

## **North East Combined Authority**

### **Transport North East Committee**

26 February 2016

Meeting held: Committee Room, Civic Centre, Regent Street, Gateshead, NE8 1HH

#### **Present:**

Councillor: N Forbes (Chair)

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

#### **24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors B Gallagher and S Green.

#### **25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **26 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 24 November 2015 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

#### **27 RAIL UPDATE**

Submitted:

(i) A report of the Chief Executive Officer for Transport (previously circulated and a copy is attached to the Official Minutes); and

(ii) A presentation by the Director of Rail North (copies of the slides are attached to the Official Minutes).

Members considered the report of the Chief Executive Officer for Transport and the associated presentation by the Director of Rail North, which provided information on the aims, formation, governance and delivery arrangements in relation to Rail North Ltd and the Association of Rail North Partner Authorities. Members also noted the update on the key issues and developments that were affecting the rail network nationally and in the NECA area, as set out in the report.

The ensuing discussion included the following matters:

- the importance of a fair deal for the NECA area;

- the importance of careful consideration of individual transport/rail needs of the constituent local authorities;
- the role, composition and structure of the North East Rail Management Unit;
- the impact of the new arrangements on the ability to influence discussions in relation to the high speed rail;
- the importance of opportunities for the Tyne and Wear Metro, including in respect of rolling stock; and
- the importance of the overall synergy between transport services.

In response to Members' questions, it was clarified that:

- Whilst there was a provision as part of the Rail North arrangements for a member voting mechanism, it was anticipated that most decisions would be taken through consensus.
- The principles of fair representation, integration and synergy were incorporated into the arrangements for the Rail North.
- It was envisaged that there would be opportunities for further service expansion.
- The North East Rail Management Unit had been designed to be flexible and able to deal with matters such as devolution and future franchise management.
- Proposals for the routing of the new Northern Connect service had not been finalised and would be subject to consultation. Generally, wherever there would be changes proposed, the proposals would be subject to a local consultation thereby providing an opportunity for local input.
- There were general provisions to ensure consideration was given to local needs whilst having regard to the connectivity issues overall and the impact on journey times. The North East Management Unit would have opportunities for engagement with the franchise operators on specific issues on behalf of NECA, including in relation to services, stations, marketing and communication.
- Clarification was also provided on the structure and composition of the North East Rail Management Unit and specifically the role of Nexus. References were made to the collaboration agreement which was a formal mechanism for enabling participation and having a greater influence.
- It was confirmed that, in the course of putting forward proposals by the Management Unit, views would be sought from the NECA Members and also Members from Cumbria, Tees Valley and North Yorkshire. The committees of NECA, such as the Leadership Board and/or Transport North East Committee, would be consulted.

**RESOLVED** – That the report be noted.

## 28 **TRANSPORT FOR THE NORTH UPDATE**

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

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

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

- the proposed Memorandum of Understanding between Transport for the North (TfN) and Network Rail and HS2 Limited, which was a symbolic document to reflect the partnership working;
- working in partnership that would present opportunities for information sharing and learning from the experience of Transport for Scotland, taking account of the similarities in the diversity of the areas covered and the economic links between the North East and Scotland;
- further opportunities for engagement with the Chair of TfN; and
- the need for a better understanding of opportunities and changes within the context of devolution.

**RESOLVED** – That the report be noted.

## 29 **SECURING INVESTMENT FOR METRO AND LOCAL RAIL**

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

Members considered the report which provided information on the progress made to date to develop proposals for the future investment in the Tyne and Wear Metro.

The ensuing discussion included the following matters:

- the importance of considering a wide range of factors, including equitable allocation of funding across the NECA area, integration, location of key strategic sites, such as employment sites, and potential impact on other local rail and transport, when considering plans for the Tyne and Wear Metro and local rail;
- the performance of Metro, the actions that were being taken to improve it and the importance of a new fleet of trains; and
- the importance of developing ambitious plans for the potential extension of the Metro routes and examples of how such plans had resulted in the extension of routes in the past.

**RESOLVED** – That:

(i) the report be noted; and

(ii) a seminar be organised for Members to discuss the Metro and Local Rail Strategy.

### 30 **TRANSPORT INTEGRATION**

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

Members considered the report which provided information on the progress made in creating an integrated transport system across the boundaries between Tyne and Wear, Northumberland and Durham. In discussion, a comment was made about the importance of continuing to progress this area of work.

**RESOLVED** – That:

(i) the “direction of travel” towards deeper integration of services, while also reflecting the very different transport needs of different communities, be noted;

(ii) Members would review the progress in collaboration across the area of the North East Combined Authority and identify priorities for further progress; and

(iii) consideration be given to an effective single branding of integrated transport across the North East Combined Authority area, an associated communications strategy and a single point of access to information.

### 31 **THE FUTURE OF THE A1(M)**

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

Members considered the report which provided information on the planned upgrade of the A1 / A1(M) to the North East and the government’s consideration of the name of the road.

In discussion, Members raised the following issues:

- The importance of a detailed consideration of the cost/benefit analysis of the proposals.
- Concern was expressed about the temporary closure of roads during the works, the associated disruption to traffic and the costs;
- Matters such as the costs of the closure of roads during the works should be factored into the overall costs;

- Careful consideration should be given to whether the proposals were a priority for the region;
- A Member did not associate the North East with the M1;
- The proposals should not incur any costs for the region. In response, it was clarified that the proposals did not entail expenditure at the local level;
- If the proposals did not incur any costs for the region, Members should support the proposals, including the associated engagement with the government;
- There was a need for the extension of the dual carriageway further north;
- The importance of engagement with the government on the need for investment in other routes in the region, including the A19 and A69; and
- Members felt there was a need for a separate discussion on the strategic approach to the regional road networks by the committee at a future meeting and possibly at a Members' seminar. It was also noted that the subject of the strategic regional road network was included in the devolution proposals.

**RESOLVED** – That the NECA would continue to engage with the Department for Transport to identify the costs and benefits of a change of the name of the A1(M) south of Gateshead to the M1 extending the national motorway network to the North East.

## 32 **SMART TICKETING UPDATE**

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

Members considered the report which provided information on the current position of the rollout of smart ticketing and future plans.

In discussion, Members asked that:

- More pressure should be put on bus operators, including in the light of the suggestions made during the course of the development and assessment of the previously proposed Quality Contract Scheme, to encourage the take-up of smart ticketing. It was also noted that discussions with bus operators were ongoing and some progress had been achieved by bus operators, as set out in section 3 of the report.
- Work should continue to develop smart ticketing to ensue passengers were able to use just one smart card, possibly contactless.
- Commitment to integration across the region should be emphasised.

**RESOLVED** – That the report and Members' comments be noted.

### 33 LOCAL SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT FUND DELIVERY IN THE NECA AREA

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

Members considered the report which informed them of a number of sustainable transport projects, including their progress, which would be taking place in Durham, Northumberland and Tyne and Wear after March 2016 when Department for Transport (DfT) grant funding for the current Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) programmes would end, and the proposals to bid for Sustainable Travel Transition Year funding in 2016-17.

In response to Members' questions, it was clarified that:

- there were many sustainable transport projects taking place in Sunderland; and
- it was understood that the closure of the Northumbria Safer Roads Initiative partnership would not affect the commitment to funding for the projects set out in paragraph 2.1 of the report;

In discussion, a Member commented on the lack of public transport in some areas of the region.

**RESOLVED** – That:

- i. The report be noted;
- ii. Consideration be given to the opportunity to secure further funding for future LSTF activities in the NECA area beyond March 2016; and
- iii. Approval of a bid for Sustainable Travel Transition Year funding in 2016-2017 be delegated to the Head of Paid Service, in consultation with the Thematic Lead for Transport, the Chief Finance Officer, the Monitoring Officer and NECA's Sustainable Transport Group.

### 34 CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING REPORT

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

Members considered the report which provided a monitoring update on the delivery of the 2015/16 Transport capital programme. As a point of clarification, it was confirmed that the figures in the table in paragraph 4.6.2 would be updated.

**RESOLVED** – That the report be noted.

**35 REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT**

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

Members considered the report which provided a monitoring update on the 2015/16 Transport budget and on Transport budgets agreed by the Leadership Board on 19 January 2016.

**RESOLVED** – That the report be noted.

**36 TRANSPORT MANIFESTO FOR THE NORTH EAST**

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

Members considered the report which provided an update on progress with the Transport Manifesto for the North East, including the current consultation, and set out an indicative timescale for the subsequent production of the full Transport Plan for the North East.

As an update on the progress of the current consultation on the Transport Manifesto for the North East, it was noted that:

- 305 responses had been received to date; and
- A response had been drafted and would be provide to the Motorcycle Action Group to address issues they had raised.

**RESOLVED** – That the report be noted.

**37 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

28 April 2016, following the conclusion of the Transport North East (Tyne and Wear) Sub-Committee.