

**NORTH EAST JOINT TRANSPORT COMMITTEE, TYNE AND WEAR SUB-COMMITTEE**

**DRAFT MINUTES FOR APPROVAL**

4 July 2019

Meeting held in the Lamesley Room, Gateshead Civic Centre, Regent Street, Gateshead, NE8 1HH

**Present:**

Councillor: G Hobson (Chair)

Councillors: C Johnson, J McElroy and A Wilson

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor Joyce McCarty

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

**3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 4 APRIL 2019**

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a correct record.

Matters Arising from the Minutes:

- (i) Further clarification was sought on driver retention and it was agreed that a report would be presented at the next meeting of the sub-committee.
- (ii) Members of the sub-committee suggested that a report be presented at a future meeting regarding commercial bus services. The sub-committee were also advised that bus operators would be invited to an informal meeting with the sub-committee in September.

- (iii) The sub-committee noted that the Chair had written to the Nexus Engineering teams to thank them for their continuing hard work on the renewal programme, and that the letter was appreciated.
- (iv) The sub-committee were informed that all members of the Joint Transport Committees and its associated statutory committees have been invited to the visit to the Metro depot on 16 July as well as members of the sub-committee.
- (v) The sub-committee were advised that 'Elmer the Patchwork Elephant's Great North Parade' trail is now in place and includes the Tyne Tunnel.
- (vi) The sub-committee were advised that new leaflets regarding the Companion Card will be circulated.
- (vii) Cllr Wilson asked for an update on driver resource issues and was informed that some short-term measures had been put in place to secure drivers on enhanced over time rates and longer-term Nexus were transforming how they train new drivers by at least doubling the new recruits per annum commencing in September. An updated report will be provided at the next TWSC meeting.

#### **4. MONITORING NEXUS' PERFORMANCE 2018/19**

Consideration was given to a report which outlined Nexus' performance over the last 12 months.

The sub-committee has been continually updated regarding the ongoing challenges that are being faced and the proposed actions that are in place.

Small improvements have been made in fleet performance. Metro customer satisfaction rates have declined which is reflective of the number of breakdowns that have occurred. Work is ongoing to fix the station display boards.

The financial climate continues to be tough, however frontline services have been protected from cuts so far. Work on the new interchange at South Shields is progressing and it is anticipated that it will open in August. In addition, the new learning centre will open at the end of the financial year.

Clarification was sought from Cllr Wilson regarding the asset renewal programme and was advised that subject to the delivery programme of the successful tenderer, the new trains will begin to arrive in 2021 and will be fully operational by 2023.

Cllr Wilson also noted that all of Nexus' Directors are male and asked whether the organisation will look to recruit more women in all roles of the organisation. The sub-committee were advised that a report will be presented to the next meeting regarding this issue.

**RESOLVED:** that the Tyne and Wear Sub-Committee note the report.

## 5. MONITORING NEXUS' PERFORMANCE 2019/20

Consideration was given to a report which provided a summary of Nexus' performance in delivering the key priorities of its Corporate Plan 2019/20 for the first two periods of the year.

The sub-committee were advised that future reports will also include statistics on punctuality and that the figures for the current periods are:

Period 1 80%  
Period 2 82%  
Period 3 87%

The recent overhead line outage and defective windscreens have affected peak hour services. In addition, cancelled trains are also included in the statistics. Patronage figures are also below target, but figures are still strong in peak hours.

The Metro fleet procurement has now progressed to the BAFO stage with three preferred bidders left. A report will be presented at a future meeting regarding further progress.

**RESOLVED:** that the Tyne and Wear Sub-Committee note the report.

## 6. METRO DISRUPTION – OVERHEAD LINE EQUIPMENT

The sub-committee received a presentation which outlined the recent overhead line damage at West Monkseaton and Chillingham Road on 29 April 2019.

The first incident took place between Shiremoor and West Monkseaton at 9am and the second at Chillingham Road at 12.45pm. Both incidents resulted in significant damage to train pantographs and the overhead line, over 1000m of overhead line had to be replaced.

The operational response was well-led and effective in evacuating trains, communicating with passengers and providing alternative transport.

Works to repair the overhead line and get a full service resumed were executed in a timely manner, with the benefit of having a team dedicated to overhead line renewals aptly demonstrated.

The West Monkseaton section was restored within 33 hours; Chillingham Road section was restored on Friday 2 May.

Following the investigation, four recommendations have been identified to help prevent similar incidents occurring:

- More regular overhead level wire surface checks on the wire/pantograph interface, possibly machine mounted;

- Further investigation by Nexus Engineering into the failure mechanisms;
- A weekly check on pantograph inspections;
- Work towards a proactive maintenance regime.

Cllr Johnson felt that the communications had been excellent during the incident.

Cllr Wilson asked for thanks to be passed onto the teams for the speed in which the service was restored.

Cllr McElroy asked whether any consideration has been given to using outside resources if any future incident occurred. Officers advised that this option has been considered but it is often difficult to find a resource at short notice.

**RESOLVED:** the Tyne and Wear Sub-Committee noted the presentation.

## 7. NEXUS' CORPORATE RISK REGISTER 2019/20 – UPDATE

Consideration was given to a report providing an update on the Nexus' Corporate Risk Register 2019/20, based on the approved Corporate Plan, and demonstrates that the risks are being properly managed and controlled.

There are twelve corporate risks – eleven of the risks have remained stable with no changes reported since the previous update to the sub-committee in April 2019.

The Frontline Services and Discretionary Travel Schemes risk is worsening since the last update. Various factors have contributed to this including pay increases which were higher than budget, and the costs associated with the Transforming Cities Bids.

Cllr McElroy commented that the report provided a good overview of all of the risks, although there were some worrying areas. He suggested it would be beneficial to have an overview of the whole public transport system including concessionary and statutory services. Cllr Wilson agreed.

The sub-committee were advised that a report would be prepared for a future meeting regarding bus services.

**RESOLVED:** the Tyne and Wear Sub-Committee noted the report.

## 8. SPENDING REVIEW 2019 METRO SUBMISSION

Consideration was given to the report which provided an overview of the submission for the continuation of revenue and capital grant funding for the operation of the Tyne and Wear Metro and investment in the network structure.

The current ten-year funding agreement is ending in March 2020. The submission asks for a commitment from the Department for Transport to work towards future multi-year funding agreements to provide certainty for the future., maintaining services within the current timetable.

The outcome of the submission is currently expected in late November/early December.

Cllr Hobson commented that the Government was putting the service in an alarming situation and suggested that the Northern Group of MPs lobby Ministers for assurance about the funding for the Metro in the future.

Cllr McElroy agreed, and commented it was important to raise these issues with the new Prime Minister and other Government Ministers as soon as possible.

**RESOLVED:** the Tyne and Wear Sub-Committee:

- (i) Noted the report;
- (ii) Agreed to ask the Northern Group of Labour MPs to lobby Ministers about the funding agreement.

## **9. ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AND CRIME MANAGEMENT**

Consideration was given to the report which set out actions being taken by Nexus, in partnership with the Police and other agencies focusing on the security of passengers.

The number of incidents report to the Police is 10% lower than in the previous year. This is due to an increase of staff and dedicated Police units patrolling the Metro system, as well as the introduction of body cameras for staff. In addition, there are also extra staff monitoring CCTV, passenger help points and social media to respond to calls for assistance.

Cllr McElroy thanked officers for the ongoing work. He suggested that the issue of anti-social behaviour should be raised as a priority with the new Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner once they are elected.

Cllr Wilson thanked the team for the response following the recent concert at the Stadium of Light.

## **10. TYNE TUNNELS UPDATE**

Consideration was given to the report which provided an update on the operation of the New Tyne Crossing and the Tyne Pedestrian and Cycle Tunnels improvement works.

The construction works at the Silverlink junction being carried out by Highways England are now substantially complete, with the A19 link below the Coast Road now open.

The refurbishment works on the Tyne Pedestrian and Cycle Tunnels are now substantially complete. A number of issues have been identified during the commissioning and certification processes which need to be resolved before the

Tunnels can be re-opened to the public. It is anticipated that the issues will be resolved in the coming weeks which will allow a phased reopening this summer.

A report outlining the costs will be presented to the next Sub-Committee meeting in September.

**RESOLVED:** the Tyne and Wear Sub-Committee noted the report.

#### **11. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED** that under section 100A and Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded because except information is likely to be disclosed and the public interest test against disclosure is satisfied.

#### **12. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will take place on Thursday 12 September 2019, time and venue to be confirmed.