

**North East Combined Authority**  
**Transport North East Committee**

9 October 2014

Meeting held North Tyneside Council, Quadrant, The Silverlink North, Cobalt Business Park, NE27 0BY

**Present:**

Councillor: Forbes (Chair)

Councillors: Foster, M Green, Hobson, Lott, McCarty, McElroy, Speding, Watson and West

**18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Allen, S Green, Ledger and Swithenbank.

**19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**20 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 29 July 2014 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**21 IMPROVING LOCAL BUS SERVICES**

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

Members considered the report which provided an update on the progress of the Bus Strategy Delivery Project (BSDP). The ensuing discussion centred on the elements of the project such as ticketing and fares, the role and responsibilities of the Quality Contract Board, the robustness of the proposed Collaboration Protocol to mitigate risks for Durham and Northumberland, potential impact on the existing network, including its possible expansion, consultation with the public and other stakeholders, changes to Concessionary Travel Scheme and roll out of smart ticketing within the context of the options for the delivery of the Bus Strategy.

**RESOLVED – That:**

- I. the proposals for a Quality Contracts Scheme (QCS) for Tyne and Wear and a Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) be noted; and

- II. the proposal that, if the Leadership Board would agree to proceed with a QCS, then the North East Combined Authority (NECA) would adopt a Cross Boundary Collaboration Protocol to manage the effects of the QCS on bus services in Durham and Northumberland, be noted.

## 22 **PROSPECTUS FOR INVESTMENT IN THE EAST COAST MAIN LINE**

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

Members considered the report which provided information on the key findings from the Prospectus for Investment in the East Coast Main Line (ECML) that had been recently produced by the Consortium of East Coast Main Line Authorities.

The ensuing discussion included matters such as:

- the value of the benefit that would be generated on the ECML by the services from High Speed 2 (HS2), concerns about the benefits of HS2 for the North East and the importance of an equal economic benefits for the North East;
- the importance of developing a good programme to attract investment and increase the capacity of the rail, including for the additional freight being produced;
- the need for more information for Members on rail as a whole, including on the comparison of the current and previous positions and examples of other countries;
- the need for further wider discussions on rail and the importance of including all regional partners in these discussions, including at relevant seminars; and
- the need for discussions on critical connections, frequency, regularity, sustainability and integration of rail and services.

It was noted that a briefing should be organised for Members on rail, possibly as part of a policy seminar.

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

## 23 **REVENUE BUDGET 2014/15 - MONITORING REPORT**

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

Members considered the report which provided a progress update in relation to how the transport related budgets for the delivery agencies for 2014/15 were being managed. The ensuing discussion included matters such as the Metro income, the need for a discussion on the Concessionary Travel Scheme within the context of the existing public transport network and the need for a fair access to the whole region by public transport.

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

## 24 CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2014/15 - MONITORING REPORT

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

Members considered the report which provided a progress update in relation to the delivery of the transport related capital programme for 2014/15.

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

## 25 CONCESSIONARY TRAVEL BUDGET 2014/15

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

Members considered the report which provided further information regarding the breakdown of the concessionary travel budget, as requested at the 29 July 2014 meeting. The report also highlighted the position with regards to the national funding for the statutory Concessionary Travel Scheme and the pressure on councils' budgets as the cuts in national funding were not matched by a reduction in the cost of concessionary travel.

The ensuing discussion included matters such as:

- the importance of continuing to lobby the government and the importance of lobbying jointly across the whole NECA area for added strength;
- the increased cost of concessionary travel as opposed to the official figures;
- funding of concessionary travel for Transport for London;
- the responsibilities of the three delivery agencies for the administration of concessionary fares schemes and their powers in relation to the provision of additional discretionary concessions; and
- the importance of considering the opportunity to develop a joint policy on concessionary travel across the NECA area whilst identifying any practical difficulties and the amount of work this could entail.

**RESOLVED** – That:

- I. the contents of this report, in particular section 5 which advised of the scale of the Concessionary Travel budget across the NECA area and also the differences in Scheme arrangements, particularly the different discretionary add-ons that prevailed across all three Travel Concession Authorities (TCAs) be noted;
- II. the information on the additional costs of special needs home to school transport within the budgets of the seven constituent councils in their capacity as Local Education Authorities be noted;
- III. the underfunding of the concessionary travel scheme costs in Tyne and Wear and the cuts that continue to be applied to the grant funding for Concessionary Travel funding and the growing gap between the cost and

funding for statutory concessionary travel at a local and national level be noted;

- IV. the lobbying activities on the need to address the inadequacy of funding for the statutory concessionary fares scheme be continued and developed as a joint lobbying on behalf of the whole NECA area for additional strength; and
- V. consideration be given to developing a joint concessionary travel scheme within the NECA context.

26 **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The next ordinary meeting would be held on 26 February 2015 at 2pm at Northumberland County Council.

There would be an extraordinary meeting on budget in early December 2014.