

North East Combined Authority

Transport North East Committee

15 July 2016

Meeting held: Sunderland Civic Centre, Burdon Road, Sunderland, SR2 7SN

Present:

Councillor: N Forbes (Chair)

Councillors: M Brain, N Foster, M Green, J Harrison, A Hepple, G Hobson, J McCarty, M Mordey, A Sambrook, M Speding, E Tomlinson and A West

49 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor S Green.

50 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

51 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 28 April 2016 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

52 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRS FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2016/17

Submitted: A report of the Monitoring Officer (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

Members considered the report which invited the Committee to appoint the Vice-Chair from the Tyne and Wear constituent authorities for the municipal year 2016/17, who would be the Chair of the Transport North East (Tyne and Wear) Sub-Committee (TWSC), and also to appoint the Vice-Chair of TWSC.

RESOLVED – That:

- i. The Committee confirmed that Councillors Neil Foster and Allan Hepple were the portfolio holders with responsibility for transport in Durham and Northumberland respectively and, therefore, Vice-Chairs of the Transport North East Committee for the municipal year 2016/17;
- ii. Councillor John Harrison from North Tyneside Council be appointed as Vice-Chair of the Committee from the Tyne and Wear area and the Chair of the Transport North East (Tyne and Wear) Sub-Committee for the municipal year 2016/17;

- iii. Councillor Gladys Hobson be appointed as Vice-Chair of the Transport North East (Tyne and Wear) Sub-Committee for the municipal year 2016/17; and
- iv. Clarification be sought from the Leadership Board on the approach to the future appointment of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Transport North East (Tyne and Wear) Sub-Committee.

53 **BUS SERVICES BILL**

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

Members considered the report which provided an update on the Bus Services Bill which had now been introduced to Parliament and its implications for the NECA area.

Members also noted an associated presentation which was delivered at the meeting (a paper copy of the slides is attached to the Official Minutes).

The Committee were addressed by the Chair of the Tyne and Wear Public Transport Users Group, who spoke about the importance of a fully integrated public transport system, their disappointment with the outcome of the consideration of the Quality Contracts Scheme, including the priority that had been given by the Quality Contract Scheme Board to the needs of bus companies rather than the travelling public, and the importance of lobbying for the removal of section 21 of the Bus Services Bill, which prevented local authorities from setting up their own bus companies.

Following a discussion, it was **RESOLVED** – That:

- i. The report be noted; and
- ii. The following be raised with local Members of Parliament:
 - a) the Committee's support for the Bill to contain provisions allowing for Bus Franchising Schemes;
 - b) the need for assurances from the Government on the terms of the Devolution Agreement;
 - c) the Committee's view that the Combined Authority and its constituent authorities should not be liable for any compensation to bus operators arising from the implementation of provisions under the proposed Act; and
 - d) section 21 be amended or removed to allow local areas to provide bus services directly if they so wished.

54 **GO SMARTER (ACROSS THE NORTH EAST) - SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL TRANSITION YEAR FUNDING 2016-17**

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

Members considered the report which provided information on the Authority's success in securing transition year funding for sustainable travel for 2016/17 and outlined key elements of the bid. Members also noted an associated presentation which was delivered at the meeting and provided more detailed information on specific projects (a paper copy of the slides is attached to Official Minutes).

In discussion, Members commented on the importance of the Go Smarter work. Members particularly welcomed the role of the programme in tackling child obesity and enabling access to work for rural communities.

Members also commented on the need to expand the low-cost scooter loan project, the need for further engagement with students through working with universities and colleges and the need for an effective infrastructure to support safe sustainable travel to work, including good connectivity and information on the routes.

The meeting also discussed links with other projects such as road safety work, future funding, prioritisation of funding and the strategic approach that should be used for addressing the needs of the region.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

55 **DEVOLUTION UPDATE**

Submitted: A report of the Head of Paid Service (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

Members considered the report which provided information on the progress achieved so far in developing the Governance Review and Draft Scheme for the proposed Mayoral Combined Authority.

The report was introduced by the Monitoring Officer who explained the current timescales. She confirmed that a response had been recently received from the Government in relation to the Combined Authority's request for assurances over the terms of devolution. The response would be submitted to the 19 July 2016 meeting of the Leadership Board for consideration.

It was also noted that, should the Leadership Board agree to proceed with the consultation stage, the consultation document would be located at key strategic locations of the constituent authorities, in addition to being published on the NECA website, thereby providing a number of ways of accessing the document. Once responses had been received, the Order could be laid before Parliament, and this was now expected around October this year.

Amongst the points noted during the ensuing discussion, were the following:

- Whilst the draft Order was proceeding through the Parliamentary process, the process entailed a sequence of orders providing for the formal exclusion of a non-consenting Authority once the Order creating the Mayoral Combined Authority has been made.

- The Chair emphasised the importance of assurances from the Government in relation to funding, including long-term funding.
- The Chair also emphasised the benefits of having the Authority's own Scheme that set out its requirements rather than having a generic scheme imposed by the Government.
- In light of the recent changes within the Government, the Monitoring Officer confirmed that the recent letter with a response from the Secretary of State offering assurances to the Combined Authority with regard to devolution should be considered as a letter on behalf of the Government.

RESOLVED – That:

- i. The report be noted;
- ii. The Committee noted that the NECA Leadership Board agreed on 4 July to postpone discussion on the Governance Review and Draft Scheme whilst reassurance was sought from central Government that the terms of the Devolution Agreement would remain unchanged following the outcome of the European Referendum, and that the region would still be guaranteed fair funding; and
- iii. The Committee noted that the Leadership Board would consider the Governance Review and Draft Scheme, and agree the approach to consultation, after assurances from the Government had been received.

56 TRANSPORT MANIFESTO AND PLAN FOR THE NORTH EAST

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

Members considered the report which provided information on the responses that had been received to the consultation on the Transport Manifesto for the North East. The report also described the next steps for the Transport Plan.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

57 HEAVY RAIL UPDATE

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

Members considered the report which provided an update on the heavy rail issues that affected the North East. Amongst the matters discussed during the ensuing discussion were the following:

- the importance of effective communication to ensure the Combined Authority was kept informed of any developments;
- the importance of working with partners, specifically Rail North, to ensure all risk factors that could impact on the North East were fully considered; and

- the importance of continuing to work to address the travelling needs of the North East and improve the provision of rail services in the region.

RESOLVED – That:

- i. The report be noted; and
- ii. The Committee's Vice-Chair from Durham County Council be nominated as NECA's alternate representative on the Board of Rail North Ltd.

58 **TRANSPORT FOR THE NORTH UPDATE**

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

Members considered the report which provided an update on the Transport for the North programme.

In relation to the Intelligent Back Office, as referred to in paragraph 6.4 of the report, as an update it was noted that a joint submission by Nexus and Transport for Greater Manchester to lead on activity related to the specification of an Intelligent Back Office on behalf of Transport for the North had been confirmed. In discussion, a Member commented on the short lifecycle of new technologies and received assurances that this was taken into consideration when smart ticketing technologies were developed.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

59 **METRO FLEET AND INFRASTRUCTURE RENEWAL**

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

Members considered the report which introduced the proposed new Metro and Local Rail Strategy, summarised the outline business cases for the Metro fleet renewal and continuation of essential renewal works, set out key features of the draft specification for the new Metro fleet, and considered the broad options for future operating arrangements to deliver the Metro system.

Amongst the matters discussed during the ensuing discussion were the following:

- the good progress achieved and the extensive amount of work carried out;
- the importance of extending Metro to key employment locations;
- a level of uncertainty with regard to the future of the proposals in the context of the Mayoral Combined Authority; and
- the importance of reviewing the infrastructure of stations, specifically with regard to the capacity of platforms to accommodate additional carriages.

RESOLVED – That:

- i. The outline business cases for the replacement of the Metrocar fleet and associated infrastructure, and for the programme of essential renewals that were expected to be presented to the Leadership Board on the 19th of July 2016, be endorsed;
- ii. The progress made towards the development of a specification for the new Metrocars be noted; and
- iii. The draft Metro and Local Rail Strategy that was to be considered by the Leadership Board be endorsed.

60 **CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2015/16 OUTTURN AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2016/17 UPDATE**

Submitted: A report of the Chief Finance Officer (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

Members considered the report which provided an update on the final outturn position in relation to the 2015/16 capital programme and the first monitoring update on the 2016/17 programme.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

61 **REVENUE BUDGET 2015/16 OUTTURN AND 2016/17 BUDGET UPDATE**

Submitted: A report of the Chief Finance Officer (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

Members considered the report which provided an update on the outturn position in relation to the 2015/16 revenue budget, and the first monitoring update on the 2016/17 budget.

In discussion, Members received clarification on Nexus' usable capital reserves, as referred to in paragraph 3.5.9, and information on the compensation received from DfT for the two-day free passage through the Tyne Tunnels provided whilst the A1 Western Bypass was closed.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

62 **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

Thursday, 3 November 2016 at 2pm at Durham County Council.