friday, which is useless for most commuters, and particularly useless for **those who have to work at weekends and evenings and are often people on low pay without a choice of means to travel or communicate.**

5.3.1 **Perhaps more so than in urban areas, rural bus services are mostly relied on by women**, because if there is only one vehicle in the family, it is often needed by their partner for their rural work.

5.3.2 If they are in office jobs or lower paid retail jobs, they are often required to wear elaborate clothes, hairstyles and make-up, so walking or cycling several miles to work or the nearest bus route in all weathers is not an option as it would be for many men.

5.3.3

**BUSES MOSTLY APPEAR TO BE USED BY WOMEN AND YOUNGSTERS FOR ECONOMIC PURPOSES, EITHER BECAUSE THEY ARE IN JOBS WHICH DON'T PAY THEM ENOUGH TO RUN A CAR, OR BECAUSE THEY ARE IN A ONE CAR FAMILY. MOST MEN SEEM TO AVOID USING BUSES BECAUSE THEY DON'T LIKE THEM, REGARDLESS OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL COST.**

(Country hotels often have live-in staff from abroad. They have no other means of getting to shops and services on their day off but buses).

**IF BUSES WERE RELIED ON BY MEN AS MUCH AS BY WOMEN AND YOUNGSTERS, WOULD THEY BE SUBJECT TO SUCH GREAT CUTS, WOULD MORE EFFORT BE PUT INTO MAKING THEM VIABLE, AND MIGHT LESS MONEY BE PUT TOWARDS TRANSPORT REQUIREMENTS WHICH ARE USED BY AS MANY MEN AS WOMEN – E.G. CAR PARKING?**

5.4

**With modern working practises of 24/7, zero hours contracts with shifts at short notice, flexitime, people now need and use buses in a very different way from long-established timetables, e.g people who actually do or would pay to use the bus to travel to work: shop, factory, care workers etc, who might work a full shift pattern, or be required to work Sundays or late nights, and who almost certainly don't have flexitime.**

Even health services and libraries are now increasingly moving to being open on Sundays and late nights, as shops, including coffee shops and restaurants, and tourist attractions, have now been for decades, and these all have workers as well as users.

5.4.1 e.g. Monday to Saturday I might need to get the 7 am bus in order to be on the shop floor for 8 am.

5.4.2 My shifts might finish at any time up to 9.45 pm.

5.4.3 Most Sundays I need be at work no later than 9.30 am in order to be on the shop floor ready to serve the customers by 10 am, and usually I don't finish until 4.30 or 5pm.

5.4.4 Some weeks I mostly do short shifts which might only be mid-morning to mid-afternoon, or they might start first thing in the morning, or they might start at tea time.

5.4.5 For people in their first jobs and wishing to progress, it is important that they play a full part in the work and life of their team, and get experience in all aspects of the work at whatever time of day these are carried out.

5.4.6 At present, on top of my £27.20 weekly bus ticket, I spend a very large proportion of my income on taxi fares to return from work late when there is no bus either to my village or within the four mile walk to the nearest bus route on Sundays and evenings (which requires a more costly weekly bus ticket than would otherwise be necessary).

5.5.1 The availability/suitability of direct or connecting services, the latter of which might be viable if timetables were designed with this in mind.

5.5.2 What are "peak times", especially in rural areas where journey times take much longer?

5.6.1 **Overcrowded buses** with passengers standing are probably **less safe and acceptable on long, steep, fast, rural routes with sharp bends, .e.g. the A 697** main Newcastle to Coldstream road, with its high accident rate, than on some short, slow, urban routes.

5.7.1 **Bus Stations**

5.7.2 Extreme **lack of information** and problems with communication as listed in sections 2 and 3.

5.7.3 **Lack of facilities, especially toilets**, make it unsuitable for pregnant women/people with health problems to make **long rural journeys by bus**, and discourage others, such as families with young children from using bus services.

e.g. at Alnwick and Berwick, there are no toilets in the bus station, and the public toilets a short walk away aren't open much, if at all, beyond office hours.

5.7.4 In recent years, I don't think that I have seen any bus station where, if someone has broken, lost, or used up charge/credit on their mobile phone, there is a **call box** near enough for them to use and still catch the bus if it comes in.

5.7.5.1 I don't think that I have ever seen any with a **panic button**, which might be particularly helpful if it is mostly women who are relying on buses, and

5.7.5.2 perhaps more necessary now that so many local police stations are closing and

5.7.5.3 it sounds as though a police officer on the beat is going to be an extreme rarity.

5.7.6.1 e.g by 8 years ago, Arriva had withdrawn its office from Morpeth bus station and it was completely unstaffed and not closely overlooked by anything.

5.7.6.2 All it had was some very rough seats inside a large and draughty hall, but this was enough shelter to encourage groups of local youths to congregate there at night, and of course it was those who appeared to be the most threatening who took possession of it after 5.30 pm and on Sundays when there were fewer people about.

5.7.6.3 The police patrolled, but only by driving past, and the youths had worked out which corners they could stay in so that they couldn't be spotted from the police car.

5.7.6.4 In the end, most people had stopped using the bus station at these times and given up on using the bus, so that those who had no choice were in the extreme minority in the bus station, and so the youths even harassed grown men with impunity.

5.7.6.5 6 years ago, the new Sanderson Arcade was opened, with the bus station an integral part of it, and so under the auspices of its security guards who work until 8pm and on Sundays, and also use security cameras which work properly. It also contains a busy newsagents which is open into the evening and on Sundays, so this all makes the bus station a secure place for people to use again.

5.7.6.7 Even so, it probably took about four years for it to get properly busy with people feeling able to use the buses again even at quiet times.

5.7.6.8 The importance of effective safety measures for making bus stations and bus stops usable, particularly for women, cannot be overemphasised in designing a successful public transport network.

5.7.6.9 This is still a huge problem at Alnwick bus station, which is also extremely unkempt, despite being one of the most important regional bus stations for visitors to the Garden, the Castle with its Harry Potter connections, particularly attractive to large groups of oriental tourists who stay in Newcastle and arrive on the X15 bus service, and a campus of St. Cloud State University, whose students also use the regular bus services.

**The comparison of Alnwick bus station, which is a major point on the international tourist route, to Morpeth bus station, which probably doesn't figure greatly in the international tourist market, is devastating for Alnwick.**

**I STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT YOU COMPARE THE TWO.**

### **5.8.1 Sunday Opening hours – especially if extended**

5.8.2 Grandparents are often the carers when the parents are at work, and I know of some rural grandparents who rely on the bus to get there.

5.8.3 Sunday bus services in rural areas are already inadequate, so if Sunday working expands, will even more rural people be precluded from getting jobs because they or their carers cannot get there?

### **5.9.1 Walking**

5.9.2 My four mile rural walk includes dark (late) nights and mornings in winter, and in all weathers, unless there is end-to-end black ice, which is too dangerous to walk on in the dark on lanes which are never gritted.

5.9.3 I can do this because I am lucky enough to live in a part of the county and be using a route which I judge to be reasonably safe.

5.9.4 Even so, passing police vehicles have stopped a couple of times to check that I am alright and tell me to take care.

5.9.5 **Most women, are brought up on the principle that it is not safe to walk alone in isolated places, especially in the dark, so that there is no way that they would consider doing this.**

5.9.6 Of course walking is equally important in urban/suburban areas, especially in areas where workers in low paid jobs might not be on an income which allows them to live in the area which they serve.

5.9.7 They might walk either by choice or necessity, and if low-paid workers are mostly women, then this makes security even more important for people to be able to get work, especially in winter.

5.9.8 e.g. Pegswood is only 2 miles from Morpeth, and many people who live there work in Morpeth, so it is common for people to walk to work.

5.9.9 There are no houses between Morpeth and Pegswood, so the route is extremely isolated, and there are one or two places with gaps in the street lighting.

**A few extra street-lights to fill the gaps** would make it more feasible for women to feel that they could walk to work safely.

#### 5.10.1 **Arranging a lift:**

5.10.2 In rural areas there are likely to be fewer lifts available than in urban areas in the requisite directions at the requisite times because there is a much higher proportion of retired residents, and probably more dispersed directions of travel

5.10.3 My team works variable shifts, often at short notice and unsociable hours, so organising and relying on lifts with other workers would be not be feasible.

5.10.4 Even if there were other workers travelling at the same times, we do not work flexitime, our holidays have to be taken in blocks of one week with at least 6 weeks notice, and we are not allowed to book single days holiday.

5.10.5 The staffing is minimal in order to be financially viable, so we cannot simply not turn up or turn up late, because it would let down and lose customers and make it very difficult for colleagues to fulfil their requirements.

5.10.6 It would therefore be impossible to rely on a lift from someone who was a bad timekeeper, or was susceptible to sickness or having to take time off to look after dependents at short notice, because there is no alternative transport to fall back on in rural areas.

#### 5.11.1 **Taxis**

5.11.2 Taxis cannot be relied on to get us to work in the morning in an emergency, because rural taxis in particular rely on school and college contracts and regular airport runs for business people to keep their taxi businesses financially viable, and they certainly can't afford to have spare vehicles over and above those used at their peak times for school runs.

5.11.3 If you want to make more use of taxis, you certainly need to ensure that it is possible for taxi businesses who serve rural areas to remain financially viable, because those based in urban areas cannot be relied upon to accept calls from rural areas, and take too long to get there to pick people up in emergencies anyway.

5.11.4 **THE COUNCIL NEEDS TO DO MUCH MORE TO SUPPORT THE VIABILITY OF LOCAL TAXI COMPANIES** e.g. not just taking the cheapest possible tender without looking at the wider effect on the local community and how it is served,

5.11.5 also doing much more to check licensing so that those who have paid to work in a particular location are not swamped by those who have not.

5.11.6 Proper and regular licencing checks are also important from the point of view of safety for those who are undertaking **long and isolated journeys in rural areas by taxi so that there are local and familiar drivers and taxi firms available to serve them**, rather than firms and drivers who are based out of the area and unknown in the community.

#### 5.12 **Community Transport** – not suitable for work shifts at short notice

5.13.1 **Cycling/mopeds** Too dangerous on long-distance fast country roads

5.13.2 e.g. the A697 Longramlington to Morpeth has far too much and too speedy traffic to be safe for cyclists.

5.13.3 In the back lanes it is safer to walk than cycle, because they are very twisty with next to no verges in places, or with dangerously deep/muddy/icy ruts at the side where the verges have been broken down

by agricultural vehicles too large for the narrow lanes, so it is easier and safer to get out of the way of large or unexpected traffic on foot rather than on a bicycle.

### **6) Three barriers to work - effects of charging for post-16 transport in rural areas**

**6.1.1** Youngsters can't get weekend work on Sundays/evenings because there is no public transport then,

**6.1.2** so this means that they are actually paying out money for transport to education when their urban fellows aren't,

**6.1.3** and cannot get out to earn money to help them to get through University or College as their urban fellows can,

so instead of being at one disadvantage, they are **now at a double disadvantage if they are looking to get the education that they need for higher paid and skilled jobs.**

**6.2.1** Now that we are in the second year of charging for post 16 transport, some families have two youngsters in post education.

**6.2.2** One parent who lives in an isolated location with no public transport, even though it is not particularly distant from school,

**6.2.3** told me that **it is now cheaper for them to drive their two children twice a day between home and school than to pay the £600 per child per year** that it would cost for them to use school transport if there was room for them.

**6.2.4** So far as I can tell, school transport does not include provision for youngsters to stay for the extra-curricular activities which are such an important requirement in modern further education and careers.

**6.2.5** **This means that whichever parent is driving is also diverted from carrying out economic activity twice a day five days per week,**

**6.2.6** which is **also not helpful to a family trying to set up their children to go on to college or university.**

**6.3.1** **Those who are furthest from services pay as much as anyone else in council tax, and are often isolated because services have been withdrawn from their community rather than because they chose to live in a place which didn't have them. We cannot have a county where only the wealthy live in the 90% that is rural.**

**6.3.2** **It is as unreasonable to expect rural people to move from the communities where they have lived in their natural surroundings as it is to expect someone from Morpeth or Blyth to move away from their friends and family to a place like Fontburn or Blindburn where it is now even more miles than it used to be to the nearest shops for everyday requirements/ choice of banks etc.**

# Northumberland ~ Beautiful by Bus

Use the buses to see over the hedge-tops to spectacular horizons.

Some personal recommendations for Northumberland scenery include:

## ARRIVA

[arrivabus.co.uk](http://arrivabus.co.uk)

X18 Newcastle to Berwick via Alnwick and Northumberland coastal villages between Amble and Berwick

X15 Newcastle to Berwick via Alnwick and old coaching stops along the A1

14 Morpeth to Rothbury for the Simonside Hills

## SPIRITBUSES

[spiritbuses.co.uk](http://spiritbuses.co.uk)

15 Alnmouth/Alnwick to Rothbury/Thropton via Corby Crag

16 Rothbury/Coquetdale circular, including Alwinton and the Cheviot Hills

GLEN VALLEY TOURS/ PERRYMAN'S [www.perrymansbuses.com](http://www.perrymansbuses.com) [glenvalley.co.uk](http://glenvalley.co.uk)

267 Berwick to Wooler for Cheviot Hills via Etal and Ford villages and Branxton for Battle of Flodden monument

GLEN VALLEY TOURS / TRAVEL SURE of Belford

470 Wooler to Alnwick via Chatton, Chillingham, and Old Bewick

85/685 services Newcastle to Carlisle via Hexham and the Tyne Valley plus

[services.outofhexham.com](http://services.outofhexham.com)

including

GO NORTHEAST

[www.simplygo.com](http://www.simplygo.com)

74 between Newcastle and Hexham. Takes 83 minutes instead of 56, but goes through some traditional Northumbrian rural villages and landscape

688 Hexham to Allenheads for the North Pennines

TELFORD'S

[www.telfordscoaches.com](http://www.telfordscoaches.com)

680 between Brampton and Alston via the South Tyne Valley for the North Pennines

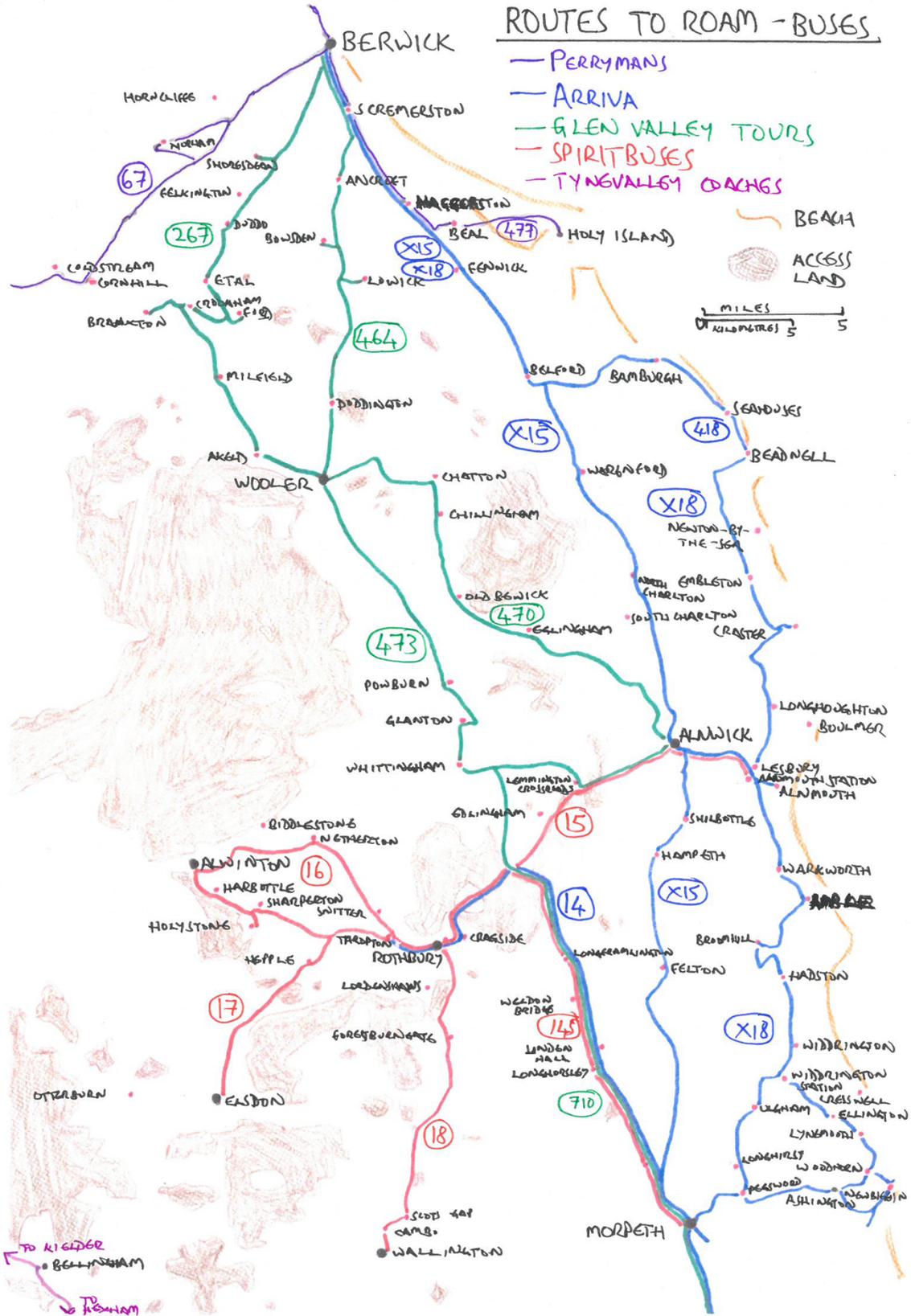
See Northumberland County Council>Roads, Streets and Transport>Bus Travel>Bus Operators and Timetables>Experience Northumberland network

Also [Traveline](http://Traveline) 0871 200 2233

(plus Tourist Information Centres, Library staff, and possibly County Council Information offices)

© 2015 S. Hedley, regular bus user, 9<sup>th</sup> March 2015

# ROUTES TO ROAM - BUSES



## South Tyneside

- a) An assessment of current transport projects to help people get to interview, jobs, training etc.
- Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) – Wheels to Work project  
This is an initiative in which Tyne and Wear residents are able to get a grant to pay for a scooter. The scheme is operated by Adapt and has
  - LSTF – Free Public Transport Provision – offered across T&W to job-seekers attending interviews and then a month-free travel to act as a ‘kick-start’
  - Tyne and Wear UMTC Project – provision of travel information to the travelling public. The resource located within Newcastle University but has coverage across all of the Tyne and Wear provides up-to-date travel information via a number of forums including social media outlets and web sites.  
Further information available at the following web link :-  
<http://www.tyneandweartravel.info/public/map/map.htm>
  - Local Growth Fund Transport Projects - identified in the North East Local Growth Fund will improve how people travel throughout the NECA region, the prioritised schemes can be found in the North East LEP Strategic Economic Plan. In South Tyneside, we will be implementing the following schemes:-
    - South Shields Town Centre Public Transport Interchange - £15m
    - Lindisfarne Roundabout / Corridor Improvement Scheme - £6.1m
    - The Arches (A194 / A185) junction improvement scheme - £5.73m
    - The A185 Improvement Scheme - £4m
    - Localised access improvement to support the Testo’s Major Scheme - £4m
  - Highway England Strategic Road Improvements - Further to the above, there are a number of strategic road improvements being delivered throughout the region by Highways England including A1 / A19 corridor improvements, with Testo’s / Downhill Lane being constructed within STC at an estimated cost of £120m.
  - Smart Ticketing Project for the North East – simplified approach to streamlining the amount of PT tickets available across all PT modes.
  - Finally, I am sure that the Job Centre plus and the respective local authorities offer incentives for job seekers to gain access to public transport when attending interviews etc.
  - Training – There is a range of student (16-21) discount tickets for public transport modes via either the bus operators and / or Nexus.
- b) The potential impact of future spending cuts and how to maintain accessibility of public transport?

***First ask is why just Public Transport, as surely all modes of transport should be considered including Sustainable Transport in terms of barriers to transport?***

***I would question the importance of Sustainability / Active Travel rather than just Public Transport.***

- Impact of the Comprehensive Spending Review in November 2015.
- Future of Local Sustainable Transport Fund – current funding is set to end in March 2016, with the government not identifying future awards.
- Active Travel Campaigns – potential new direction for Government Funding opportunities

- Devolution Asks for Transport for NECA region – how will these affect future funding decision across the region and for STC
  - NECA Governance and Structure will be important going forward in terms of the delivery model
  - Importance of Transport for the North and accessing funding
  - Regional Super-power??
- Concessionary Travel and the rising population age – Current projections indicate that the CT scheme is likely to be unaffordable, with many Passenger Transport Executives having to use alternative funding sources to continue with the current scheme.
- Quality Contract Scheme for Bus Services – opportunities for the management and operation of bus services to be in the public hands. but also a financial risk in terms of the future patronage figures across Tyne and Wear  
Findings of the QCS board expected at the end of October 2015.
- c) An assessment of the different problems across the NECA area (Durham, Newcastle, Gateshead, Sunderland, South Tyneside, Northumberland, North Tyneside) (e.g. the particular needs of rural areas).
- Ageing Population
  - Devolution Asks for Transport for the NECA region – governance, financial arrangements, powers etc
  - NECA Governance and Structure will be important in terms of going forward.
  - Importance of Transport for the North and accessing funding.
  - Importance of Rural vs Urban demographics and transport provision / need across the NECA region.

## 1. The accessibility of public transport (i.e. whether people can travel at reasonable cost, in reasonable time and with reasonable ease)?

### COST

- Affordability of Public Transport (Cost of Petrol vs Cost of PT fare – fuel costs are seen as everyday of life expense, whilst PT fares are an additionality)
- Smart Ticketing / Confusion of amount of PT ticketing – need for consolidation
- The ability to sustain the current Concessionary Travel scheme, especially with the ageing population age!!

### TIME

- Real Time Information that prescribes when the bus / metro / ferry is due at a particular destination
- Problems with the Metro Service (daily problems reduces confidence levels)
- Issues with the Metro Concession (DB Regio contract expires in 2019, but major concerns with performance)

### EASE

- Public Transport Information via Smart Phones and other technology streams
- Social Media Outlets being utilised and harnessed to provide update.
- Metro Fleet Replacement is not expected until 2023 and at a cost of >£250m
- Interchange Options through Smart Ticketing

- Nexus offer a number of transport provisions to the socially excluded including the following schemes:-
  - Community Transport
  - Subsidised Bus Services
  - Taxi Buses
  - Scholar Services
  - Concessionary Transport Scheme plus the Gold Card option

**2. The availability of public transport and the extent to which it is adequate to access employment sites?**

- Punctuality and Reliability matters of public transport;
- Quality Contract Scheme for bus services could improve bus service operation.
- Employment sites are often located close to the strategic road network due to the transportation of goods. As a consequence of this, the staff travel patterns are heavily reliant on the private car. Due to this, Public Transport services are often reduced / limited, as the patronage figures are not viable.

**3. What alternative transport approaches could be considered to support people being actively engaged in work?**

- Agile Working
- Flexible Hours
- Working from Home
- Reducing the travel requirements (teleconferences / meetings) avoiding the need to travel
- Public Transport Discount Ticketing Schemes (Metro Corporate Saver scheme – ticket payment comes directly from employees salary, providing discount)
- Smart Ticketing presents a great opportunity of simplifying as to how people travel (No payments will be exchanged, but costs recovered at the end of month)

**Evidence from Travel Advisors**

Re Cobalt Park, North Tyneside - we have worked with both Arriva and Go North East very successfully over the last 9 years often responding to /recruitment/occupiers/relocation needs within a short period of time. Arriva diverted the 53 service and add on evening services when Accuread (now G4S) located to the park from Killingworth when staff were within walking distance from their old site. The success of the service at the time ensured that the company did not lose any staff during the relocation period.

Providing postcode data to the bus companies and nexus allowed us to work in partnership to target services to meet the requirements of business growth. The launch of the Cobalt Clipper (Newcastle – Cobalt – Blyth) was a pump prime service with an initial contract for 5 years and enabled GNE to supply new buses on the contract, the service was extended into early evenings when Newcastle Building Society opened a office on Cobalt to cover their early evening shifts. The service now runs every 15 mins weekdays, 30 mins weekends and evenings.

We continue to work in partnership with bus companies and Nexus to ensure that the needs of the occupiers continue to be met and enable them to meet recruitment and work patterns needs as

well as promoting sustainable travel to the 14,000 workforce. Bus companies continue to support the Cobalt Freezone as well as 7 days free trial for new starters.

However as Cobalt continues to grow and excellent transport links play a huge part of that we need to continue to break down other barriers to employment by public transport.

- Most bus companies have good route savers – i.e £13 for 7 days unlimited travel, however a lots of areas require a change of operators which becomes expensive from areas such has Northumberland and South of the river limiting access to jobs outside the city centre.
- Real time information by app or google maps so you can make a choice which service to get.
- Smart ticketing for integrated ease of travel, PAYG travel included
- Studies to extend metro lines to key employment

Public transport needs to be reliable that requires infrastructure improvements and investment in a co-ordinated manner as a region looking at incorporating other transport modes such a car clubs, cycle hire etc.

Bette cycle and walking links from residential to employment areas are also cost effective and will improve Health and Wellbeing to the workforce, over 1/3 of Cobalt’s workforce live within a 5 mile radius but is difficult to cycle from Tynemouth, Cramlington, Wallsend etc or the links are disjointed.

Other staff can travel much further distance, therefore Metro and Bus connection options to be included or park and ride at key interchanges Blyth, Heworth etc. These again have to cost aware to the end user.

Information and awareness is also essential a lot of the big employers already employ travel co-ordinators providing information and raising awareness to staff and visitors. Go Smarter is going some way to bring this together with other employment areas but this could be improved.

I’m not sure if this is what you are looking for but I would be happy to discuss further, Cobalt has offered to pilot new schemes and projects over the years and assisted in securing funding from DFT, Big Lottery and LSTF with many partners including Sustrans, North Tyneside Council, Nexus, GNE and Arriva.

No.	Barrier	Specific Examples/Details
1.	Bus zones – Sunderland zone ends at Ferryboat Lane and Washington zone.	Two zones required, or walk across footbridge over A19, potentially increasing costs for employees at Nissan, Unipres, Johnson Controls and Vantec.
2.	Services provided along Washington Road do not always coincide with shift patterns.	Service 50 – 1 <sup>st</sup> one from So Shields past Nissan at 07:08, after most shifts have begun. Service 50 becomes 50A in evenings and operates via HMRC Waterview Park and not Washington Road.
3.	Turbine Business Park – distance from bus stops	Approx 30-40 min walk from Washington Road bus stops to Turbine Business Park if travelling from Town End Farm area. Approx 20 min walk from bus stop on slip road onto A1231.

		No bus shelters at these stops.
4.	Mandarin Way / HMRC Waterview Park served by buses provided by different operators	Increasing costs for employees. Unable to take advantage of cheaper fares.
5.	Pattinson Industrial Estate, no buses serving the south part.	Use of public transport involves lengthy walks of around 20-30 mins.
6.	Stephenson Industrial Estate – no direct services to main transport links, eg Galleries bus station or Heworth Interchange.	Service to/from Galleries and Heworth withdrawn, meaning employees having to change buses at Concord which also involves a 10 min walk.
7.	Birtley Road – length of journey time from Galleries and Heworth	One service withdrawn from Heworth meaning only one bus serving this area from there, taking around 50 mins.
8.	Sunderland Enterprise Park – call centre businesses operating shifts ending/starting during evening – no or few services.	Service 99 – last one at 18:54 Service 73 – last one at 18:04 Service 8 – last one at 19:27 Service 35A – last one at 23:36 Many shifts end/start between 19:00 and 20:00, therefore to use public transport would involve long walk to Hylton Park or Southwick.
9.	Sunderland Enterprise Park – services provided by different operators.	Increasing costs and reducing choice of travel options.
10.	Doxford International Park – call centre businesses operating shifts ending/starting during evening – no or few services.	X35 – last one at 17:30 to Hartlepool, 18:33 to Peterlee, 19:30 Sunderland 39: 23:23 33: 18:13 37: 17:37 or 18:07 to Galleries
11.	Lack of bus shelters at various locations used by employees.	Lack of protection whilst waiting.

### Evidence from Voluntary Groups

#### Evidence from Friends of the Durham Green Belt

On behalf of the Friends of the Durham Green Belt, a voluntary group engaged in amending and refreshing the County Durham Local Plan, we wish to make a suggestion in respect of question 3 What alternative transport approaches could be considered to support people being actively engaged in work?

Our suggestion is that the Leamside Line continues to be recognised as a hugely important opportunity to create a commuter (and freight) capability alongside the East Coast Main Line. The ECML is quite rightly the premier railway line in England offering high speed connections between London and Edinburgh for people in the major cities on the route. As speeds become higher, the facility for slower commuter trains reduces. The Leamside Line can provide a commuter service for Ferryhill, Shincliffe, Sherburn, Belmont, Rainton, Fencehouses, Washington and onwards to connect into the Tyne/Wear network. This would greatly assist the accessibility of these localities and surrounding communities to the unrivalled range of job opportunities in Newcastle/Gateshead

and in Sunderland. It is a project that has enjoyed the support of Durham County Council since the early '90s when the Line was 'mothballed'. Indeed it was Durham County Council that commissioned independent feasibility studies on the potential of the Leamside Line. It is a project that NECA should readily endorse.

Thank you for the opportunity to make suggestions.

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## **Evidence from Sustrans**

Sustrans makes smarter travel choices possible, desirable and inevitable. We're a leading UK charity enabling people to travel by foot, bike or public transport for more of the journeys we make every day.

### **1. The accessibility of public transport (i.e. whether people can travel at reasonable cost, in reasonable time and with reasonable ease)?**

A wide range of in depth consultation exercises and research studies have examined the ways in which the availability of transport acts as a barrier to work and education. Some of the most important external reports on this subject from across the UK include:

- Joseph Rowntree Foundation, transport and poverty literature review, 2014
- The Social Exclusion Unit, making the connections report, 2003
- The Youth Select Committee enquiry on young people and transport, 2012
- The Environment Audit Committee enquiry on access to public services, 2013
- The Work Foundation, transport barriers to youth unemployment, 2012
- Elizabeth Finn survey work on transport poverty in Northern Ireland, 2011
- Office of National Statistics, life opportunities survey (chapter 5, transport), 2014
- Various Campaign for Better Transport reports
- A range of research studies including the work of the Centre for Transport and Society at the University of the West of England

Sustrans has policy expertise in the area of transport poverty and the ways in which transport opportunities limit opportunity to access a wide range of life opportunities including work, training and essential services. We have been requested to provide evidence to UK select committee enquiries on this subject and have produced several policy briefings (See Sustrans 'Locked Out' and 'Access Denied' reports).

These reports clearly document the ways in which transport barriers cause disadvantage in employment, training and life opportunities, and the common causes of these problems.

The availability of public transport is one common cause of these problems. However the research set out above, alongside our direct experience working with people across the North East who face transport barriers, has taught us that the availability of convenient and accessible public transport is only one element of this problem. Transport barriers to work and training are also caused by:

- The cost of public transport, especially for young people (exacerbated by the end of the Educational Maintenance Allowance for young people, lower minimum wages for those on apprenticeships)
- Public transport not meeting the needs of shift workers who are travelling at unusual times of day and night

- Careers advisors or Jobcentre Plus not having the confidence to give journey planning advice and ability to encourage all travel modes
- Low travel horizons among those who are out of work or training
- Lack of knowledge about public transport services leading to adverse perceptions of journey length and connectivity
- Desire to cycle or walk constrained by Poor quality or poorly maintained bikes, low confidence and fitness levels and poor quality walking and cycling routes
- Unemployed young people are more likely to live in short-term rented or crowded accommodation with nowhere to securely store bikes

## **2. The availability of public transport and the extent to which it is adequate to access employment sites?**

“The North East’s cycle infrastructure is characterised by a number of long distance cycle routes that are in parts traffic free. While these offer some provision for cycle tourism, vital connections that link communities, schools, employment and other destinations in urban areas are required to generate a significant model shift to sustainable transport.

Sustrans endeavours to work directly with local authorities to transform towns and cities across the region. Highway engineers and Officers are experienced in traditional highway schemes and detailing, but lack the technical knowledge of cycle infrastructure or urban design. Similarly, while senior officers and policies demonstrate the intent to improve walking and cycling numbers, Sustrans can help to plan networks and deliver schemes street by street to create and inspire what is effectively a cultural shift.”

Job seekers are often willing to travel further by bike than average commuters, Merseytravel for example found average cycle travel distance of 5 to 9 miles.

## **3. What alternative transport approaches could be considered to support people being actively engaged in work?**

Sustrans has delivered a range of transport projects to support people facing transport barriers to active engagement in work and training:

- In Sunderland working with the city’s biggest employers to improve access to work and improve staff health and wellbeing with a variety of innovative initiatives.
- In North Tyneside we work with two of the country’s biggest business parks. We deliver short term engagement activities, short term bike loans, Dr Bike sessions and cycle confidence sessions. These business parks are now recognised nationally as followers of good practice.
- In Derby we are working with whole families, secondary school and college students, and job seekers to give the skills to travel sustainably to employment.
- In Ashington we recruited, trained and supported local people to become volunteers to increase active travel in a deprived community. The project loaned over 500 recycled bikes in order to access workplace training and job interviews. Beneficiaries reported that one of the main motivations was getting to work more easily, and the vast majority agreed that both cycling and walking increased their sense of independence
- In Kirby we designed and built a new cycling and walking network between neighbourhoods with high unemployment, employment opportunities and other essential

services. The route is very well used, over 80% of users say they use the route because it saves them money, and over 30% of people now use the route to get to work.

- In Stockton, working with an employment agency we supplied low cost reconditioned cycles to people new to work and struggling with transport poverty.

Our Sustrans experience and best practise has been benchmarked against projects across the UK that offer transport solutions to job seekers and NEETs and offer lessons to the North East, including:

- The TfGM job seekers programme covers 2.7m residents in 10 LA areas with high unemployment rates. The programme works with Transport operators, job centres and work programme providers to deliver 'Bike Back to Work' (recycled bikes and bike training), low cost or free public transport tickets, travel surgeries at job centres and training of travel champions at job centres. 10,000 job seekers have been helped back to work through the initiative.
- Centro's WorkWise offers Residents within West Midlands Free day tickets to attend job interviews, free travel tickets when starting a new job, free travel support and information, and free cycling support. To date, the scheme has helped more than 12,000 people back into employment.
- Let's Get Moving Merseyside project worked across Merseyside to make sure that transport is not a barrier to finding work. Services included Neighbourhood Travel advice Teams, Dial-a-Link bus services, Rent a scooter/Borrow a bike and Free travel card tickets. An independent evaluation found Bikes are more sustainable than other options (85% of bike recipients remained in employment after 6 months) and that bikes were by far the most cost effective option, costing on average £9.16 per month (over 12 months), free public transport passes £84.72 to 137.22 per month and scooters from £140.42 to 152.08 per month.

**Many projects or initiatives set up to solve mobility problems faced by those accessing work or training focus on subsidising public transport costs or offering free tickets. Although this can be very helpful in the short term, the benefits are not necessarily sustained as**

- This approach focuses on financial support only, which can jeopardise retention of participants in training, education or employment once the subsidy ends
- Our experience shows that a free ticket offer skews support to those with fewest transport barriers, and does not provide the intensive support required to engage long-term unemployed and inactive participants
- The approach addresses public transport barriers only, and does not provide the unemployed with the skills and confidence to walk and cycle, which would benefit them for the rest of their lives and lead to associated health benefits.

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## **Evidence from Parkinson's UK**

About Parkinson's and Parkinson's UK

1. Parkinson's is a progressive, fluctuating, neurological disorder, with no known cure that affects around 127,000 people in the UK. Around a third of people with Parkinson's develop symptoms before the age of 65, and one in 100 before the age of 40. The number of people with Parkinson's is estimated to increase by 28% by 2020.  
\*
2. Parkinson's affects everyone differently and while the condition impacts on movement (rigidity, tremor and slowness of movement) there are over 40 "non-motor" symptoms that people report including anxiety, depression, fatigue, pain, continence issues, memory problems and sleep disturbance. The condition can also affect all aspects of daily living including talking, walking, swallowing and writing.
3. We believe that with appropriate care and support, many people with Parkinson's can have a good quality of life for many years after diagnosis.
4. Parkinson's UK is the research and support charity for everyone affected by the condition. We bring people with the condition, their carer's and families together via our network of local groups, our website and free confidential helpline. Specialist nurses, our supporters and staff provide information and training on every aspect of Parkinson's.
5. We welcome the North east combined authority's call for evidence on transport and have sought the views of people affected by Parkinson's living and working in the area. Below are concerns that people expressed about whether they can travel at reasonable cost, in reasonable time and with reasonable ease.
6. Many people living with Parkinson's need access to hospital on a regular basis to attend health appointments with members of their multi-disciplinary team, for instance consultants, Parkinson's nurses, speech and language therapists, physiotherapists and psychiatrists. Visits to these professionals are crucial for people with Parkinson's to maintain their health and wellbeing. However a number of our supporters shared their difficulties with being able to get to hospital if they live in the country, on the outskirts of a main city or even in the centre. For instance:
  - a. Once out of the Tyne Valley main corridor access by bus is difficult from Alston to Hexham.
  - b. It is even more difficult to get to Newcastle, Bellingham, Hexham or Wooler to Alnwick or Berwick.
  - c. The buses do not link up with key areas in the region, such as Hexham to Newcastle or Carlisle or Alnwick to Newcastle.
7. We have also heard that there can be issues getting to and from hospitals after working hours as some services reduce after 6pm to just one per hour. For instance people in south west or west Northumberland struggle to get transport to take them to Newcastle Freeman or the Royal Victoria Hospital, Newcastle.
8. We would be happy to provide further information on access to public services to improve life for those affected by Parkinson's.

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## Evidence from Parose Projects

I am writing in response to your request for evidence with regards to the problems that people face that are preventing them from getting into employment, travelling to work, school or college.

I represent an organisation named Parose Projects who deliver projects in sustainable transport, public realm and transport-led regeneration. We have an office base in Darlington and work with clients up and down the country.

I wanted to bring to your attention our JobCentre Plus 'Into Work' project that we piloted with Southampton City Council. Transport can often be a perceived barrier for people seeking work so with the correct training and awareness raising, job seekers transport horizons can be broadened therefore opening up their employment options.

The attached PDF provides more details about our Into Work project which ultimately led to job seekers participating in the project being up to 30% more likely to find work than those not participating.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this with you further so if you have any questions then please do not hesitate to contact me.

## **Case Studies – Smarter Travel**

### **My Journey Job Centre Plus – Into Work**

#### **Client**

Transport for South Hampshire

#### **Sector**

Transport and Employment

#### **Brief**

Research, develop and deliver an LSTF transport partnership project with the Jobcentre Plus which would address the key LSTF aims of increased economic growth and reduced CO2.

#### **Deliverables**

Following desk top research and complicated negotiations with a large number of bus companies a three staged evolving pilot across five Job Centres was established to address cost as a barrier to employment, help broaden transport horizons and support use of public transport. The pilots involved free monthly bus tickets to 18-24 year old job seekers, free travel advice and coaching in resources available, or a combination of the two. In November 2013 as a result of the changing labour market and changing of flow patterns a decision was taken to open the project up to all age groups and those on the work programme. Over 1,500 people have benefited from free travel, with over 2,300 free monthly travel cards being distributed across the project. Over 2,000 individuals have benefitted from travel advice.

Evaluation work indicates that numbers finding work that received free travel were 30% higher than those not participating. The participating Job Centres are currently involved in an attempt to perpetuate the project by funding it themselves.

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## **Evidence from the Tyne and Wear Public Transport Users Group**

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 Tyne & Wear Public Transport Users Group was formed in November 2010. We are a voluntary grouping of individuals and representatives from various organisations across Tyne and Wear. Our main interests are in improving the quality, quantity and availability of Public Transport services for the general public here in the North East. Most of our work is

within Tyne & Wear, but we are also interested in issues over the wider region. Over the past year we have taken an increasing interest in the organisation of integrated transport elsewhere in Europe and believe that there are lessons for us all if we understand how things are managed in other parts of the world.

- 1.2 We believe that cheap and attractive public transport is a key part of any solution to the problems of environmental damage and pollution. We believe that a public transport system must also satisfy the needs of pedestrians and cyclists.
  - 1.3 We seek to influence the bus and rail companies, as well as Nexus and the Integrated Transport Authority, and to encourage car owners to switch to public transport. We support simpler (and cheaper) fares, better integration of transport modes, improved recognition of the needs of cyclists and pedestrians, proper adaptations to enable all individuals to use public transport, and the development of affordable park and ride schemes.
  - 1.4 Our management committee, who take responsibility for this report, is made up of representatives drawn from a wide range of organisations with an interest in public transport. Individuals also take part in our work through a developing network of local groups.
  - 1.5 Further details of our work can be found on our website <http://www.twptug.org.uk/>. We welcome to our membership all groups and individuals who share our aims.
2. The North East Combined Authority has called for evidence about the accessibility and availability of public transport in the area and in particular whether people face any problems which prevent them from getting to work, school or college. Request for evidence about 3 specific issues
- Whether people can travel at reasonable cost, in reasonable time and with reasonable ease
  - The extent to which public transport gives adequate access to employment sites
  - What alternative transport approaches could be considered that would support people into permanent employment

### **3 Preamble**

- 3.1 We've seen a number of marginal changes to bus services over the past years that have all made it more difficult for some people to get to work. The changes have included lessening frequencies or removal of services in some areas covered by the Combined Authority.
- 3.2 To add to these changes in service we have also noted a change in views from passengers, and potential passengers, to the effect that both buses and metro are not reliable and note the amount of anecdotal evidence that this is encouraging people to use cars to get to work.
- 3.3 We welcome the work being done to make Metro more reliable and the increased emphasis on improving conditions for cyclists. However both require more work and further resources.
- 3.4 The concept of a proper transport network in which all modes/operators work together rather than competing for passengers and where the fare structure is both simple and consistent is, we believe, the key to meeting the needs of people travelling to work, school or college. Only a network will allow provision to be made that is properly comprehensive and does not simply serve only the largest flows of people.
- 3.5 Public transport does not work in a vacuum. It needs to be an integral part of the planning system. We believe that all planned developments, both for housing and industry, need to

be served by proper public transport from the very start and that planning permission should be refused if they do not include this provision.

#### **4. Question One: Can people travel at reasonable cost, in reasonable time and with reasonable ease?**

4.1 In answering this question we draw the attention of the committee to:

- The fact that fares have increased at above the rate of inflation for a number of years. It seems to us that, in many cases, the marginal cost of using a car to get to work is now lower than bus fares. Increased use of cars has implications for both the environment and a wide range of external costs that also need to be met by public authorities.
- As the bus operators have withdrawn what they regard as uneconomic services an increasing burden has fallen on NEXUS to secure both routes and timetables. We are aware that, given cuts in local authority budgets, this could become an increasingly difficult task in the future. The loss of services and connections has hit hard in particular areas. We are aware that, for example, people in Wideopen and Seaton Burn feel strongly that it is no longer easy for them to use buses and that the services they do have only serve a limited range of destinations. There will be many other examples.
- Our view that the simple existence of a bus service does not mean that it will meet the needs of people. We noted that in a recent dispute, by employees at the Barbour warehouse, on South Tyneside one of the issues related to the timing of buses. It was said by the employees that even if buses were available too and from the site there would be problems for individuals who wished to make onward connections. Bus routes need to be appropriately designed to ensure that work places are on bus routes and timetables need to be constructed to meet the needs of workers and their need for onward connections.
- The considerable distances that people now have to travel to work and the associated costs of that travel. Many people change jobs many times in the course of their working life whilst living in the same house or district where they have a range of social and familial links. If people are to be able to take advantage of the whole range of employment, and other, opportunities on offer they need to be able to travel speedily and economically between their home and as many potential workplaces as is possible.
- The general lack of detailed information about the connections that need to be made and the problems faced by individuals.

4.2 We think that a useful start could be made by:

- Carrying out an audit of all major areas of employment to ascertain both the problems faced by existing public transport users and, crucially, the barriers that car drivers experience that stop them from using public transport.
- Pressing for improvements to systems that will speed up journeys. In particular we think that the proposal to open the Ashington Blyth Tyne line to passengers will be key to ensuring that South East Northumberland residents can reach jobs in Newcastle with reasonable journey times. We would support further re-openings, for example the Leamside line, extend similar advantages to County Durham. We also want to see the Metro system extended to serve Washington.

**5. Question Two: To what extent does public transport give adequate access to employment sites?**

- We welcome the attempts that NEXUS and Bus Operators have made to provide services to new industrial and office sites. However our view is that these efforts are often negated by the traffic congestion which results from the many individuals who choose to use private cars for their commute. We believe that work should be done to ensure that public transport has real and effective priority in the use of roads in these areas, particularly at peak time. For example we welcome the recent decision by Stagecoach to extend some services that used to terminate in Wallsend to new termini at Silverlink and Cobalt. However our experience is that, at peak times, the roads in these areas are clogged with cars. As a result the new bus connections are likely to be slow and will not entice car drivers to abandon their vehicles for public transport. A similar phenomenon seems to have existed on Team Valley for many years.
- We recommend that NECA ensure that a mapping exercise is carried out of public transport serving the increasing number of out of town business parks. It is important to ascertain what current transport connections currently exist to enable access to employment at these business parks. Once an effective set of links are established targeted marketing campaigns may be required.
- In the future, wherever a new business park is planned, NECA needs to ensure that public transport connections are mapped so that there is not a mismatch between the site and the locations that people are coming from to work there.
- We note the success of the Metro system and its growing ridership. We think that it should be a priority to look at extending the Metro system to cover all of the main employment generators.

**6. Question Three: What alternative transport approaches could be considered that would support people into permanent employment?**

- We are sceptical about the impact of a number of so-called alternative schemes and the value for money that they provide. For example we haven't seen evidence that convinces us that car share schemes really work.
- It is important that particular support is given to ensure that affordable fares are offered to all but we think that they highest importance should be given to making sure that specific deals are on offer to college students, apprentices and trainees, and to the lower paid.
- As we have said in our introduction further work needs to be done to look at the barriers that prevent people from cycling or walking to work or college.
- We strongly support the work done by NEXUS with stakeholders, including TWPTUG, to improve the integration of cycling with Metro. This included work on schemes to enable people to travel to work at business parks by Metro and then collect a bicycle parked safely at the Metro station to travel the final part of the journey to the business park, safely park the bike at work and reverse the journey to

travel home. These schemes must be prioritised for funding and publicity, and also need to include links to bus services.

- We recommend that NECA continue the whole range of work started by NEXUS with stakeholders on integration of cycling with Metro, including work on the carriage of standard bicycles on Metro – with a trial due this autumn, and expand to include integration of bicycles with bus services. We have discussed with bus operators the possibility of carriage of bicycles on buses and this needs to be explored further.
- We recommend that more is done to build on the work by Living Streets in partnership with NEXUS, to focus on the experience of accessing Metro stations and bus stations and stops, and the walking routes to employment sites, eg offices, to and from public transport. This needs to include work on lighting, signage, paths and pavements for example. The aim should be to provide an environment around transport facilities and interchanges that feel safe and secure at all time of day and night.

## 7. Conclusion

Tyne and Wear Public Transport Users Group would welcome the opportunity to meet with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to expand on the points we have made in this response and to offer a more general public transport users' view on transport issues in general.

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### Evidence from Providers

#### Evidence from Go North East

##### Introduction

This paper has been prepared by Go North East, the region's largest bus operator, to provide an overview of the 'travel to work and training' provision that we believe exists within the North east Combined Authority's area.

It addresses the three numbered points in the Press Release issued by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee dated 27 August 2017:

- Whether people can travel at reasonable cost, in reasonable time and with reasonable ease;
- The extent to which public transport gives adequate access to employment sites; and

What alternative approaches could be considered that would support people into permanent employment.

##### Background

Go North East is the region's largest bus company, operating a fleet of more than 650 buses and providing services across Northumberland, Tyne and Wear, County Durham and into Tees Valley. The company is the region's third largest private sector employer, with 2,100 people employed wholly within the area. In 2014/15, our passengers made more than 67 million journeys with us – that's twice as many passenger journeys as the Tyne and Wear Metro.

Go North East can trace its origins to Gateshead's tramways in the late nineteenth century. In 1913, the tramway operator established a company to look after its growing bus interests, which continued to do so until 1967 when the firm was effectively nationalised. Just 19 years later, the company was privatised.

Since 1986, the original company has grown to become the UK's fifth largest transport operator. As such, the Go-Ahead Group, which has maintained its group registered office in Newcastle, has become the region's third largest plc – one of just five plcs headquartered in the region.

Go North East has maintained its century-long reputation for quality and innovation. We were the first bus company outside London to introduce low floor, fully accessible buses; we were the first to introduce free wifi for passengers and at-seat power supplies for mobile devices; we were the first to introduce 'talking buses' for the visually impaired. We have the largest number of diesel-electric and micro-hybrid buses of any operator in the region, making the Go North East fleet one of the cleanest in the area.

We have made significant investments in modern depots at Deptford in Sunderland and Riverside in Gateshead. As a major employer, we operate a successful apprenticeship scheme with Gateshead College, training the vehicle technicians of the future. We invest heavily in regular in-house training for our 1,600 drivers, which includes customer care training and training in helping people with mobility issues, visual impairment, hearing loss and dementia.

We work closely with local schools to encourage children to use bus services, especially as they progress into secondary education. We provide reduced fares for young people, including a 90p flat single fare at weekends and during school holidays. We provide discounted fares for students in full-time education.

We have a choice of tickets providing best value options for commuters and regular customer, including a flexible daily ticket option for people who work fewer than five days a week.

## **1: Can people travel in reasonable time and with reasonable ease to employment and further education sites?**

This paper presumes that there are two distinct types of travel requirement; those people who travel to work or college, to start at 9am and finish at 5pm (for simplicity, called 'office hours'); and shiftworkers. Shift work can be very varied, but for the purposes of this paper has been simplified to consider shift workers who may start at 6am and others who might start or finish at 10pm (ie, the classic three-shift system).

Most city centres have a commuting 'hinterland': an area from which the city can be reached by bus in about two hours, with a direct bus or one change. Northumberland villages to the north, the north west and west have good connections to Newcastle. Durham's commuting hinterland extends into Weardale to the west and as far as Catterick from the south.

### ***Office hours: the 'travel to work' area***

All of our cities and towns have office workers. In this section we summarise the 'ease of travel' in order to reach the centres of Newcastle, Durham and Sunderland by 9am, and to commute beyond to Middlesbrough, on Mondays to Saturdays.

**Newcastle:** The maximum 'travel to work' area is bounded by Carlisle to the west (a travel time of 2hrs 6mins), Bellingham (2hrs 6min), Alnwick (1hr 45 min), Rothbury (1hr 45min), Otterburn (57min) and Middlesbrough (1hr 20min). All of these towns and villages (and therefore settlements on the main routes from there) have a direct service to Newcastle. Many other places have frequent services starting by 6am or earlier, such as Hexham (0534), Blyth (0600) and Whitley Bay (0619).

**Durham:** Durham has the benefit of direct and frequent bus services from Newcastle, Darlington and Middlesbrough, from shortly after 5am. It is commutable by bus from farther afield, with just one change, the extremities being Hexham (2hrs 7mins), Morpeth (1hr 53mins) and Catterick (1hr 47 min).

**Sunderland:** Sunderland has direct and frequent bus services from Newcastle, Durham and Middlesbrough. With one change, it is possible to commute from Hexham, Morpeth and Darlington.

### ***Shift work: the 'travel to work' area***

To assess the ease of travel for shift workers, some typical employment locations have been listed below.

#### ***Team Valley: direct services arriving before 0600 from:***

Heworth, Leam Lane, Gateshead, Winlaton, Blaydon, Dunston, Wallsend, Walker, Byker, Newcastle city centre

#### ***Team Valley: places that are connected to Team Valley before 0600 with one change of bus:***

South Shields, Jarrow, Hebburn, Crawcrook, Ryton, Chester-le-Street

#### ***Cobalt Business Park:***

First bus arrives 0543; last bus departs 2309.

Direct bus from Ashington, Bedlington and Cramlington arrives 0650; last return bus at 2210.

#### ***Doxford International Business Park:***

First bus arrives 0606; last bus depart 2235.

#### ***Metrocentre:***

First bus from western Gateshead arrives 0537; First bus from Newcastle 0608.

**Nissan:**

First bus from Sunderland 0522; last bus to Sunderland 0033 (half past midnight)  
First bus from Chester-le-Street and Washington arrives 0613

**Tyne Tunnel Trading Estate:**

First bus 0645 and every 30 minutes until 2315

**Sage/Newcastle Great Park:**

First bus from Newcastle arrives 0657; last bus to Newcastle 2241.

As the 'traditional' engineering factories have closed, new modern industries have become more widely dispersed. This means that they can be difficult to serve by public transport. As a consequence, only those areas where employment is concentrated – notably Team Valley and Cobalt – can produce traffic flows that can be served successfully by bus before 0600.

Most centres of employment can be reached by 0700. Most centres have a good bus service until 2000 and many until 2200 and some much later.

By working in partnership with developers and employers, Go North East has been able to provide good levels of service to some of the new employment sites. These include Cobalt Park in North Tyneside, where we provide a mix of direct services from as far afield as Ashington and high-frequency services from Blyth, Whitley Bay, North Shields and Newcastle.

**2: Fares: Can people travel at reasonable cost?**

Go North East provides a range of reasonably price good value tickets for regular commuters, irregular commuters and occasional travellers of all ages. Go North east also participates in the 'North east Explorer' and network Ticketing Ltd 'Network One' schemes, as well as working with other bus operators to provide good value discounted multi-operator fares.

**Go North East 'key' smartcard:** Go North East was the first bus operator in the region to introduce a 'smart card' scheme. 'The Key' is a smart card that can hold a wide range of ticket products, enabling people to choose the best value option for the journeys they make regularly. The card is also capable of holding 'SmartZone' products, the multi-operator ticket currently being introduced that allows discounted travel on services of any bus operator.

**Go North East 'Buzzfare':** This is a zonal ticketing system offering fares on all Go North East services across the region, using a system of just seven geographic zones. The zones have been designed to enable Go North East to offer good value local fares and best value fares for longer journeys. Most of our passengers travel within one zone, and can get a weekly ticket for £18.40. A three zone plus ticket, at £32.00, gives unlimited travel on all Go North East services, enabling commuting from as far afield as Alston, Bellingham, Ashington, Blyth, Middlesbrough, Bishop Auckland and Consett. A one zone, one day ticket costs just £4.85.

**Go North East Town Savers and Route Savers:** For people who simply travel locally (and this is the vast majority of bus travellers), Town Savers provide simple, flat fares within towns and good value day tickets. Examples include the Durham City saver at £3.10 a day (£12 a week), and the Stanley saver at £2.80 a day (£11 a week).

Route Savers provide discounts for people who travel on the same route or corridor. Examples include the Angel saver, giving unlimited travel on all Go North east services between Durham and

Newcastle for £17.30 a week, and the Crusader saver between South Shields and Newcastle at £13.30 a week.

**Go North East and Young people:** Go North East's product for young people is called 'Get Around'. For young people from 11 years old to under 18, this provides a range of discounts on ordinary fares. Off peak and at weekends, this is a simple 90p flat fare regardless of journey length, on any Go North East service. For young people making more than two peak-time trips on Go North East buses, a day ticket costs £3.75 and a weekly ticket £15.90, giving unlimited travel. Monthly, termly and annual tickets are also available.

Students at college or university are also able to take advantage of 'Get Around' daily and weekly tickets.

**Multi-Operator tickets:** Go North East is working with Stagecoach and Arriva to provide a new, smartcard-based multi-operator ticket. 'SmartZone' tickets will provide discounted tickets that can be used on buses of all three operators at a considerable discount. A pilot scheme is currently operating in South Tyneside and it will be progressively rolled out across Tyne and Wear in the coming months. A multi-operator ticket for parts of Durham will also be introduced.

**Multi-modal tickets:** The region has had the benefit of paper-based multi-modal tickets since at least 1974. Traveltickets were introduced during the early 1970s and during the 1980s became a Network Ticketing Ltd product. Go North East fully participates in the NTL schemes. These tickets are available on buses, Metro, trains and the Ferry in Tyne and Wear. There is also the 'Explorer' ticket, valid across an area bounded by Berwick-upon-Tweed, Carlisle, Darlington and Scarborough providing a day's travel for just £9.50. Network Ticketing Ltd is working towards producing a 'smart' version of its ticket offering.

### **3. Overcoming Barriers**

Almost all parts of the NECA region have good bus transport. In rural areas, county councils have worked with bus operators to provide a mix of commercial and supported bus services that ensure that most settlements have suitable connections to their main centres, with affordable services that provide useful connections to the rest of the network at reasonable times.

Sadly, there will always be some circumstances where buses and public transport will not be the answer for some transport needs. Some of the more remote settlements in our region (in Northumberland and the North Pennines in particular) are unlikely to ever be able to produce enough passengers to make bus service provision viable and it would be unreasonable for residents in remote areas to expect there to be a public provision, for example, for shift workers to be able to reach the urban core.

Nevertheless, there are some issues that could be tackled by the public sector working in partnership with bus operators and the private sector.

*Congestion:* Increasing congestion makes both bus services and private commuting less attractive. Go North East has achieved considerable success by working with some major employers to stagger start and finish times, helping to spread the effect of peak hour congestion at some known pinch points in the region's road network.

*Bus priority:* Short lengths of low-cost bus priority can be a cost-effective method of shortening journey times and thereby increasing commutability from the city centre hinterlands, thereby reducing barriers to employment and education opportunities.

*Shift work:* Go North East has discussed shift patterns and connectivity with a number of employers in the region, such that our regular network of services has been adapted to ensure that new employment centres can be served before 7am and after 10pm. For example, we have provided services to Follingsby Par in Gateshead, and for Royal Mail in Sunderland in the run-up to Christmas.

*Modal integration:* There are more bus services serving more Metro stations today than there were thirty years ago. Go North East also provides valuable links into rail stations across the NECA region, increasing employability providing good commuting possibilities.

All of these can be implemented efficiently through an open dialogue between operators, business, passengers and local authorities.

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### **Evidence from Durham City Trust**

## Response from The City of Durham Trust to the North East Combined Authority's request for views on future public transport needs in the region.

We were asked to give considered response to three questions about local public transport:

- Whether people can travel at reasonable cost, in reasonable time, and with reasonable ease
- The extent to which public transport gives adequate access to employment sites; and
- What alternative transport approaches could be considered that would support people into permanent employment.

These questions are necessarily deeply intertwined (for instance, “reasonable cost” in question 1 is effectively presupposed by “adequate access” in question 2) and they cannot be considered in isolation from each other. In addition, no viable policy on public transport needs can be separated from crucial issues of spatial planning more generally, especially concerning the location of new housing and employment sites, as well as other measures that influence private car use such as major new road building.

### Spatial Planning

Durham County Council's Local Transport Plan 3, adopted in 2011 after extensive consultation, set out a firm and commendable policy basis for discouraging additional or longer car journeys and for favouring the more sustainable forms of transport. It rests on the principles of ensuring that all County residents can access opportunities without the necessity of reliance on private motorised transport, and on development policies which minimise the need for new road construction.

Paragraphs A.5.1-A.5.3 of that document read:

A.5.1 Road building can be disruptive and expensive and it is more preferable that new development is located to minimise the need for new road construction. In terms of building roads to overcome problems relating to congestion and safety, then such projects shall only be pursued after all other potential options have been considered.

A.5.2 The new road infrastructure programme has to change from facilitating the growth of traffic to one of managing the growth of traffic, with a view to eventually reducing traffic.... To be consistent with this Plan's goals, new roads need to be designed so as not to encourage more or longer car journeys, nor detract from any of the more sustainable forms of transport.

A.5.3 The County Council will continue its approach to integrating all modes of transport, to build a sustainable transport system for the county and will ensure that all new highway proposals complement the Plan's goals. All highway schemes will be fully assessed to ensure that they fully support the Plan's [i.e. LTP3's] goals and challenges.

Unfortunately the Durham County Council appears largely to have disregarded its own policies in its subsequent approach to transport delivery and in the exercise of its strategic land-use and development control responsibilities. Contrary to the

provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework, it has allowed out of town shopping and employment sites to expand at the expense of town centres, while for budgetary reasons it has significantly reduced its expenditure on supporting bus services, with the consequence that in many parts of the County no bus services are provided in the evenings and on Sundays. At the same time the Council has continued to prioritise expenditure on schemes which improve the journey times of car users, in some instances to the detriment of pedestrians and cyclists. This approach is clearly contrary to LTP policy A.5.2, and as a result the relative disadvantage of public transport users, pedestrians and cyclists has increased since the new Council was established in 2009.

Durham County Council's "Integrated Transport Approach for Durham City" of 2013 argued:

Durham City is the most sustainable settlement within the County from a transport perspective. The County taken as a whole has a dispersed settlement pattern which creates specific transport issues. The majority of its residents do not live, work, shop or spend recreational time all in one place and the provision of public transport in the County is difficult and is often reliant on subsidies, especially in rural areas.

For Durham County Council this difficult scenario remains one which supports a policy of intensified development in and around Durham City. This is understood to remain the argument of the emerging new draft of the County Durham Plan, despite heavy criticism of this policy in an Independent Inspector's report of February 2015. This led to the Council's launching an appeal for judicial review. The High Court's subsequent quashing of the Inspector's report related, necessarily, to matters of procedure, not of content, with the court also ordering withdrawal of the original plan. To date, no cogent answer has been given to the Inspector's criticism that the Council's development policy risks further exacerbating the isolation and deprivation of other parts of the County.

Ironically, this preferred mode of recent developments in the area near Durham City has actually tended to weaken it as a retail centre, for the stress has been on out-of-centre retail centres and for plans for housing estates built near them in the green belt. In addition, the Council's policy of shifting its own key customer-facing services to out of centre locations such as Belmont Business Park (the parking shop, the registration of birth, deaths and marriages, and most recently the social work services moved from Hopper House) is both undermining the city centre and making such facilities more difficult for non-car users to access, whether they are city residents or those from further away who travel to Durham by bus and who are now forced to make a second journey to reach these Council offices. Current car parking regimes also reflect this regressive out of-centre bias, with charges for those in the centre while outlying retail and business centres are free.

In the meantime, the balance of use of retail properties in the centre of Durham City has changed, with a proliferation of coffee shops and estate agents while other goods (for example, hardware, household goods, men's clothes) are provided in small quantities by a very limited number of shops. Recent planning applications have seen a prime site on Claypath turned over to student housing, and a drastic reduction in retail space proposed for a major shopping mall with space being devoted instead to restaurants and a cinema. In the past year the Council has approved an additional out-of-town retail park on Dragon Lane and extra capacity at the Arnison Centre.

- **Whether people can travel at reasonable cost, in reasonable time, and with reasonable ease**
- **The extent to which public transport gives adequate access to employment sites**

These two questions need to be answered together.

A recent national survey by the Campaign for Better Transport of cuts to supported bus services shows that reductions in support from Durham County Council have been small compared to those in other regions, with a 1.5% cut levied in 2014-2015. Nevertheless, large parts of Durham County are becoming increasingly cut off, with loss of Sunday and evening services. Rural areas are particularly disadvantaged. For instance, the latest one can leave for Wolsingham by bus from Durham on a weekday is 19.15. Along with the closure of many pubs and local post offices, such deteriorations represent a slow death sentence to many small communities, cutting young people off from the chance of accessible employment or social life.

Urban centres are also being affected. There is no bus service on a Sunday between Durham and Seaham, and links between Durham and Bishop Auckland, two of the largest towns in the County, consist only of a half hourly bus service after 7pm on weekdays and hourly on Sunday evenings. The situation is exacerbated by the extremely reduced nature of the rail network in the County. To travel by rail between Durham to Sunderland, or to Gateshead, Washington or Stockton is at present time-consuming to the point of being impractical. Only the Durham to Newcastle and Durham to Darlington routes are feasible as useful links, while train services between Durham and Chester-le-Street run only every 2 hours for most of the day.

The privatized nature of local bus services can be a significant hindrance to travel. At present to buy a return ticket out towards Gilesgate Moor from Durham City is to restrict yourself as to which company's service can be used in the return journey. Journeys which entail a change of service will often require a new and separate ticket. The information available at bus stations and bus stops is also often inadequate, with timetables that require detailed advance local knowledge to be usable.

Bus services do not serve some major employment sites very well: Durham University's Mountjoy Campus is isolated, as is Belmont Industrial Park. Currently, the quickest route between Belmont and the Raintons and the University is by changing between the GoAhead Sunderland buses at the Claypath underpass and an Arriva service to or from Middlebrough, Bishop Auckland, or Hartlepool. But (a) the bus stops are not laid out to facilitate such an interchange, and (b) because the services are operated by different companies, two tickets are needed, even though both Arriva and Go-Ahead have their own zonal tickets for their services in Durham City.

The Trust understands that at a recent meeting of Durham University's sustainable transport group there were various discussions along the lines of the need for better cycle infrastructure, for faster public transport connections with Queen's Campus, Stockton and Teesside generally, and for buses from the Belmont and Sniperley Park & Ride to serve the University. This issue is not just of importance for the University, for residents of Durham City will recognise how strongly traffic levels and local congestion suddenly ease during the University vacations.

To return to the example of Belmont Industrial Estate, the poor provision of public transport effectively cuts off this site from access by those without a private vehicle. To highlight the absurdity of this situation we observe that when Arriva relocated its Durham bus garage out to the Business Park it had to provide a mini-bus for its own employees because of the lack of a regular scheduled bus link between the city centre and the new depot, apart, that is, from the very few peak-hour buses operated by its competitor.

A comparable situation exists in relation to Aykley Heads, which Durham County Council has been pushing vehemently as the most attractive business location in the North East, stressing its supposedly fine transport links. A Traveline check for the journey from High Shincliffe to Aykley Heads in the morning peak revealed that two of the suggested options for travel entailed getting off the bus at the Market Place and then taking a walk of twenty-five minutes for the rest of the way.

Because travel by car is still significantly cheaper for almost all journeys, the retarded and disintegrated nature of the local transport services still locks the County into an environmentally destructive pattern of increased car dependency. The lack of adequate public transport provision and the continuance of planning policies which encourage or necessitate use of the private car is a social injustice. This injustice seems particularly stark for many women in the County seeking employment. Scrutiny of the latest unemployment statistics from NOMIS, compared with the figures from five years ago, shows that the situation for women during this period became significantly worse, even while male employment rates have exceeded the national and regional trend:

This is the unemployment average for the 12 months April 2014-March 2015

County Durham:	Male 4.9% (6,500)	Female 9.3% (11,700)	NE
average M	8.1%	F 7.8 %	GB average M 6.1% F 5.8%

Going 5 years back, to the start of the new Council (April 2009-March 2010) the figures were:

Male 9.2% (11,400)	Female 7.2% (8,000)	NE average	M 11.3%	F 7.9%
GB average M	8.8%	F	6.8%	

This context highlights the social injustice inherent in the Durham County’s current policies insofar as they merely assume or encourage private car use, for in most one-car households it is still the male who generally uses the car.

Finally, lack of adequate evening travel by public transport means that a considerable part of the population is effectively living under curfew (the last train even from Newcastle back to Durham City on a Saturday leaves at 21:55).

- **What alternative transport approaches could be considered that would support people into permanent employment.**

The City of Durham Trust would welcome the establishment of a regional transport body able to determine the funding priorities for transport infrastructure schemes across the region, as opposed to schemes with a more parochial focus, such as recent and still active plans for Western and Northern relief roads around Durham City, environmentally destructive schemes that could only increase dependency on the private car. The Trust believes that any money raised from developers and likely to

be earmarked for the two relief roads could be more sustainably used to help improve rail links between Durham City and the north and the north east.

The Trust supports current plans from the North East Combined Authority for a Quality Contract Scheme for more legal power over bus services, setting ticket prices, routes and timetables, and ensuring the interoperability of tickets between different companies and modes. Such proposals, however, are currently developed only in application only to Tyne and Wear (via NEXUS) and on some routes in and out of County Durham and Northumberland. However, as Mr Kevan Jones, MP for North Durham, has argued, there is now a danger of regions outside of Tyne and Wear losing out, becoming less accessible and being perceived as having a second rate transport infrastructure. A transport scheme of this kind must surely embrace the whole area of the new authority, not just the urban core. Given that wider context, the Trust would support unreservedly current plans, that significant amounts of money currently taken by bus companies be redistributed to support local services. We also agree that bus fares need to be reduced, having risen by on average more than 3% above inflation for a decade, as well as with a proposal that younger people, aged 16 to 18, travel at a reduced fare (which would also support the central government policy that young adults undergo education or training to the age of 18). In general and as a crude basic principle, the cost of using public transport should be less than that of using a car.

The current situation with bus services in and around Durham City illustrates such a need for a wider Quality Contract Scheme. Durham County Council's current options for supporting buses are severely limited and any proposed financial support for bus services is piecemeal, with developers being asked for a financial contribution towards bus provision for specific sites. Durham County Council's "Integrated Transport Approach for Durham City" of 2013 also remains timid of sustainable transport measures once they suggest expenditure, and makes no mention of any measures that might raise revenues by constraining the private car, such as an extended congestion charge or workplace parking levy, measures recommended by the Transport Innovation Fund study of 2006/7 as reducing congestion when combined with enhanced public transport. Increased use of 20 mph speed limits in town and village centres will make them safer and more attractive as retail and community centres. The closure of selected streets to private traffic altogether is a well-known method of increasing the vibrancy attractiveness of central retail areas..

An IPPR study published a year ago demonstrated that transport capital investment in the North East was distinctly less than all other English regions: <http://www.theguardian.com/news/datablog/2014/aug/07/london-gets-24-times-as-much-infrastructure-north-east-england> . In this context, the current proposals and rhetoric concerning a "Northern Powerhouse" represent an opportunity to attract needed central government funding for transport, and the Trust believes this can be more easily achieved by the development of bolder, more innovative and sustainable schemes, as opposed to various and expensive fixes to congested bottlenecks in a highways network that is far less sustainable in the longer term. Core Planning Principle 17 of the NPPF requires planning "for developments which make the fullest use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are, or can be made sustainable."

The Trust supports further research into the viability of reopening former railway branch lines in the regions and notes that the Campaign for Better Transport has singled out 12 such lines in the North East (<http://www.bettertransport.org.uk/re->

opening-rail-lines#ne ). The Trust welcomed consideration of options in the draft County Durham Plan for extending the operations of the Tyne & Wear Metro into the County from their existing terminus on the former Durham- Sunderland branch at South Hylton to a proposed new railway station at Horden Sea View (Paragraph 9.30). 1 The safeguarding of those parts of the Leamside line within or along the County boundary should also be extended to the former Durham-Sunderland branch between Newton Hall and Leamside, for the same reasons that are set out in para. 9.34 of the draft plan. 2 Safeguarding the Leamside line should include provision of a station at Ferryhill and the Leamside line and should also be included in considerations for any extended metro. This could provide opportunities for sustainable rapid transport links to be created from the Newton Hall and Belmont/Sherburn areas to Washington, Newcastle and Sunderland via Rainton, relieving the A167, A690 and A1(M). It would possibly also allow the Belmont Park & Ride site to be developed into a major multi-modal transport interchange, capable of feeding the Tyne & Wear conurbation in addition to Durham City, and thus reducing carbon emissions within the county which arise from cross-boundary car journeys.

## Summary of Main Points

*Spatial Planning.* The feasibility and cost of local transport use is not just a matter of transport systems themselves. Their use is fundamentally influenced by planning decisions on the location of housing, employment, and of public service and retail sites. Current trends towards out-of-centre retail and business parks have only built in divisive assumptions of private car ownership and made sustainable travel more impracticable.

*Ease, cost and reliability of local transport, and of access to places of work.* The current limited and declining provision of bus services is cutting off the more rural areas of the County, especially in the evening and at weekends. It also serves poorly links between larger centres. Journeys can be roundabout, excessively expensive, and may involve more than one operator and ticket. There is no practicable and attractive railway access to urban centres in the County which are not on the East Coast Main line. Current Durham County Council ideas on sustainable transport have often been rather feeble add-ons to schemes which actually lock-in and encourage private car use. The difficulty of travel seems especially to have impacted employment prospects among the female population of the County.

*Alternatives that would improve the situation.* The Trust would welcome changes to the law that would enable an integrated transport scheme, such as that currently in the pipeline for Tyne and Wear, to be expanded to the whole NE region. Railway lines should be reopened and the metro extended. Larger scale sustainable schemes of that sort could be offered as giving credibility to the place of County Durham in a "Northern Powerhouse."

## Notes

1. "In particular, a new station on the Durham Coast Line, and the Leamside Line provide opportunities for sustainable travel from the County into the conurbations. Although not included in the Plan there is also potential the Tyne and Wear Metro could extend into County Durham in the longer term with an extension. Nexus, who manage public transport in Tyne and Wear, have expressed an interest in extending the Metro service southwards on the Durham Coast Line, to Seaham and possibly to the new station at Horden (Peterlee). The extension would be dependent on the electrification of the Durham Coast Line and compatibility with existing passenger and freight services."

2. "There is evidence that both the ECML and parts of the A1(M), particularly the Gateshead Western Bypass, are running at or above capacity. The reinstatement of the Leamside Line would be a significant and regionally important piece of transport infrastructure which would provide additional capacity and relieve the existing two track railway between Darlington and Newcastle, improve transport accessibility across the region and provide opportunities for modal switch and the associated environmental benefits this entails. It would also have the added benefit of providing extra capacity for more freight to be transported in and out of the County making the area a more attractive location for business."

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## North East Combined Authority

### Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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**Date:** 1<sup>st</sup> December 2015

**Subject:** Forward plan & Scrutiny Work Programme

**Report of:** Monitoring Officer

#### **Executive summary**

The purpose of this report is to provide scrutiny members with an opportunity to consider the items on the Forward Plan for the current 28 day period and to review the updated Annual Work Programme for 2015/16.

#### **Recommendations**

It is recommended that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers the Forward Plan in relation to the development of the committee's work programme and notes the revisions to the work programme since the last meeting.

# North East Combined Authority

## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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### 1. Background Information

- 1.1 The Forward Plan is a document which lists the decisions that the North East Combined Authority committees intend to take in the coming months. The Forward Plan 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.
- 1.2 Details of each decision are usually included on the Forward Plan 28 days before the report is considered and any decision is taken.

### 2. Role of Overview and Scrutiny

- 2.1 One of the main functions of this Committee is the review and scrutiny of decisions made by the North East Leadership Board (NELB), the Transport North East Committee (TNEC), Transport North East (Tyne and Wear) Sub-Committee (TWSC) and Nexus. Durham County Council (DCC) and Northumberland County Council (NCC) are also subject to overview and scrutiny in relation to transport functions delegated to them, as is the North East Local Enterprise Partnership (NELEP) to the extent of the NECA's role as its accountable body. One of the ways this can be achieved is by considering the forthcoming decisions of those various decision making bodies
- 2.2 In considering items in the Forward Plan, the Scrutiny Committee should determine whether scrutiny can add value in relation to the decision being made.
- 2.3 To this end, the most recent version of the Forward Plan is attached marked Appendix 1.

### 3. Annual Work Programme

- 3.1 The Scrutiny Committee's Annual Work Programme is attached as Appendix 2.
- 3.2 The work programme has been compiled to allow the Scrutiny Committee to have an overview of all performance, decision-taking and developments within the NECA, as well as being focused and flexible to allow for new issues and recognising the capacity of the scrutiny committee to respond in a timely way to emerging developments throughout the year.

# North East Combined Authority

## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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3.3 The NECA 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 authority)
- b) The Budget and Policy Framework
- c) The Forward Plan
- d) The three Thematic Leads
- e) Evidence for the policy review

### **4. Policy Review – Transport Related Barriers to Employment**

4.1 The Scrutiny Committee is currently gathering evidence for a policy review of transport related barriers to education, employment and training. The review will contribute to the North East Transport Plan. The Plan will contribute to the delivery of “More and Better Jobs”.

4.2 A Call for Evidence has been issued and circulated widely. Written submissions have been received to the Call for Evidence and all responses have been collated and are attached in a separate report.

4.3 Those written submissions provide important evidence for the review and will contribute to further evidence gathering sessions to be programmed into the work programme.

### **5. Next Steps**

5.1 In considering the Forward Plan, Members are asked to consider those issues where the Scrutiny Committee could make a contribution and add value.

5.2 If the Scrutiny Committee determines to review or scrutinise a decision notified in the Forward Plan, a meeting of the Committee will be arranged to allow scrutiny members to carry out their role in a timely way.

5.3 The draft work programme will be refreshed and updated at each meeting of the scrutiny committee throughout the year.

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

6.1 Development of a work programme and review and scrutiny of decisions in the Forward Plan will contribute towards the development and implementation of the policy framework of the NECA, Nexus and NELEP as well as providing appropriate challenge to decisions taken.

# North East Combined Authority

## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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### **7. Finance and Other Resources**

7.1 No financial or other resource implications are identified at this stage. The financial impact of any proposals or recommendations should be taken into account and any significant implications should be reflected in any considerations and comments made by the Scrutiny Committee.

### **8. Legal**

8.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from these recommendations.

### **9. Other Considerations**

#### **9.1 Consultation/Community Engagement**

Not applicable

#### **9.2 Human Rights**

There are no specific human rights implications arising from this report.

#### **9.3 Equalities and Diversity**

Not applicable

#### **9.4 Risk Management**

Not applicable

#### **9.5 Crime and Disorder**

Not applicable

#### **9.6 Environment and Sustainability**

Not applicable

### **10. Background Documents**

10.1 None

### **11. Links to the Local Transport Plans**

11.1 None

### **12. Appendices**

# North East Combined Authority

## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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- 12.1 Forward Plan - Appendix 1  
Work Programme - Appendix 2

### 13. Contact Officers

- 13.1 Karen Brown, Scrutiny Officer, karen.brown@sunderland.gov.uk

#### Sign off

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

### 14. Glossary

Forward Plan – list of decisions to be taken in the next 28 days  
Work Programme – schedule of reports to be taken over the year

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## **Forward Plan of Decisions**

**Published 12 November 2015 \***

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The Forward Plan for the North East Combined Authority (NECA) is prepared and published by the Monitoring Officer for the purpose of giving the 28 day notice of decisions that are planned to be taken by the NECA, its committees or a Chief Officer, which impact on the key areas of the NECA, namely Transport, Economic Development, Regeneration, Skills and Inclusion.

Unless otherwise indicated, if you require any further information or wish to make representations about any of the matters contained in the Forward Plan, please contact the appropriate officer as detailed against each entry at least 7 days before the meeting.

**\*The most recent entries are referred to as “NEW”. Updated entries are referred to as “Updated”.**

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
<b>A. North East Leadership Board (Leadership Board)</b>							
A 1.	17 November 2015 and then all ordinary meetings	Leadership Board	Update reports from Thematic Leads: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic Development and Regeneration;</li> <li>• Employability and Inclusion; and</li> <li>• Transport</li> </ul>	All	To be confirmed	Held by the Contact Officer	<p>Economic Development and Regeneration: Beverley Poulter Lead Policy Officer Sunderland City Council 0191 561 1150 <a href="mailto:beverley.poulter@sunderland.gov.uk">beverley.poulter@sunderland.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Employability and Inclusion: Janice Rose Economic and Inclusion Policy Manager Northumberland County Council 01670 624747 <a href="mailto:janice.rose@northumberland.gov.uk">janice.rose@northumberland.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Transport: Mark Wilson</p>

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
							Head of Transport Policy 0191 211 5679 <a href="mailto:mark.wilson@newcastle.gov.uk">mark.wilson@newcastle.gov.uk</a>
A 2.	17 November 2015	Leadership Board	Devolution Update  To note the latest developments in relation to the Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill and the governance options.	Corporate Issue	The Leaders and Elected Mayor as well as the Head of Paid Service and the Chief Executives of the Constituent Authorities will be consulted on this item.	To be confirmed in the report to the Leadership Board	Adam Wilkinson Head of Paid Service North East Combined Authority 0191 643 5689 <a href="mailto:adam.wilkinson@northeastca.gov.uk">adam.wilkinson@northeastca.gov.uk</a>
A 3.	17 November 2015	Leadership Board	Treasury Management Mid- Year Review  Leadership Board is asked to agree the revised investment criteria and limits and the updated 2015/16 prudential	Corporate issue	Consultation with statutory officers	2015/16 Treasury Management and Investment Strategy	Eleanor Goodman Principal Accountant North East Combined Authority 0191 277 7518 <a href="mailto:eleanor.goodman@newcastle.gov.uk">eleanor.goodman@newcastle.gov.uk</a>

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
			indicators set out in the report.				
A 4.	17 November 2015	Leadership Board	Draft Budget 2016/17 and Transport Levies	Corporate issue	The budget for 2016/17 will be subject to consultation in advance of the formal agreement in winter 2016.	Held by the Contact Officer	Paul Woods Chief Finance Officer North East Combined Authority 07446936840 <a href="mailto:paul.woods@northeastc.a.gov.uk">paul.woods@northeastc.a.gov.uk</a>
A 5.	17 November 2015	Leadership Board	Project Approvals  (Inclusive of: • Weetslade Roundabout and Corridor Improvements;  • River Tyne Economic Development Project; and  • Lindisfarne Roundabout)	• Transport; • Economic Development and Regeneratio n; and • Employabilit y and Inclusion.	To be confirmed.	Held by the Contact Officer	Paul Woods Chief Finance Officer North East Combined Authority 07446936840 <a href="mailto:paul.woods@northeastc.a.gov.uk">paul.woods@northeastc.a.gov.uk</a>  and  Mark Wilson Head of Transport Policy 0191 211 5679 <a href="mailto:mark.wilson@newcastle.gov.uk">mark.wilson@newcastle.gov.uk</a>

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
			<p>Approval of funding or contractual arrangement that may be necessary from NECA for projects to proceed. This includes projects where funding is allocated directly to NECA or projects where funding is approved by the NELEP Board, where the approval may also be necessary from NECA in its role as accountable body. The report may include information about projects approved under delegated arrangements in</p>				

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
			between formal meetings, to enable projects to proceed in a timely fashion to achieve the outcomes of the Strategic Economic Plan.				
A 6.	17 November 2015	Leadership Board	North East Rail Management Unit  Report for approval	Transport	NECA-area transport officers consulted over a two-week period.	North East Rail Management Unit – Collaboration Agreement	Tobyn Hughes Managing Director Transport Operations 0191 203 3246 <a href="mailto:Tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk">Tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk</a>
A 7.	17 November 2015	Leadership Board	Rail North Members Agreement  Report for approval	Transport	NECA-area transport officers consulted over a two-week period.	Rail North Members Agreement	Tobyn Hughes Managing Director Transport Operations 0191 203 3246 <a href="mailto:Tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk">Tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk</a>
A 8.	17 November 2015	Leadership Board	Quality Contracts Scheme Update	Transport	To be confirmed	To be confirmed	Tobyn Hughes Managing Director Transport Operations 0191 203 3246

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
			An update report, for information				<a href="mailto:Tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk">Tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk</a>
A 9.	19 January 2016	Leadership Board	Budget 2016/17 and Transport Levies	Corporate issue	The budget for 2016/17 will be subject to consultation.	Reports to NELB and other committees of the Combined Authority.	Paul Woods Chief Finance Officer North East Combined Authority 07446936840 <a href="mailto:paul.woods@northeastc.a.gov.uk">paul.woods@northeastc.a.gov.uk</a>
A 10.	19 January 2016 and then all ordinary meetings	Leadership Board	Update reports from Thematic Leads: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic Development and Regeneration;</li> <li>• Employability and Inclusion; and</li> <li>• Transport</li> </ul>	All	To be confirmed	Held by the Contact Officer	Economic Development and Regeneration: Beverley Poulter Lead Policy Officer Sunderland City Council 0191 561 1150 <a href="mailto:beverley.poulter@sunderland.gov.uk">beverley.poulter@sunderland.gov.uk</a>  Employability and Inclusion: Janice Rose Economic and Inclusion Policy Manager Northumberland County

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
							Council 01670 624747 <a href="mailto:janice.rose@northumberland.gov.uk">janice.rose@northumberland.gov.uk</a>  Transport: Mark Wilson Head of Transport Policy 0191 211 5679 <a href="mailto:mark.wilson@newcastle.gov.uk">mark.wilson@newcastle.gov.uk</a>
A 11.	Any future meeting	Leadership Board	Project Approvals  This is a standing item, which will include the approval of any funding or contractual arrangement that may be necessary from NECA for projects to proceed. This includes projects	The projects could relate to any of the thematic theme areas – Transport; Economic Development and Regeneration ; or Employability	Any, where necessary.	Held by the Contact Officer	Paul Woods Chief Finance Officer North East Combined Authority 07446936840 <a href="mailto:paul.woods@northeastc.a.gov.uk">paul.woods@northeastc.a.gov.uk</a>

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
			<p>where funding is allocated directly to NECA or projects where funding is approved by the NELEP Board, where the approval may also be necessary from NECA in its role as accountable body. The report may include information about projects approved under delegated arrangements in between formal meetings, to enable projects to proceed in a timely fashion to achieve the outcomes of the Strategic Economic Plan.</p>	and Inclusion.			

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
A 12.	19 April 2016 and then all ordinary meetings	Leadership Board	Update reports from Thematic Leads: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic Development and Regeneration;</li> <li>• Employability and Inclusion; and</li> <li>• Transport</li> </ul>	All	To be confirmed	Held by the Contact Officer	<p>Economic Development and Regeneration: Beverley Poulter Lead Policy Officer Sunderland City Council 0191 561 1150 <a href="mailto:beverley.poulter@sunderland.gov.uk">beverley.poulter@sunderland.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Employability and Inclusion: Janice Rose Economic and Inclusion Policy Manager Northumberland County Council 01670 624747 <a href="mailto:janice.rose@northumberland.gov.uk">janice.rose@northumberland.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Transport: Mark Wilson Head of Transport Policy 0191 211 5679 <a href="mailto:mark.wilson@newcastle.gov.uk">mark.wilson@newcastle.gov.uk</a></p>

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
<b>B. Transport North East Committee (TNEC)</b>							
B 1.  <b>Updated</b>	24 November 2015 and all future meetings	TNEC	Transport Manifesto for the North East  Report for approval	Transport	Wide public consultation will take place following publication of the Transport Vision	Held by the Contact Officer	Mark Wilson Head of Transport Policy 0191 211 5679 <a href="mailto:Mark.Wilson@newcastle.gov.uk">Mark.Wilson@newcastle.gov.uk</a>
B 2.	24 November 2015 and all future meetings	TNEC	Transport for the North – an update on the programme to improve the transport network in Northern England  Report for information	Transport	To be confirmed	The Northern Powerhouse: One Agenda, One Economy, One North: document published at <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/northern-transport-strategy">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/northern-transport-strategy</a>	Mark Wilson Head of Transport Policy 0191 211 5679 <a href="mailto:Mark.Wilson@newcastle.gov.uk">Mark.Wilson@newcastle.gov.uk</a>
B 3.	24 November 2015	TNEC	Appointment of Vice-Chair of TWSC	Corporate issue	This is a constitutional	Constitution	Vivienne Geary

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
					matter		Monitoring Officer <a href="mailto:viv.geary@northtyneside.gov.uk">viv.geary@northtyneside.gov.uk</a>
B 4.	24 November 2015	TNEC	Draft budget 2016/17 and transport levies	Corporate issue/ Transport	To be confirmed	Held by the Contact Officer	Paul Woods Chief Finance Officer North East Combined Authority 07446936840 <a href="mailto:paul.woods@northeastca.gov.uk">paul.woods@northeastca.gov.uk</a>
B 5.	24 November 2015 and all future meetings	TNEC	Capital Programme Monitoring Report  This report provides the Transport North East Committee with a progress update in relation to delivery of the transport related capital programme. This is a requirement of	Corporate issue	Consultation on 2014/15 capital programme with Treasurers and Chief Executives, and capital programme agreed by Leaders in April 2014.	NECA Budget and Capital Programme 2014/15	Eleanor Goodman Principal Accountant 0191 277 7518 <a href="mailto:eleanor.goodman@newcastle.gov.uk">eleanor.goodman@newcastle.gov.uk</a>

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
			the NECA constitution and is a function delegated to TNEC.				
B 6.	24 November 2015 and all future meetings	TNEC	Revenue Budget 2014/15 Monitoring Report  This report provides the Transport North East Committee with a progress update in relation to how the transport related budgets for the delivery agencies are being managed. This is a requirement of the NECA constitution and is a function	Corporate issue	Consultation on 2014/15 budget with Treasurers and Chief Executives, and budget agreed by Leaders in April 2014.	NECA Budget and Capital Programme 2014/15	Eleanor Goodman Principal Accountant 0191 277 7518  <a href="mailto:eleanor.goodman@newcastle.gov.uk">eleanor.goodman@newcastle.gov.uk</a>

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
			delegated to TNEC.				
B 7.  <b>NEW</b>	24 November 2015	TNEC	Metro Training - Single Local Growth Fund Scheme Update  The purpose of this report is to advise TNEC of the proposed change of location for the light maintenance and training centre outlined in the Strategic Economic Plan	Transport	The report has been prepared through Nexus' internal reporting arrangements	Held by the Contact Officer.	Tobyn Hughes Managing Director (Transport Operations) 0191 203 3246 tobyn.hughes@nexus.o rg.uk
B 8.	26 February 2016 and all future meetings	TNEC	QCS Programme Update  The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the QCS	Transport	The report has been prepared through Nexus's internal reporting arrangements.	Held by the Contact Officer	Tobyn Hughes Managing Director (Transport Operations) 0191 203 3246 <a href="mailto:tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk">tobyn.hughes@nexus.o rg.uk</a>

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
			Programme and Workstreams.				
B 9.	26 February 2016	TNEC	Local Sustainable Transport Fund programme update  This report would provide information on the delivery of the NECA-wide capital schemes and the 3 revenue-based schemes in Northumberland, Durham and Tyne and Wear	Transport	To be confirmed	Held by the Contact Officer	Mark Wilson Head of Transport Policy 0191 211 5679 <a href="mailto:Mark.Wilson@newcastle.gov.uk">Mark.Wilson@newcastle.gov.uk</a>
B 10.	26 February 2016 and all future meetings	TNEC	Transport Vision for the North East Report for approval	Transport	Wide public consultation will take place following publication of the Transport Vision	Held by the Contact Officer	Mark Wilson Head of Transport Policy 0191 211 5679 <a href="mailto:Mark.Wilson@newcastle.gov.uk">Mark.Wilson@newcastle.gov.uk</a>

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
B 11.	26 February 2016 and all future meetings	TNEC	Transport for the North – an update on the programme to improve the transport network in Northern England  Report for information	Transport	To be confirmed	The Northern Powerhouse: One Agenda, One Economy, One North: document published at <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/northern-transport-strategy">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/northern-transport-strategy</a>	Mark Wilson Head of Transport Policy 0191 211 5679 <a href="mailto:Mark.Wilson@newcastle.gov.uk">Mark.Wilson@newcastle.gov.uk</a>
B 12.	26 February 2016 and all future meetings	TNEC	Capital Programme Monitoring Report  This report provides the Transport North East Committee with a progress update in relation to delivery of the transport related capital programme. This	Corporate issue	Consultation on 2014/15 capital programme with Treasurers and Chief Executives, and capital programme agreed by Leaders in April 2014.	NECA Budget and Capital Programme 2014/15	Eleanor Goodman Principal Accountant 0191 277 7518 <a href="mailto:eleanor.goodman@newcastle.gov.uk">eleanor.goodman@newcastle.gov.uk</a>

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
			is a requirement of the NECA constitution and is a function delegated to TNEC.				
B 13.	26 February 2016 and all future meetings	TNEC	<p>Revenue Budget 2014/15 Monitoring Report</p> <p>This report provides the Transport North East Committee with a progress update in relation to how the transport related budgets for the delivery agencies are being managed. This is a requirement of the NECA constitution and is a function</p>	Corporate issue	Consultation on 2014/15 budget with Treasurers and Chief Executives, and budget agreed by Leaders in April 2014.	NECA Budget and Capital Programme 2014/15	<p>Eleanor Goodman Principal Accountant 0191 277 7518</p> <p><a href="mailto:eleanor.goodman@newcastle.gov.uk">eleanor.goodman@newcastle.gov.uk</a></p>

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
			delegated to TNEC.				
B 14.	Any relevant meeting	TNEC	Transport Project Approvals. This is a standing item, which will include the approval of any funding or contractual arrangement that may be necessary from NECA for projects to proceed. This involves projects where funding has previously been approved by the Local Transport Body and where the approval may also be necessary from TNEC, on behalf of NECA in its role as accountable body.	Transport	To be confirmed	Held by the Contact Officer	Paul Woods Chief Finance Officer North East Combined Authority 07446936840 <a href="mailto:paul.woods@northeastc.a.gov.uk">paul.woods@northeastc.a.gov.uk</a>  And  Mark Wilson Head of Transport Policy 0191 211 5679 <a href="mailto:Mark.Wilson@newcastle.gov.uk">Mark.Wilson@newcastle.gov.uk</a>

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
			Report for approval				
B 15.	28 April 2016 and all future meetings	TNEC	Transport Vision for the North East Report for approval	Transport	Wide public consultation will take place following publication of the Transport Vision	Held by the Contact Officer	Mark Wilson Head of Transport Policy 0191 211 5679 <a href="mailto:Mark.Wilson@newcastle.gov.uk">Mark.Wilson@newcastle.gov.uk</a>
B 16.	28 April 2016 and all future meetings	TNEC	Transport for the North – an update on the programme to improve the transport network in Northern England  Report for information	Transport	To be confirmed	The Northern Powerhouse: One Agenda, One Economy, One North: document published at <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/northern-transport-strategy">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/northern-transport-strategy</a>	Mark Wilson Head of Transport Policy 0191 211 5679 <a href="mailto:Mark.Wilson@newcastle.gov.uk">Mark.Wilson@newcastle.gov.uk</a>
B 17.	28 April 2016 and	TNEC	Capital Programme Monitoring Report	Corporate issue	Consultation on 2014/15 capital	NECA Budget and Capital	Eleanor Goodman Principal Accountant 0191 277 7518

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
	all future meetings		This report provides the Transport North East Committee with a progress update in relation to delivery of the transport related capital programme. This is a requirement of the NECA constitution and is a function delegated to TNEC.		programme with Treasurers and Chief Executives, and capital programme agreed by Leaders in April 2014.	Programme 2014/15	<a href="mailto:eleanor.goodman@newcastle.gov.uk">eleanor.goodman@newcastle.gov.uk</a>
B 18.	28 April 2016 and all future meetings	TNEC	Revenue Budget 2014/15 Monitoring Report  This report provides the Transport North East Committee with a progress	Corporate issue	Consultation on 2014/15 budget with Treasurers and Chief Executives, and budget agreed by Leaders in	NECA Budget and Capital Programme 2014/15	Eleanor Goodman Principal Accountant 0191 277 7518  <a href="mailto:eleanor.goodman@newcastle.gov.uk">eleanor.goodman@newcastle.gov.uk</a>

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
			update in relation to how the transport related budgets for the delivery agencies are being managed. This is a requirement of the NECA constitution and is a function delegated to TNEC.		April 2014.		
B 19.	28 April 2016 and all future meetings	TNEC	QCS Programme Update  The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the QCS Programme and Workstreams.	Transport	The report has been prepared through Nexus's internal reporting arrangements.	Held by the Contact Officer	Tobyn Hughes Managing Director (Transport Operations) 0191 203 3246 <a href="mailto:tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk">tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk</a>
B 20.	28 April 2016 (annually)	TNEC	Discharge of Transport Functions by	Transport	The report refers to the discharge of	The North East Combined	Adrian J White Head of Transport and Contract Services

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
			<p>Durham County Council.</p> <p>The report provides an update on the discharge of delegated functions at Durham County Council.</p>		<p>delegated functions by officers in Durham County Council in consultation with the relevant cabinet portfolio holder and its contents have already been noted by the Cabinet of Durham County Council.</p>	<p>Authority Constitution The North East Combined Authority Deed of Operation dated the 29th April 2014.</p>	<p>Durham County Council 03000 267455 <a href="mailto:adrian.white@durham.gov.uk">adrian.white@durham.gov.uk</a></p>
B 21.	28 April 2016 (annually)	TNEC	Northumberland County Council – Public Transport Activity Report on Delegated Functions 2014	Transport	To be confirmed	Held by the Contact Officer	<p>Stuart McNaughton Principal Transport Policy Officer Northumberland County Council 01670 624 104 <a href="mailto:stuart.mcnaughton@northumberland.gov.uk">stuart.mcnaughton@northumberland.gov.uk</a></p>

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
			The report provides an update on the discharge of delegated functions at Northumberland County Council.				
<b>C. Transport North East (Tyne and Wear) Sub-Committee (TWSC)</b>							
C 1.	24 November 2015	TWSC	Monitoring Nexus' Performance  The purpose of these reports is to advise TWSC of Nexus corporate performance in respect of service and project delivery such that the Sub-Committee exercises the monitoring and oversight functions	Transport	The report has been prepared through Nexus corporate performance reporting arrangements.	Held by the Contact Officer	Tobyn Hughes Managing Director (Transport Operations) 0191 203 3246 <a href="mailto:tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk">tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk</a>

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
			in respect of Nexus activities delegated to it from the NECA Leadership Board.				
C 2.  <b>Item postponed</b>	24 November 2015	TWSC	<p>End Date of Current Metro Concession <b>(confidential report)</b></p> <p>The purpose of this report is to seek endorsement for the proposed end date of the current concession and to provide options for the future concession.</p> <p>The report will be exempt from the publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of</p>	Transport	The report has been prepared through Nexus's internal reporting arrangements	Held by the Contact Officer	Tobyn Hughes Managing Director (Transport Operations) 0191 203 3246 <a href="mailto:tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk">tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk</a>

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
			The Local Government Act 1972 because it is likely to include commercially sensitive information relating to the Metro Concessionaire.				
C 3.	24 November 2015 and then at every meeting	TWSC	<p>Tyne Tunnel Update <b>(confidential report)</b> The report will provide an update for Members on the operation and management of the Tyne Tunnel</p> <p>The report will be exempt from the publication by virtue of paragraphs 3 and</p>	Transport	To be confirmed	Held by the Contact Officer	<p>Michael Murphy Engineer to the Tyne 0191 211 5950 <a href="mailto:michael.murphy@newcastle.gov.uk">michael.murphy@newcastle.gov.uk</a></p>

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
			5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of The Local Government Act 1972				
C 4.	24 November 2015 and all future meetings	TWSC	Metro Performance Update  It is recommended that the Committee note the report and measures in place to improve Metro performance.	Transport	To be confirmed	Held by the Contact Officer	Tobyn Hughes Managing Director (Transport Operations) 0191 203 3246 <a href="mailto:tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk">tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk</a>
C 5.	24 November 2015 and all future meetings	TWSC	Nexus Strategic Risks 2015/16  The purpose of this report is to provide an update to TWSC of the strategic risks identified by	Transport	The report has been prepared through Nexus internal reporting arrangements.	Held by the Contact Officer	Tobyn Hughes Managing Director (Transport Operations) 0191 203 3246 <a href="mailto:tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk">tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk</a>

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
			Nexus for 2015/16.				
C 6.	24 November 2015	TWSC	Revision to Metro and Ferry Fares 2016  The purpose of the report is to seek approval for changes to Metro and Ferry fares for 2016.	Transport	The report has been prepared through Nexus' internal reporting arrangements	To be confirmed	Tobyn Hughes Managing Director (Transport Operations) 0191 203 3246 <a href="mailto:tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk">tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk</a>
C 7.	24 November 2015	TWSC	Nexus Annual Activity and Expenditure Report 2014/15  The purpose of the report is to present the Nexus Annual Activity and Expenditure Report for 2014/15.	Transport	The report has been prepared through Nexus' internal reporting arrangements	To be confirmed	Tobyn Hughes Managing Director (Transport Operations) 0191 203 3246 <a href="mailto:tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk">tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk</a>

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
C 8.	24 November 2015	TWSC	Nexus Corporate Business Plan 2016/17 to 2018/19  The purpose of the report is to present the three year Nexus Corporate Business Plan for 2016/17 to 2018/19	Transport	The report has been prepared through Nexus' internal reporting arrangements	To be confirmed	Tobyn Hughes Managing Director (Transport Operations) 0191 203 3246 <a href="mailto:tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk">tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk</a>
C 9.	24 November 2015	TWSC	Concessionary Travel Policy  The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the Nexus policy on Concessionary Travel	Transport	The report has been prepared through Nexus' internal reporting arrangements	To be confirmed	Tobyn Hughes Managing Director (Transport Operations) 0191 203 3246 <a href="mailto:tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk">tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk</a>
C 10.	24 November 2015	TWSC	Great North Run Review	Transport	The report has been prepared through Nexus' internal	To be confirmed	Tobyn Hughes Managing Director (Transport Operations) 0191 203 3246

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
			The purpose of the report is to provide an update to Members on the performance of Metro on Great North Run day.		reporting arrangements		<a href="mailto:tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk">tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk</a>
C 11.  <b>NEW</b>	24 November 2015	TWSC	Draft Budget 2016/17 and Transport Levies	Corporate issue/ Transport	To be confirmed	Held by the Contact Officer	Paul Woods Chief Finance Officer North East Combined Authority 07446936840 <a href="mailto:paul.woods@northeastc.a.gov.uk">paul.woods@northeastc.a.gov.uk</a>
C 12.	28 January 2016	TWSC	Publicity, Marketing and Promotions Policy  To seek approval for the Nexus policy on all publicity related activity.	Transport	The report has been prepared through Nexus internal reporting arrangements.	Held by the Contact Officer	Tobyn Hughes Managing Director (Transport Operations) 0191 203 3246 <a href="mailto:tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk">tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk</a>

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
C 13.	28 January 2016	TWSC	Secured Service Policy  The purpose of the report is to seek approval for the Nexus policy on Secured Bus Services	Transport	The report has been prepared through Nexus' internal reporting arrangements	To be confirmed	Tobyn Hughes Managing Director (Transport Operations) 0191 203 3246 <a href="mailto:tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk">tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk</a>
C 14.	28 January 2016 and then at every meeting	TWSC	Tyne Tunnel Update <b>(confidential report)</b> The report will provide an update for Members on the operation and management of the Tyne Tunnel  The report will be exempt from the publication by virtue of paragraphs 3 and 5 of Part 1 of	Transport	To be confirmed	Held by the Contact Officer	Michael Murphy Engineer to the Tyne 0191 211 5950 <a href="mailto:michael.murphy@newcastle.gov.uk">michael.murphy@newcastle.gov.uk</a>

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
			Schedule 12A of The Local Government Act 1972				
C 15.	28 January 2016 and all future meetings	TWSC	Metro Performance Update  It is recommended that the Committee note the report and measures in place to improve Metro performance.	Transport	To be confirmed	Held by the Contact Officer	Tobyn Hughes Managing Director (Transport Operations) 0191 203 3246 <a href="mailto:tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk">tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk</a>
C 16.	28 January 2016 and all future meetings	TWSC	Nexus Strategic Risks 2015/16  The purpose of this report is to provide an update to TWSC of the strategic risks identified by	Transport	The report has been prepared through Nexus internal reporting arrangements.	Held by the Contact Officer	Tobyn Hughes Managing Director (Transport Operations) 0191 203 3246 <a href="mailto:tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk">tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk</a>

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
			Nexus for 2015/16.				
C 17.	26 February 2016 and then at every meeting	TWSC	<p>Tyne Tunnel Update <b>(confidential report)</b> The report will provide an update for Members on the operation and management of the Tyne Tunnel</p> <p>The report will be exempt from the publication by virtue of paragraphs 3 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of The Local Government Act 1972</p>	Transport	To be confirmed	Held by the Contact Officer	Michael Murphy Engineer to the Tyne 0191 211 5950 <a href="mailto:michael.murphy@newcastle.gov.uk">michael.murphy@newcastle.gov.uk</a>

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
C 18.	26 February 2016 and all future meetings	TWSC	Metro Performance Update  It is recommended that the Committee note the report and measures in place to improve Metro performance.	Transport	To be confirmed	Held by the Contact Officer	Tobyn Hughes Managing Director (Transport Operations) 0191 203 3246 <a href="mailto:tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk">tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk</a>
C 19.	26 February 2016 and all future meetings	TWSC	Nexus Strategic Risks 2015/16  The purpose of this report is to provide an update to TWSC of the strategic risks identified by Nexus for 2015/16.	Transport	The report has been prepared through Nexus internal reporting arrangements.	Held by the Contact Officer	Tobyn Hughes Managing Director (Transport Operations) 0191 203 3246 <a href="mailto:tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk">tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk</a>
C 20.	28 April 2016 and then at	TWSC	Tyne Tunnel Update	Transport	To be confirmed	Held by the Contact Officer	Michael Murphy Engineer to the Tyne 0191 211 5950

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
	every meeting		<p><b>(confidential report)</b> The report will provide an update for Members on the operation and management of the Tyne Tunnel</p> <p>The report will be exempt from the publication by virtue of paragraphs 3 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of The Local Government Act 1972</p>				<a href="mailto:michael.murphy@newcastle.gov.uk">michael.murphy@newcastle.gov.uk</a>
C 21.	28 April 2016 and all future meetings	TWSC	<p>Metro Performance Update</p> <p>It is recommended that the Committee note</p>	Transport	To be confirmed	Held by the Contact Officer	<p>Tobyn Hughes Managing Director (Transport Operations) 0191 203 3246 <a href="mailto:tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk">tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk</a></p>

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
			the report and measures in place to improve Metro performance.				
C 22.	28 April 2016 and all future meetings	TWSC	Nexus Strategic Risks 2015/16  The purpose of this report is to provide an update to TWSC of the strategic risks identified by Nexus for 2015/16.	Transport	The report has been prepared through Nexus internal reporting arrangements.	Held by the Contact Officer	Tobyn Hughes Managing Director (Transport Operations) 0191 203 3246 <a href="mailto:tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk">tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk</a>
<b>D. Governance Committee</b>							
D 1.	11 December 2015 and 1 April 2016	Governance Committee	Internal Audit Progress Report  The report provides an update on the outcomes from internal audit	Corporate Issue	Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer and Chief Finance Officer	Internal Audit Plan, Final Internal Audit Plan	Philip Slater Audit, Risk and Insurance Service Manager Newcastle City Council 0191 211 6511 <a href="mailto:Philip.slater@newcastle.gov.uk">Philip.slater@newcastle.gov.uk</a>

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
			activity and progress against the delivery of the internal audit plan.				
D 2.	11 December 2015	Governance Committee	Annual Audit Letter	Corporate issue	To be confirmed	Held by the Contact Officer	Philip Slater Audit, Risk and Insurance Service Manager Newcastle City Council 0191 211 6511 <a href="mailto:Philip.slater@newcastle.gov.uk">Philip.slater@newcastle.gov.uk</a>
D 3.	11 December 2015	Governance Committee	Draft budget 2016/17 and Transport Levies	Corporate issue	This report will form part of the consultation process	Held by the Contact Officer	Paul Woods Chief Finance Officer North East Combined Authority 07446936840 <a href="mailto:paul.woods@northeastc.a.gov.uk">paul.woods@northeastc.a.gov.uk</a>  And Eleanor Goodman Principal Accountant 0191 277 7518 <a href="mailto:eleanor.goodman@newcastle.gov.uk">eleanor.goodman@newcastle.gov.uk</a>

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
D 4.  <b>NEW</b>	11 December 2015	Governance Committee	External Audit Progress Update  This report provides an update for information on the work of Mazars, the External Auditors to the Combined Authority.	Corporate issue.	Consultation with statutory officers and the Governance Committee Chair.	Held by the Contact Officer	Eleanor Goodman Principal Accountant 0191 277 7518 <a href="mailto:eleanor.goodman@newcastle.gov.uk">eleanor.goodman@newcastle.gov.uk</a>
D 5.  <b>NEW</b>	11 December 2015	Governance Committee	Nexus' Annual Audit Letter for 2014/15  The purpose of the report is to present the Nexus Annual Audit Letter for 2014/15	Corporate issue/ Transport	Consultation with officers at Nexus and at the Nexus Audit Committee meeting of 2 November 2015.	Held by the Contact Officer	Tobyn Hughes Managing Director (Transport Operations) 0191 203 3246 <a href="mailto:tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk">tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk</a>
D 6.  <b>NEW</b>	11 December 2015	Governance Committee	Strategic Risk and Opportunities Register	Corporate issue	Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer and	The Risk Management Strategy	Philip Slater Audit, Risk and Insurance Service Manager

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
			The report provides an update on the Combined Authority's key risks and opportunities	The Risk Register covers all aspects of the Combined Authority's activity	Chief Finance Officer		Newcastle City Council 0191 211 6511 <a href="mailto:Philip.slater@newcastle.gov.uk">Philip.slater@newcastle.gov.uk</a>
D 7. <b>NEW</b>	11 December 2015	Governance Committee	Quality Contracts Scheme (QCS) Update  The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the latest position with regards to the Quality Contract Scheme.	Transport	Consultation with officers at Nexus and NECA.	Held by the Contact Officer	Tobyn Hughes Managing Director (Transport Operations) 0191 203 3246 <a href="mailto:tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk">tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk</a>
D 8. <b>NEW</b>	1 April 2016	Governance Committee	External Audit Progress Update  This report provides an	Corporate issue.	Consultation with statutory officers and the Governance	Held by the Contact Officer	Eleanor Goodman Principal Accountant 0191 277 7518 <a href="mailto:eleanor.goodman@newcastle.gov.uk">eleanor.goodman@newcastle.gov.uk</a>

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
			update for information on the work of Mazars, the External Auditors to the Combined Authority.		Committee Chair.		
D 9.	1 April 2016	Governance Committee	<p>Accounting Policies Update 2014/15</p> <p>The report will set out the draft accounting policies to be used in the preparation of the 2015/16 accounts, with an explanation of any changes which may have been introduced, and an update on changes to the Code of Practice on Local Authority</p>	Corporate issue	To be confirmed	Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting 2014/15	<p>Eleanor Goodman Principal Accountant 0191 277 7518 <a href="mailto:eleanor.goodman@newcastle.gov.uk">eleanor.goodman@newcastle.gov.uk</a></p>

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
			Accounting. Governance Committee will be asked to approve the policies.				
<b>E. Governance Sub-Committee</b>							
Currently, there are no meetings scheduled							
<b>F. Overview and Scrutiny Committee (O&amp;S)</b>							
F 1.  <b>NEW</b>	1 December 2015	O&S	Transport Related Barriers to Education, Employment and Training – Written Submissions  The purpose of this report is to analyse written	Transport	To be confirmed	Held by the Contact Officer	Karen Brown Scrutiny Officer 0191 561 1004 <a href="mailto:Karen.brown@sunderland.gov.uk">Karen.brown@sunderland.gov.uk</a>  Representation to be submitted to the Contact Officer by 20th November 2015

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
			evidence for the policy review on transport related barriers to employment				
F 2.	1 December 2015	O&S	Devolution update  The purpose of the report is to note the latest developments in relation to the Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill and the governance options.	Corporate	To be confirmed	Held by the Contact Officer	Adam Wilkinson Head of Paid Service North East Combined Authority 0191 643 5689 <a href="mailto:adam.wilkinson@northeastca.gov.uk">adam.wilkinson@northeastca.gov.uk</a>  Representation to be submitted to the Contact Officer by 20 <sup>th</sup> November 2015
F 3.	1 December 2015	O&S	Nexus Performance review  The purpose of this report is to review current performance and	Transport	To be confirmed	Held by the Contact Officers	Tobyn Hughes Managing Director (Transport Operations) 0191 203 3246 <a href="mailto:tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk">tobyn.hughes@nexus.org.uk</a> And

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
			measures in place to improve performance.				Karen Brown Scrutiny Officer 0191 561 1004 <a href="mailto:Karen.brown@sunderland.gov.uk">Karen.brown@sunderland.gov.uk</a>  Representation to be submitted to the Contact Officer by 20 <sup>th</sup> November 2015
F 4.	1 December 2015	O&S	Forward Plan and Work Programme  The purpose of this report is to receive the latest version of the Forward Plan and annual work programme	Corporate	To be confirmed	Held by the Contact Officers	Karen Brown Scrutiny Officer 0191 561 1004 <a href="mailto:Karen.brown@sunderland.gov.uk">Karen.brown@sunderland.gov.uk</a>  Representation to be submitted to the Contact Officer by 20 <sup>th</sup> November 2015
<b>G. Economic Development and Regeneration Advisory Board (EDRAB)</b>							
G 1.	18 December 2015	EDRAB	Inward Investment – Development of NECA Investment	Economic Development	NECA Elected Members and officers; NELEP	North East Strategic Economic Plan - More and	Beverley Poulter Lead Policy Officer Sunderland City Council 0191 561 1150

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
			<p>Gateway Function and Sector Propositions</p> <p>Members are requested to provide views on the development of the NECA Investment Gateway function along with key sector propositions, in order to attract investment projects to the region.</p>	and Regeneration	Members and officers	Better Jobs	<a href="mailto:beverley.poulter@sunderland.gov.uk">beverley.poulter@sunderland.gov.uk</a>
G 2.	18 December 2015	EDRAB	<p>Economic Assets</p> <p>Members are requested to provide views on a draft schedule of projects for inclusion in the Regional Investment Plan</p>	Economic Development and Regeneration	NECA Elected Members and officers; NELEP Members and officers	North East Strategic Economic Plan - More and Better Jobs	<p>Beverley Poulter Lead Policy Officer Sunderland City Council 0191 561 1150 <a href="mailto:beverley.poulter@sunderland.gov.uk">beverley.poulter@sunderland.gov.uk</a></p>

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
			and make recommendations to the NELB.				
G 3	18 December 2015	EDRAB	Devolution Update  The purpose of the report is to note the latest developments in relation to the government's devolution agenda.	Corporate Issue	The Leaders and Elected Mayor as well as the Interim Head of Paid Service and the Chief Executives of the constituent authorities have been consulted on an ongoing basis during the development of the report.  A series of meetings with local and regional stakeholders as well as MPs and House of	Report to NECA Leadership Board – 'Developing a Devolution Prospectus for the North East Combined Authority' – 20 January 2015  Report to NECA Leadership Board – 'Developing a Devolution Prospectus for the North East Combined Authority – update on stakeholder engagement –	Adam Wilkinson Head of Paid Service North East Combined Authority 0191 643 5689 <a href="mailto:adam.wilkinson@northeastca.gov.uk">adam.wilkinson@northeastca.gov.uk</a>

No./ Date Published on Forward Plan	Date of Decision	Decision Maker	Topic	Thematic area	Consultees /Consultation Process	Background Documents	Contact Officer
					Lords members took place in March 2015 to test the initial devolution proposals.	16 June 2015	

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**Work Programme 2015/16**

Date	Items	Lead Officer	Informal Briefings / Development Days
22 <sup>nd</sup> June (Durham)	Appointment of Chair & Vice-Chair	Viv Geary	13 <sup>th</sup> July – CfPS Development Session
	NELEP annual report 2104/15	Bob Paton	
	NELEP overview of funding	Paul Woods	
	Scope of Policy Review – Transport related barriers to employment	John Bourn	
	Forward Plan & Work Programme	Karen Brown	
21 <sup>st</sup> July (Sunderland)	Policy Review – Local Sustainable Transport Funded Projects	Project Managers	
	NECA Devolution Proposals Update	Vince Taylor	
	Financial Monitoring Update – Outturn 2014/15		
	Forward Plan & Work Programme	Karen Brown	
8 <sup>th</sup> September (Gateshead)	Thematic Lead Update – Employability : focus on Apprenticeships	Shona Duncan, Employment & Skills Manager, North Tyneside Council	
	Policy Review: Transport Barriers to Employment – Evidence from Nexus	Huw Lewis, Nexus	
	Forward Plan & Work Programme	KB	
20 <sup>th</sup> October (Newcastle)	Transport Lead Update Report	Ian Coe	
	Devolution Update	Adam Wilkinson	
	Policy Review: Transport Barriers – evidence from Stagecoach	Robin Knight	
	Forward Plan & Work Programme	KB	
1 <sup>st</sup> December (North Tyneside)	Draft Budget 2016/17	Paul Woods	Transport Manifesto (IC)
	Policy Review – Written Submissions	KB	
	Nexus Performance update	Tobyn Hughes	
	Devolution Update	Adam Wilkinson	
	Forward Plan & Work Programme	KB	
9 <sup>th</sup> February (South Tyneside)	Economic Development Thematic Lead Update	Thematic Lead Member	
	Policy Review Evidence		
	Forward Plan & Work Programme	KB	
22 <sup>nd</sup> March (North Tyneside)	Transport Thematic Lead Update	Thematic Lead Member	
	Policy Review Draft Conclusions		
	Forward Plan & Work Programme	KB	
<b>In addition to the schedule items, the following items will be included in the work programme.</b>			
Shared Services	Opportunities for sharing the delivery of services between authorities. This could involve reviewing the progress currently being made with the sharing of services across the seven authorities within the NECA three key priority areas.		
Strategic Planning Frameworks	Partnership and collaboration in joining up local development planning frameworks to support devolved decision making		
Child Poverty	Child Poverty Commission's Plan for Regions		

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