

Public Approved Minutes

North East Combined Authority, Transport North East (Tyne and Wear) Sub-Committee

19 April 2018

(3.01 - 4.04 pm)

Meeting held Sunderland Civic Centre, Burdon Rd, Sunderland SR2 7DN

Present:

Councillor: J Harrison(Chair)

Councillors: G Hobson, J McCarty, J McElroy and M Mordey

52 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

53 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

54 MONITORING NEXUS PERFORMANCE AND METRO PERFORMANCE UPDATE

Submitted: Reports of Managing Director Transport Operations (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

Members agreed that they would consider agenda items 3 and 4 together.

Huw Lewis (Customer Service Director, Nexus) presented the reports which provided members with a review of Nexus' performance against its Corporate Business Plan targets and objectives, and an update on Metro performance for the twelve weeks from 10 December 2017 to 3 March 2018.

In discussion the following points were noted:

- That the 'Improve Metro performance' workstream had an amber status.

The year had started well but performance had tailed off during the autumn period, although to a lesser extent than during the same period for the previous two years.

Following issues during autumn the contract with the traction system supplier had been terminated, but it had taken eight weeks to then pull the situation back around.

During the recent period of seriously bad weather, and the following mini period of bad weather, the Metro had gone down to a 30 minute timetable. There had been positive feedback from customers about this, particularly when trains had been running when buses were not, but there had also been a legacy impact on the trains.

Overall there had been a 5% improvement in Metro performance from the end of 2016/17 and officers were confident that this would continue to improve.

- That there were concerns about the results of the Metro customer satisfaction survey from November 2017.

It was recognised that there had not been much movement in customer satisfaction over the previous year, but there had been some positives within the survey, particularly with regards to staff knowledge and approachability.

Moving forward customers were to be surveyed four times a year (in May, July, August and February) rather than two times, which would provide a much more immediate measure of satisfaction.

Members requested to see the high level information about customer satisfaction broken down further in future reports, and it was suggested this should be added as an appendix to the main report.

- That it was excellent news about the number of special events coming up that would help to increase the Metro farebox, and that there was need to keep a close watch on any reduction in the farebox.
- That there had been a recent incident in which a door had been pulled from a Metro train by youths and thrown into a pub car park, and members were concerned generally about incidents of anti-social behaviour and violence on the network.

A new security chief for Metro had been appointed, following which there had been a huge improvement. A number of high profile activities had been launched, working with police and local communities. The number of customer service advisors was increasing, and there would also be a possible increase in the number of police hours across the network following the signing of a better and stronger contract with Northumbria Police.

Members emphasised that they did not believe there to be a safety issue on the Metro.

- That in order to help tackle fraud on the Metro the number of Customer Service Advisors (CSAs) would be increased from 98 to 104, and a change would also be made to their roster which would allow for a team of six or more to be out on the network, targeting fraud hotspots. All CSAs were able to issue penalty fare notices.

It was noted that at certain times, such as during rush hour periods, it was better to have all CSAs on the gate line in order to protect farebox revenue.

The recent reduction in fraud equated to around £20,000 in farebox revenue saved.

- That as part of the move away from the DB Regio contract there had been a reclassification of fleet engineering costs as capital expenditure, and that this had created a saving within the Metro Services revenue budget which was to be allocated to a 'Fleet Transition' reserve.

The reserve fund was necessary as Metro would be running two fleets for a period of time, and it would create headroom to accommodate the associated spike in costs.

There would be a similar amount set aside into the reserve fund during the 2018/19 financial year. Any money not utilised from the reserve fund would be transferred back and could then be allocated to support other projects.

- That a deficit in the Metro budget was still projected, and that there may be a need for service cuts and for money to be directed towards maintaining existing services rather than creating new ones. A piece of work identifying cost pressures would be brought to a future meeting of the Committee.
- That discussions with the Department for Transport (DfT) about future funding were ongoing, but had been positive so far and were looking encouraging.

RESOLVED – That the Sub-Committee noted the contents of the reports.

55 **METRO PERFORMANCE UPDATE**

As Minute number 54.

56 **UPDATE ON NEXUS' CORPORATE RISKS 2018/19**

Submitted: Report of Managing Director Transport Operations (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

Huw Lewis presented the report which introduced Nexus' Corporate Risk Register for 2018/19, and sought comment from the Sub-Committee.

In discussion the following points were noted:

- That the risk of a ‘Catastrophic safety related event on Metro’ remained amber, and the reason for that was that while the risk of such an event occurring was considered to be extremely small the impact would be catastrophic. The Management team were content that this was the correct way to state this risk and that it was consistent with industry practice.
- That more should be done to promote the Pop Blue card for young people aged 18 and under, and that an ideal time to do this would be in schools and colleges during the autumn when the new academic year began.

Officers advised that they were attending open days and events at schools and colleges already to promote the card, that they were also planning to target the leisure market, and that whilst the card was advertised on the Metro system it was recognised that more needed to be done to target young people who were not already using the Metro.

RESOLVED – That the report be received and the Sub-Committee’s comments noted.

57 **TYNE TUNNELS UPDATE**

Submitted: Report of Chief Executive Officer for Transport (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

Alastair Swan (Principal Engineer, Newcastle City Council) presented the report which provided members with an update in activities at the Tyne Tunnels relating to the operation of the New Tyne Crossing and to the Tyne Pedestrian and Cycle Tunnels (TCPT) phase three improvement works.

In discussion the following points were noted:

- That the construction works to the Silverlink Junction were expected to be completed by Christmas 2018.
- That the improvement works to the TCPT had been a long, hard journey and had been quite fraught at times, but that it was positive that the works were now nearing completion and would provide a link between North and South Tyneside for pedestrians and cyclists.

It was suggested that there would need to be a large scale marketing programme when the tunnels reopened as there had been such a long period of closure that some young people may not even be aware they existed.

RESOLVED – That the Sub-Committee noted the contents of the report.

58 **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED – That by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of agenda items 8 (Confidential Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 23 February 2018) and item 9 (Tyne Tunnels Update) because exempt information

was likely to be disclosed and the public interest test against the disclosure was satisfied.

59 **CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 23
FEBRUARY 2018**

The confidential minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 23 February 2018 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.