

## Transport North East Committee

Thursday 28th April 2016 at 3.00 pm (or following the conclusion of the Transport North East (Tyne and Wear) Sub-Committee, whichever is later)

Meeting to be held at the Civic Centre, Barras Bridge, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 8QH

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## AGENDA

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### Page No

1. **Apologies for Absence**

2. **Declarations of Interest**

Please remember to declare any personal interest where appropriate both verbally and by recording it on the relevant form (to be handed to the Democratic Services Officer). Please also remember to leave the meeting where any personal interest requires this.

3. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting** 1 - 8

4. **Transport Manifesto for the North East** 9 - 16

5. **Discharge of Transport Functions by Durham County Council** 17 - 26

6. **Discharge of Transport Functions by Northumberland County Council** 27 - 36

(Northumberland County Council – Public Transport Activity Report on Delegated Functions)

7. **National Infrastructure Commission report - High Speed North**

Members are requested to note the intention to circulate the above report on a supplemental agenda in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

8. **The Strategic Road Network in the NECA area** 37 - 46

9. **Capital Programme Monitoring Report**

Members are requested to note the intention to circulate the above report on a supplemental agenda in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

10. **Revenue Budget Monitoring Report**

Members are requested to note the intention to circulate the above report on a supplemental agenda in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

11. **Date and Time of Next Meeting**

July 2016, date and time to be confirmed.

Contact Officer: Victoria Miller Tel: 0191 211 5118 E-mail: [victoria.miller@northeastca.gov.uk](mailto:victoria.miller@northeastca.gov.uk)

**To All Members**

## 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.

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## North East Combined Authority Transport North East Committee

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**DATE:** 28<sup>th</sup> April 2016  
**SUBJECT:** Transport Manifesto for the North East  
**REPORT OF:** Chief Executive Officer for Transport

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report

- i) updates members on the Transport Manifesto for the North East consultation and
- ii) sets out a revised indicative timescale for subsequent production of the full Transport Plan for the North East.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Committee notes the contents of this report

# North East Combined Authority

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### **1. Background Information**

- 1.1 As reported to previous meetings of this Committee, the Combined Authority must produce a Transport Plan for the North East. Among other functions, this will supersede the existing Local Transport Plans for Durham, Northumberland and Tyne and Wear.

The two-stage process for the production of this Plan is

1. A Transport Manifesto setting out high level ambitions, followed by
2. The Transport Plan : a comprehensive, statutory document

- 1.2 The report to the February meeting of this Committee attached the final version of the Manifesto and reported that the consultation had begun, with a closing date for responses of 8<sup>th</sup> April. It was also reported that no active promotion of the Manifesto consultation would take place during the pre-election period.

### **2. Consultation and responses**

- 2.1 The public consultation on the Manifesto consisted of the following:

- An extensive publicity campaign, conducted in conjunction with the seven Councils and Nexus
- Details on the NECA website and links to it on the seven Councils' and Nexus' websites. During the consultation period, this information was reviewed and where necessary made more prominent, particularly where feedback indicated this was necessary
- The consultation questionnaires were available electronically and in paper versions.
- Alternative format versions (Audio, Braille, British Sign Language and Easy Read) were produced in response to requests from disability organisations. No requests were received for any other versions.
- Each of the seven Councils and Nexus sent the Manifesto and consultation questionnaire to all organisations and individuals on their transport consultation mailing lists. This included Town and Parish Councils in rural areas.

- 2.2 In all around 1,750 responses had been received by the time of writing this report. A small number of disability organisations asked for an extra two weeks to digest the alternative format versions of the Manifesto and questionnaire and this was agreed so, for these organisations, the closing date is 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2016. These will be incorporated in the final analysis of the questionnaires. The following paragraphs describe an early indication of the results; a full report analysing all responses, in whatever form they were submitted, will be presented to this Committee once the detailed analysis is completed.

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- 2.3 The vast majority (1,677) of responses received were online, although paper copies were available as well. Breakdown of the online responses by Council area and respondent type (individual or organisation) is as follows. The large number in the “unknown” category is mainly because responses were still included if the respondent did not indicate their postcode, partly because some organisations who responded covered more than one Council area and also because some responses from people and organisations from outside the NECA area were accepted

<b>Geographical Breakdown</b>			
District	Returns	Percent	Percentage of NECA population (2014)
County Durham	166	9.9%	26.5%
Gateshead	147	8.8%	10.3%
Newcastle upon Tyne	265	15.8%	14.8%
North Tyneside	162	9.7%	10.4%
Northumberland	152	9.1%	16.2%
South Tyneside	91	5.4%	7.6%
Sunderland	87	5.2%	14.2%
Unknown	607	36.2%	NA
Total	1677	100.0%	NA

<b>Respondent Type</b>		
Individual	1256	74.9%
Organisation	90	5.4%
Unknown	331	19.7%
Total	1677	100.0%

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- 2.4 The two principal questions asked respondents what they believed NECA's priorities for transport in the next 20 years should be. The main subjects to emerge in order of importance were:

Good access to workplaces, services, shops and leisure
Well-maintained, climate-resilient and safe transport networks
Less road congestion
More sustainable travel
Growth in economic activity
Better air quality and lower carbon emissions
Efficient use of transport assets
Land use planning that favours sustainable travel
Healthy, active lifestyles
Equality of opportunity

- 2.5 As is usual with such consultations, many respondents took the opportunity to write in additional comments about transport and a few sent in written submissions as well. Interim indications are that the main topics were:

- Concern about public transport reliability
- The need for integrated public transport services and ticketing
- Lower fares on public transport
- Better safety for both roads and public transport
- Diverse and opposing views on sustainable transport, road traffic and highway management – either in favour of restraining car use or making better provision for it
- The need to maintain services in rural areas
- Requests for motorcycles and scooters to be included

### 3. Transport Plan

- 3.1 While the Transport Manifesto consultation as described above is progressing, background work is also being undertaken on the Transport Plan to the following indicative outline timetable:

- May 2016 : produce final report on Manifesto analysis

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- June - July 2016 : produce first draft Transport Plan and seek approval of the document and to commence public consultation from Leadership Board, Transport for the North East Committee and Overview & Scrutiny Committee
  - August 2016 : set up consultation process
  - September - November 2016 : formal consultation on Transport Plan (a minimum 12 weeks is needed, and any earlier start date would result in the consultation running over the summer holidays which should be avoided)
  - December 2016 - January 2017 : analyse Transport Plan consultation responses
  - February - March 2017 : amend Transport Plan for the North East in the light of consultation responses
  - April/May 2017: seek approval of final draft Transport Plan.
- 3.2 The draft Transport Plan will be considered through the appropriate decision-making processes. These will depend upon whether the Authority becomes a Mayoral Combined Authority, in which case these decision-making processes will need to reflect new regulations under the revised Constitution which would be effective at that time.
- 3.3 If the Authority does not proceed to become a Mayoral Combined Authority, then as the Transport Plan is a “part 4” document under the NECA Constitution, the procedure outlined in Part 4.4 “Budget and Policy Framework Rules of Procedure” will be followed, with information provided and referrals made to Overview and Scrutiny Committee as set out in the Constitution. That Committee will therefore have opportunities to make recommendations to the Leadership Board regarding the Plan, also as set out in the Constitution.
- 4. Finance and Other Resources**
- 4.1 There are funds available for production of the Transport Manifesto and consultation thereon, and for production of the Transport Plan. Whilst the cost of producing the Transport Manifesto is modest, based on previous experience it is estimated that the cost of producing the Transport Plan is likely to be approximately £170,000, which reflects the substantial consultation exercise and extensive modelling and assessment work that is required for the production of a significant statutory document of this type.
- 5. Legal**
- 5.1 NECA is under a duty to prepare a Local Transport Plan. The Transport Plan is required to develop policies for the promotion and encouragement of safe, integrated, efficient and economic transport to, from and within NECA's area and NECA must carry out its functions to implement these policies. The Transport Plan will be subject to a period of statutory consultation and also will be adopted in accordance with the “Budget and Policy Framework Rules of Procedure” set out in the NECA Constitution.

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### **6. Other Considerations**

#### **6.1 Consultation/Community Engagement**

As described in this report, consultation on the Transport Manifesto has ended. There will be a full public consultation on the Transport Plan later this calendar year.

#### **6.2 Human Rights**

There are no specific human rights implications arising from this report.

#### **6.3 Equalities and Diversity**

There are no specific equalities and diversity implications arising from this report.

#### **6.4 Risk Management**

Failure to proceed with the Transport Manifesto and then with the Transport Plan could undermine the credibility of this region, compared to other Combined Authorities, when dealing with central government.

#### **6.5 Crime and Disorder**

There are no specific crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

#### **6.6 Environment and Sustainability**

Many of the measures identified by the Transport Manifesto and Plan will, if implemented, assist the Combined Authority in achieving a more sustainable transport system for the region.

### **7. Background Documents**

None.

### **8. Links to Plans in the Policy Framework**

This report has a direct link to the forthcoming Transport Plan for the North East

### **9. Contact Officers:**

#### **9.1 Mark Wilson, Head of Transport Policy (North East Combined Authority)**

[mark.wilson@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:mark.wilson@newcastle.gov.uk) 0191 211 5679



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### **10. Sign off**

- Head of Paid Service ✓
- Monitoring Officer ✓
- Chief Finance Officer ✓

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## North East Combined Authority

### Transport North East Committee

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**DATE:** 28<sup>th</sup> April 2016

**SUBJECT:** Discharge of Transport Functions by Durham County Council

**REPORT OF:** Vice Chairman with Portfolio Responsibility for Transport for Durham County Council

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee of how Durham County Council has discharged the transport functions delegated to it by NECA for the calendar year 2015.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Committee agree to note the report

# **North East Combined Authority**

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### **1 Background Information**

- 1.1 When NECA approved its constitution, it delegated to the two constituent County Councils transport functions set out in part 3.4 of the Constitution. Durham's Cabinet subsequently authorised the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Economic Development to discharge these functions in consultation with the Cabinet Portfolio Holder, Economic Regeneration.
- 1.2 The NECA operating agreement requires that the relevant Portfolio holder provides reports when required to the Transport North East Committee advising on how the delegated functions have been exercised. Attached at appendix 1 is an account of the discharge of transport functions for 2015 agreed by the Corporate Director for Regeneration and Economic Development and Transport Portfolio Holder, Economic Regeneration. Appendix 1 is also scheduled to be reported for information to the County Council's Cabinet meeting in June 2016.

### **2 Proposals**

- 2.1 Members are requested to note the report.

### **3 Next Steps**

- 3.1 These are identified as far as practicable in appendix 1

### **4 Potential Impact on Objectives**

- 4.1 The report describes how Durham County Council is discharging transport functions delegated by NECA.

### **5 Finance and Other Resources**

- 5.1 The transport functions will be funded by the levy issued by NECA to Durham County Council.

### **6 Legal**

- 6.1 This report is submitted in accordance with obligations contained in the Deed of Operation entered into by the constituent authorities on formation of the Combined Authority.

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### **7 Other Considerations**

#### **7.1 Consultation/Community Engagement**

None specific in this report

#### **7.2 Human Rights**

None specific in this report

#### **7.3 Equalities and Diversity**

None specific in this report

#### **7.4 Risk Management**

None specific in this report

#### **7.5 Crime and Disorder**

None specific in this report

#### **7.6 Environment and Sustainability**

None specific in this report

### **8 Background Documents**

- 8.1 The North East Combined Authority Constitution  
The North East Combined Authority Deed of Operation dated the 29<sup>th</sup> April 2014

### **9 Links to Plans in the Policy Framework**

- 9.1 This report has no direct link to plans in the Policy Framework

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### 10 Appendices

- 10.1 Appendix 1  
North East Combined Authority (NECA)  
Durham County Council Transport Activity Report  
Jan-Dec 2015

### 11 Contact Officers

- 11.1 Adrian J White, Head of Transport and Contract Services, Durham County Council, [adrian.white@durham.gov.uk](mailto:adrian.white@durham.gov.uk), Tel: 03000 267455

### 12 Sign off

- Head of Paid Service ✓
- Monitoring Officer ✓
- Chief Finance Officer ✓

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### **Appendix 1**

#### **North East Combined Authority (NECA)**

#### **Durham County Council Transport Activity Report**

#### **January - December 2015**

##### **Introduction**

1. The County Council operates an 'Integrated Transport Unit' (ITU) in line with Government's best practice guidance. The ITU delivers public transport, home to school transport, Special Education Needs (SEN) transport and adult social care transport. It also has close links with health, clinical commissioning groups and the North East Ambulance Service.
2. Integrating transport in this way enables the authority to create packages of work across sectors to maximise the use of vehicles and staff, ensure full use is made of existing local bus services for education and social work purposes and deliver consistency of standards across different modes. The opportunities to integrate commissioning and delivery of local authority transport with non-emergency healthcare transport have also helped to deliver a simpler and more understandable service for the user.
3. The Council also values the benefits of the harmonisation of policy and delivery across the economic development, planning, housing and transport functions. This approach ensures that we can maximise transport's contribution to economic growth in the County.

##### **Bus Service Network**

###### *Current State of Commercial and Subsidised Networks*

4. Bus operators' own commercial services provide a high proportion of the network in most of County Durham. Go North East and Arriva provide the majority of the services, with approximately equal market shares; six other firms also run locally significant commercial services. All the main towns have at least two operators providing commercial services, except for Consett and Newton Aycliffe; Bishop Auckland has six commercial operators each providing at least hourly services.
5. Total bus boardings have fallen slightly in 2015, continuing a trend that set in in mid-2014. No single cause has been identified, although it is probably related to some decline in footfall at major retail centres, and reductions in car fuel costs
6. The majority of the bus network in County Durham has been essentially stable since October 2012 in terms of level of service and the service routes. There has been considerable further investment in the new buses in the period by both main operators. Further investment continues into 2016. The planned spending on support for local services has remained stable since the cuts introduced in

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2011/12. Commitments have been managed in the light of the planned reduction of £400,000 to be implemented in the 2016/17 financial year.

7. Go North East made substantial changes to their services in the Stanley area in November 2015, with a slight increase in the overall number of buses operating in the network. A key aim was to improve the punctuality of corridors where traffic delays on routes into the MetroCentre and Newcastle have affected services. Some former through services were split at Stanley, which has transformed punctuality of the sections in County Durham. The network includes additional express services between Stanley and Newcastle, including a new peak time express service via the Team Valley operating with transitional support from DCC. We see potential for this to develop further in coming years.

### *Secured Service Retendering Activity*

8. General DCC practice is that our contracts for bus services are arranged on 4 year cycles with DCC holding a right to extend to 5 years. Normally all contracts in an area are renewed in the same cycle, with contracts changing at the start of the school summer holidays to enable operational synchronisation with school bus contract changes commencing the start of September. Contracts in much of Co Durham were renewed to start in autumn 2012, with the rest renewed in July 2013. The 2015 was therefore a period of low activity in tendering bus services. The contracts for the "Link2", our demand responsive minibus service, were tendered with North East Accessible Transport (based in Jarrow) winning the contracts at very competitive rates, covering the operation of 6 minibuses; the remaining two bus duties continue to be operated by DCC's in-house fleet.

### **Park and Ride**

9. The Durham Park and Ride has continued to perform very satisfactorily. Record numbers were carried during the Lumiere event in November 2015.

### **Clean Vehicle Technology Fund**

10. The project in partnership with other NECA councils which won funding under the 2014 Clean Vehicle Technology Fund, to equip GNE buses on four services across the NECA area with a kinetic energy recovery system has progressed slowly in 2015. Two trial vehicles were equipped but results were unsatisfactory. Discussions are continuing between GNE, the partner authorities and the Department for Transport about how best to proceed, probably with alternative technology.

### **Concessionary Fares**

11. Reimbursement payments under Durham's concessionary fare scheme for older and disabled people form the major element of the County Council's spending on public transport. Largely fixed price arrangements have been negotiated with the two major operators, with "cap and collar" provisions to handle deviations



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from expected volumes. During 2015 total boardings have declined slightly which will lead to a fall in the total cost of successor agreements for 2016/17.

### **Community Transport (CT)**

12. The CT sector predominantly concentrates on group hire, although Weardale Community Transport again operated its summer-only Sunday bus service in 2015. The Council's programme of offering capital grants from Local Transport Plan funding to assist Community Transport continues. We also supported groups in making their bids to the Department for Transport's Rural Community Transport Minibus Fund, with all six bids being successful.
13. We are also continuing our use of RSCTI funding to support the CT sector to develop its capacity, with a particular focus on the recruitment of volunteers.

### **North East Smart Ticketing Initiative (NESTI)**

14. DCC has continued to actively participate in the NESTI initiative, undertaking in conjunction with NESTI, two pilot trials of the regional Stored Travel smartcard. The trial involving DCC's Cathedral Bus service in Durham has matured into full operation from summer 2015, while a trial on selected GNE services continued to operate throughout 2015.

### **Multi-Operator Ticketing Scheme**

15. This project to introduce countywide multi-operator zonal ticketing did not develop during 2015 in the manner that had been hoped. Although a draft memorandum of understanding and a constitution of a formal steering group were prepared, some operator's concerns about the zoning and pricing concepts that had previously been thought to be close to agreement led to a pause in the project. The Council is continuing to work with bus operators in County Durham to implement a scheme of multi-operator bus fares reflecting the bus market of County Durham. This is likely to be based on the operators' "Smartzone" model which has been piloted in some areas of Tyne & Wear.

### **Home to School/Social Care Transport**

16. Home to school and social care transport forms the major part of DCC Sustainable Transport Group's operations, with a total spend of approximately £13 million pa and over 1000 contracts in operation. This includes an increasing provision of places on school transport buses that are paid for by parents and or schools, as DCC's current policy for provision of free transport has retrenched to essentially statutory entitlement for year groups starting primary or secondary schooling from Sept 2012. In the school year starting September 2015, about 6,500 pupils received free travel to school, plus some 3,000 pupils travelling under the non-statutory concessionary schemes.
17. General DCC practice is that our contracts for Home to School Contract Hire services are arranged for up to a maximum 4 year period with DCC holding a

# **North East Combined Authority**

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right to extend to 5 years. Tendering is carried out over a three year period on an area by area basis. Contracts are renewed in each area to commence at the start of the school year in September. South and West Durham contracts were renewed to start in autumn 2012, East Durham contracts in 2013 and North and Central contracts in 2014. 2015 was therefore a period of lower activity in retendering with a focus on renewing some short term contracts and contracts for SEND pupils and social care users.. The Tender prices have been very competitive across the range of service throughout this period. Despite an increase in the number of SENs transport services, actual spend has remained the same.

### **Travel Response Centre (TRC)**

18. TRC is the central point for people ringing to book on to DCC's "Link2" dial-a-ride service and health transport services or for travel information. TRC has a large data base of approved operators providing social care and pupil transport and has close links with NEAS, private ambulance services, community transport and volunteer driver schemes.
19. Around 80,000 calls are handled on an annual basis. The TRC also processes referrals from Social Workers and other care staff for client travel to day care.
20. The Health Booking Service is delivered on behalf of the NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups in Durham. Following an eligibility assessment, patients are booked on to North East Ambulance Patient Transport Services. Patients and visitors who are ineligible for NHS patient transport are, where possible, booked on alternative services providing access to hospitals or advised on how to make their journey by public transport.

### **Public Transport Information**

20. Durham provides a comprehensive range of passenger information on all local bus services operating within the County. This includes maintaining current timetable displays at over 2,800 bus stops, providing electronic displays at bus stations and on-street stops, printed county public transport map, printed timetable leaflets and a web based interactive bus map. The interactive bus map shows bus routes and individual timetables for all registered services in downloadable format.
21. Durham also provides the data management and system development roles for the North East Traveline journey planning service. This includes processing and collation of bus service data from Tyne & Wear, Northumberland, Tees Valley and Cumbria on a continuous basis. Work is ongoing to enable the web based journey planner to become more compatible with mobile devices.

### **Real Time Passenger Information**

22. Durham has continued to work in partnership with Nexus, Northumberland CC, Tees Valley Unlimited and local bus operators to deliver a new Real Time

# North East Combined Authority

## Transport North East Committee

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Passenger Information system for the wider North East region. Testing for the new system is currently ongoing following the development of software and upgrades to over 100 information displays at bus stations and stops in County Durham. Real time data for selected bus services is currently being displayed via electronic displays at bus stations and stops. In time, this will include all operators and services and include on-line via Traveline North East, NextBus and the DCC interactive bus map.

### Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF)

23. Durham's LSTF South Durham *Local Motion* project has encouraged the adoption of low-carbon travel habits through a complimentary package of sustainable transport measures targeted at businesses, schools and local communities. From April 2015, the project was expanded towards Durham City and targeted Spennymoor, Crook and Willington to improve connectivity to access work and training opportunities within South Durham and further afield to Darlington and Durham City. LSTF funding for this project ends on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016.
24. DCC has also continued as the lead authority for the national LSTF Living Streets *Walk To* project. This project, in partnership with 11 local authorities and Living Streets, has increased the levels of walking among people of all ages. A range of engaging interventions have supported significant changes in people's travel behaviours leading to reduced congestion and an improved environment whilst also benefitting health and well-being. Measures have focussed on where the school run is having a significant negative impact on congestion, journey times and economic growth. LSTF funding for this project ends on 31st March 2016.

### Sustainable Travel Transition Year 2016/17

25. Moving forward, a consolidated NECA-wide bid has been submitted to the Department for Transport Sustainable Travel Transition Year (STTY) funding for 2016/17. The bid, entitled Go Smarter (across the North East) combines the most effective elements from LSTF Go Smarter Tyne & Wear, Northumberland, and South Durham Local Motion, expanding the reach and impact to additional communities with co-ordinated delivery across the NECA area.
26. The proposal builds on the investment and proven success of existing programmes that have increased sustainable travel for businesses, schools and local communities. It supports the local economy, boosts economic growth and cuts carbon emissions by making it easier for people to access jobs, training and education opportunities, by engaging and informing younger people, those seeking jobs or training, or already employed. A decision on the award of STTY funding is expected to be made at the end of April 2016 with delivery commencing immediately thereafter.

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## North East Combined Authority

### Transport North East Committee

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**DATE:** 28<sup>th</sup> April 2016

**SUBJECT:** Discharge of Transport Functions by Northumberland  
County Council

**REPORT OF:** Chief Executive, Northumberland County Council

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Under the Constitution of the Combined Authority, and in accordance with an Operating Agreement between the Constituent Authorities, certain functions have been delegated to the Executive of the two Constituent County Councils, being Durham and Northumberland. This report provides an update on the discharge of delegated functions at Northumberland County Council for the financial year 2015/16.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Committee note the transport responsibilities of Northumberland County Council and the activities undertaken in 2015/16.

# **North East Combined Authority**

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### **1 Background Information**

- 1.1 The Combined Authority Order transfers to the Combined Authority transport functions previously carried out by Northumberland County Council under parts 4 and 5 of the Transport Act 1985 and functions under part 2 of the Transport Act 2000.
- 1.2 Under the Constitution of the Combined Authority, and in accordance with an Operating Agreement between the Constituent Authorities, transport functions have been delegated to the Executive of the two Constituent County Councils, being Durham and Northumberland.
- 1.3 Under protocols agreed between the Constituent Authorities, it was planned for Northumberland County Council to report to the Combined Authority on the manner in which the transport functions have been discharged including how they have been discharged in accordance with any performance management criteria set by the Combined Authority.

### **2 Proposals**

- 2.1 Members are requested to note the contents of the report.

### **3 Next Steps**

- 3.1 Under protocols agreed between the Constituent Authorities, Northumberland County Council will provide an update report to TNEC on an annual basis.

### **4 Potential Impact on Objectives**

- 4.1 The tasks reported in this document support the objectives of the Combined Authority of creating the best possible conditions for growth in jobs, investment and living standards, to make the North East an excellent location for business, to prioritise and deliver high quality infrastructure and to enable residents to raise their skill levels and to benefit from economic growth long into the future.

### **5 Finance and Other Resources**

- 5.1 For 2014/15, the funding for Transport functions in Northumberland County Council was transferred into the Combined Authority, and the Combined Authority in turn delegated the funding to the Council to cover the discharge of its transport functions.
- 5.2 The levy for Northumberland County Council transport functions has been agreed and will be put in place by 1 April 2016 for financial year 2016/17.

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### **6 Legal**

- 6.1 In order to enable the Transport functions to be carried out lawfully by the employees who carry them out currently, authorisation has been obtained from the Policy Board of Northumberland County Council.

### **7 Other Considerations**

#### **7.1 Consultation/Community Engagement**

There are no specific consultation/community engagement implications arising from this report.

#### **7.2 Human Rights**

There are no specific human rights implications arising from this report.

#### **7.3 Equalities and Diversity**

There are no specific equality and diversity issues arising from this report.

#### **7.4 Risk Management**

There are no specific risk management issues arising from this report.

#### **7.5 Crime and Disorder**

There are no implications for crime and disorder arising directly from this report.

#### **7.6 Environment and Sustainability**

There are no specific environment and sustainability issues arising from this report.

### **8 Background Documents**

- 8.1 The North East Combined Authority Constitution.  
North East Combined Authority Deed of Operation dated the 29th April 2014.

### **9 Links to Plans in the Policy Framework**

- 9.1 This report has no direct links to plans in the policy framework.

### **10 Appendices**

- 10.1 Appendix 1  
North East Combined Authority (NECA)  
Northumberland County Council Transport Activity Report 2015/16.

# North East Combined Authority

## Transport North East Committee

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### 11 Contact Officers

11.1 Stuart McNaughton  
Strategic Transport Policy Officer  
Northumberland County Council  
[stuart.mcnaughton@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:stuart.mcnaughton@northumberland.gov.uk)  
01670 624104

### 12 Sign off

- Head of Paid Service ✓
- Monitoring Officer ✓
- Chief Finance Officer ✓



# North East Combined Authority

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### **Appendix 1**

#### **North East Combined Authority (NECA)**

#### **Northumberland County Council Transport Activity Report 2015/16**

##### **The Supported Bus Service Network**

- 1 The vast majority of bus routes operating in Northumberland are run commercially without any input, subsidy or support from Northumberland County Council. This commercial network which covers approximately 80% of all services covers those routes that are profitable. The remaining 20% of services are either fully or partially subsidised by Northumberland County Council, these services would not operate without the ongoing support of the council.
- 2 The supported services comprise approximately 50 routes or parts of routes that cover mainly rural but also some urban areas of Northumberland. These supported services include instances of services running commercially at popular/peak times, but where support is given to maintain journeys at other times (early morning and late evening for example). They also include support the County Council gives to key tourist services that help boost the local economy and safeguard the environment by ensuring that people can visit notable locations without needing a car. All supported routes are shown on Map 1 overleaf.
- 3 Historically, the criteria for subsidising bus services has been based on maximum subsidy per passenger and where these figures are exceeded the service concerned should not be provided i.e. it will be withdrawn. A more considered approach has now been implemented that looks at accessibility, integration and procurement to ensure services deliver the maximum accessibility from the given budget. This approach has allowed us to realise substantial savings (see table below) with minimal disruption to the supported bus network.

	Supported Services Budget
Supported Bus Services Gross Expenditure 2015/2016	£2.4m
Savings realised through re-tendering of supported bus services	£200k
Funding available as of the 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2016	£2.2m

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Map 1: Bus services that are currently fully or partly subsidised by Northumberland County Council



### **Management of the Public Transport Network**

- 4 Following the opinion of the Quality Contract Scheme (QCS) Board in November, Nexus have withdrawn the scheme. This provides an opportunity to look at a number of options for the future. As part of a fresh approach Northumberland and Durham have been working with Nexus in a combined approach to managing the public bus network in the future. As approximately 75% of bus services in Northumberland start or finish in Tyne & Wear we are engaged in early discussions around what future developments could be.
- 5 Currently there are the following options:
- Revisit the QCS but the NECA have agreed this will not be happening
  - Voluntary Partnership, it would be possible to embark on this immediately but arrangements are only as good as the personal relationships between those involved.
  - Statutory partnerships requiring local authorities to spend public money on new infrastructure, regardless of priorities.
  - With the introduction of the Buses Bill later this year, there will be new arrangements available for local authorities and bus operators to enter into.
    - Enhanced Partnerships that allow local authorities and bus operators to agree their own standards for all services in their area — perhaps focusing on frequency and reliability along a particular route, or setting emissions standards to improve local air quality, or introducing common branding, marketing and ticketing rules over a wider geographical area. In this way, the bill will build on the strengths of existing partnership arrangements while addressing their weaknesses, including the weakness that allows a small minority of operators to block improvements that have been agreed by the majority.
    - The Buses Bill will honour the devolution deal commitments to give local authorities the choice to use new powers to franchise bus services in their areas. Whilst still a deal of uncertainty around devolution if it progresses franchising would be the responsibility of the Mayor.
- 6 All these possible options and implications need to be considered to find the appropriate arrangement. A detailed piece of work will commence over the next 2-3 months to inform the preferred approach.

### **Home to School Transport**

- 7 In May 2014 it was agreed by Northumberland County Council to remove the previous free student travel scheme for new Post 16 students but retain provision for students from low income backgrounds and those with a statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN). The decision introduced a policy that is now broadly in line with most councils but still more generous than some. Prior to taking this decision Northumberland County Council provided free transport for just over 3,500 students, at a cost of £3.3 million per year (£936 per student per year on average).

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- 9 About 40% (1,400) of all Northumberland's students who benefitted from free transport at Post-16 level chose to attend out of county establishments such as Newcastle College and Tyne Met College. This resulted in a loss of potential income to Northumberland-based learning providers in the region of £28 million since 2008 when the free transport scheme was introduced.
- 10 The change to policy has now been fully rolled-out and the Council has achieved its targeted savings of £2.4 million. This does not appear to have impacted adversely on the number of students accessing Post 16 education. Northumberland College responded by arranging and funding a number of its own bus services which serve their main campuses in Ashington and at Kirkley Hall. Generally speaking students are making more use of local bus services but places on school buses are offered to students (in return for a £600 annual charge) where they are unable to access a viable public transport system.

### **Concessionary Travel Scheme**

- 11 Northumberland County Council participates in the government's English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS). The national scheme entitles pass holders who are resident in England to free off-peak travel (after 09:30) on local bus services throughout England. This scheme covers both disabled people and eligible older people.
- 12 In addition to the national scheme entitlements Northumberland County Council also provides a number of local enhancements to the scheme, pass holders can travel from 09:00 onwards on journeys beginning in Northumberland. Northumberland is also one of a few Councils to provide companion passes to eligible disabled persons, companion passes allow an additional person to travel for free when accompanying a companion pass holder.
- 13 The costs of providing this scheme will exceed £4.6m for 2015/16. This represents a significant increase on the previous year's outturn. Passenger numbers have remained relatively stable with the approx. 3% budget increase being primarily down to fare increases. Future costs are expected to continue to increase with an upward pressure on this budget going forward.

### **NESTI Smart Ticketing**

- 14 The main aims of the North East Smart Ticketing Initiative Project are the introduction of a Region wide smart ticketing infrastructure on all public transport and the introduction of a single smart payment method accepted on all forms of public transport across the region.
- 15 Between October 2014 and September 2015 Northumberland County Council staff participated in a pilot of the use of the smart Pop card. The pilot successfully progressed through the following phases:
- October 2014 Pre-paid Pop cards used on Arriva services x15 and x18
  - February 2015 Pop card tops up at Payzone merchants and Metro ticket machines introduced

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- May 2015 Pop card use rolled out on Arriva bus services operated by the Ashington Depot.
  - June 2015 Pop card use extended to use on the Metro system.
- 16 The pilot successfully completed trials of the on-bus, back of office, payzone and public interface processes. The pilot ended during September 2015 when public Pop card use was rolled out to all Arriva bus services operating north of the River Tyne and the on the Metro.

### **Community Transport**

- 17 Community transport has a key role to play in the mix of transport solutions for Northumberland. Community transport is about providing flexible and responsive solutions to un-met local transport needs and often represents the only way in which particular user groups can access a range of essential services. Because community transport is regulated under different rules from 'conventional' bus services, it is particularly well placed to offer innovative solutions where commercial services are not available. As a result it can provide the connectivity needed to get to a range of destinations for otherwise isolated or excluded groups of people, helping to develop sustainable communities and contributing to social inclusion.
- 18 There are a range of Community Transport operators in Northumberland, some offering services without subsidy and support from the Council and others contracted by Northumberland County Council to deliver specific activities. As the commercial bus network continues to diminish in rural parts of Northumberland more emphasis will be given towards Community Transport solutions. Users of community transport include people of all ages, disabled people, unemployed people, people in communities that don't have access to public transport, children and young people as well as older people. Because community transport is embedded in the communities in which it operates, it is well placed to focus on very local needs and on one-to-one help, providing both choice and quality services.
- 19 Northumberland County Council can confirm 3 years funding for a new Northumberland wide Get-about Car Scheme. The car schemes are delivered by volunteers who drive their own cars in return for mileage expenses. It is a demand responsive, flexible and accessible transport service for individuals and groups who cannot access public transport, due to mobility, illness, infirmity or restricted access. Adapt (North East) Ltd will operate the new volunteer car scheme across Northumberland for individuals who cannot access public transport for a variety of reasons. The volunteer car drivers are subject to an Enhanced CRB disclosure. Service users contact Adapt (North East) Ltd to book a journey with the scheme co-ordinators organising the door to door journeys.

### **Hexham Bus Station**

- 20 Since February 2014 the council have explored a range of options proposed for new bus service provision in Hexham. This was in response to on-going health

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and safety concerns with the present site on Priestpopple and the opportunity to redevelop the site for commercial purposes.

- 21 The recommendation was for the development of a new station at Loosing Hill and this option received planning approval in September 2015. The new site will support economic development, meet future public transport needs and address safety issues which could not be met by staying in the current location. Work has now started on site with the opening of the new bus station planned for summer 2016.

## North East Combined Authority Transport North East Committee

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**DATE:** 28<sup>th</sup> April 2016  
**SUBJECT:** The Strategic Road Network in the NECA area  
**REPORT OF:** Chief Executive Officer for Transport

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report provides members with details of the strategic road network in the NECA area, including current and future investment proposals.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Committee notes the contents of this report

# North East Combined Authority

## Transport North East Committee

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### **1. Background Information**

- 1.1 A safe, comprehensive and well-maintained major highway network is fundamental to the connectivity of the NECA area, benefiting all road users, and contributing to economic growth by enabling the efficient movement of people and goods. The road network also provides vital access to our key international gateways for access to external markets, as well as enabling visitor access to our tourist destinations.
- 1.2 This report summarises current and future investment proposals on our key strategic road corridors including planned improvements to east-west connectivity arising out of the current Transport for the North study into the A66/A69.

### **2. The strategic road network in the NECA area**

- 2.1 The strategic road network (SRN) in England covers around 4,300 miles of route and is managed by Highways England (HE), a government-owned company. In this region, they are responsible for the A1, the A19, the A66 and the A69. All other roads in England are managed by local and regional authorities. The HE network represents around two per cent of all roads in England by length, but it carries a third of all traffic by mileage as well as carrying two thirds of all heavy goods vehicle mileage in England.

The map in Appendix A shows the entire English SRN.

### **3. The Roads Investment Strategy**

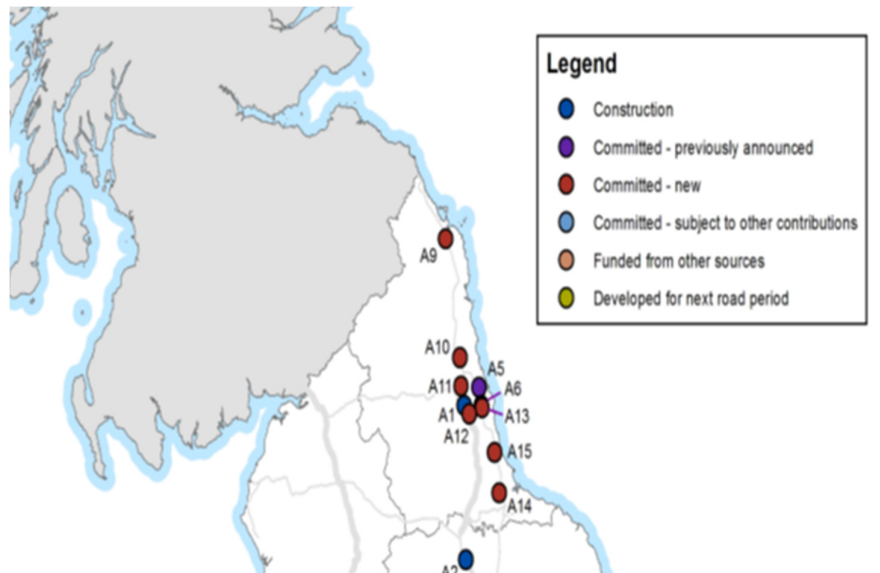
- 3.1 In December 2014, HE published its first Roads Investment Strategy (RIS1), setting out a long-term vision for the strategic road network over the period from 2015 to 2020. Seven of the schemes in the Strategy are in the NECA area – please see the list below and the related map.
  - A1 North of Ellingham
  - A1 Morpeth to Ellingham
  - A1 Junction 74 (Scotswood) to Junction 79 (North Brunton)
  - A1 Junction 65 (Birtley) to Junction 67 (Coalhouse)
  - A19 Junction with the A1290 (Downhill Lane)
  - New technology on A1(M) and A19
  - A19 Testos
  - A19 Coast Road



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Sections 4 to 6 of this report provide details of the key routes in the North East and the plans for improvement.

#### **4. The A1**

- 4.1 The A1 performs a strategic, regional and local role. It provides the main strategic north-south link connecting North East England to London, the M62, the Midlands and Scotland. Regionally, it connects NECA to the borders, Tees Valley and Cumbria while at a local level the route is used by commuters, leisure and business trips, often for very short distances. However, the route is also put under severe strain outside the conventional peak times, due to growing demand for inter, off-peak and weekend leisure trips reflecting, in part, the growth in traffic to Newcastle Airport and the presence of the Metrocentre as a major trip destination.
- 4.2 Traffic flows on some sections are in excess of 100,000 vehicles per day, exceeding the route's theoretical capacity by more than 100%. Failure to tackle the constraints suffered by the A1 has been identified as a serious barrier to economic growth within the region.
- 4.3 To address the current congestion on the A1 Western Bypass, the Government announced investment worth around £350m as part of RIS1. Improvements under way or planned include:
- Completion of 3 lanes and 'Lobley Hill' link road on the A1 Western Bypass between Coal House Junction and the Metrocentre – due for completion in spring 2016;
  - Three lanes between junctions 65 (Birtley) and 67 (Coal House). This includes the replacement of Allerdene Bridge; and

# North East Combined Authority

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- Narrow lane widening between junctions 74 (Scotswood) and 79 (North Brunton) to allow three lanes of traffic through the junctions, with four lanes between some junctions.
- 4.4 To tackle issues, north of Newcastle, the Government announced investment worth around £290 million as part of RIS1. Improvements include:
- North of Newcastle – A1 to be dualled to Ellingham, linking the Morpeth and Alnwick bypass (34 miles north of Newcastle); and
  - North of Ellingham – a set of measures to enhance performance and safety including overtaking lanes, right turning refuges and better crossing facilities for pedestrians and cyclists.
- 5. The A19**
- 5.1 The A19 provides a strategic link and continuous dual carriageway between North Yorkshire and Northumberland. Regionally, it connects Tees Valley and the NECA area.
- 5.2 The route is a major economic corridor providing access to Port of Tyne and to the major employment sites of Tyne Tunnel Trading Estate, Silverlink Retail Park, Cobalt Business Park, Nissan, West Sunderland, Peterlee, Seaham and those in South East Northumberland. At a local level, there has been considerable business park development close to the A19 corridor, adding to capacity pressure on key junctions, whilst the opening of the second Tyne Tunnel in 2011 effectively widened the A19 under the river to 2 lanes.
- 5.3 As part of RIS1, major junction improvements are taking place along the A19 which is being upgraded to expressway – equivalent to motorway quality dual carriageway – to support manufacturing and exports. The following junctions are being improved in the NECA area:
- A19/A1058 Coast Road Junction Improvement - starting in Summer 2016 and due for completion by Spring 2018; and
  - A19 Testos and Downhill Lane Junction Improvements – starting March 2019 and due for completion by March 2021.
- 5.4 The A19/A1058 improvement was classified as a nationally significant infrastructure project (NSIP) and, as such, Highways England were required to make an application for a Development Consent Order to construct the project. An examination was held in Spring/Summer 2015 and the Inspector recommended in October 2015 that the Secretary of State should make the Order. In January 2016, the Secretary of State decided that the Order be made. Contractors have been appointed and the scheme is due to start construction in Summer 2016.

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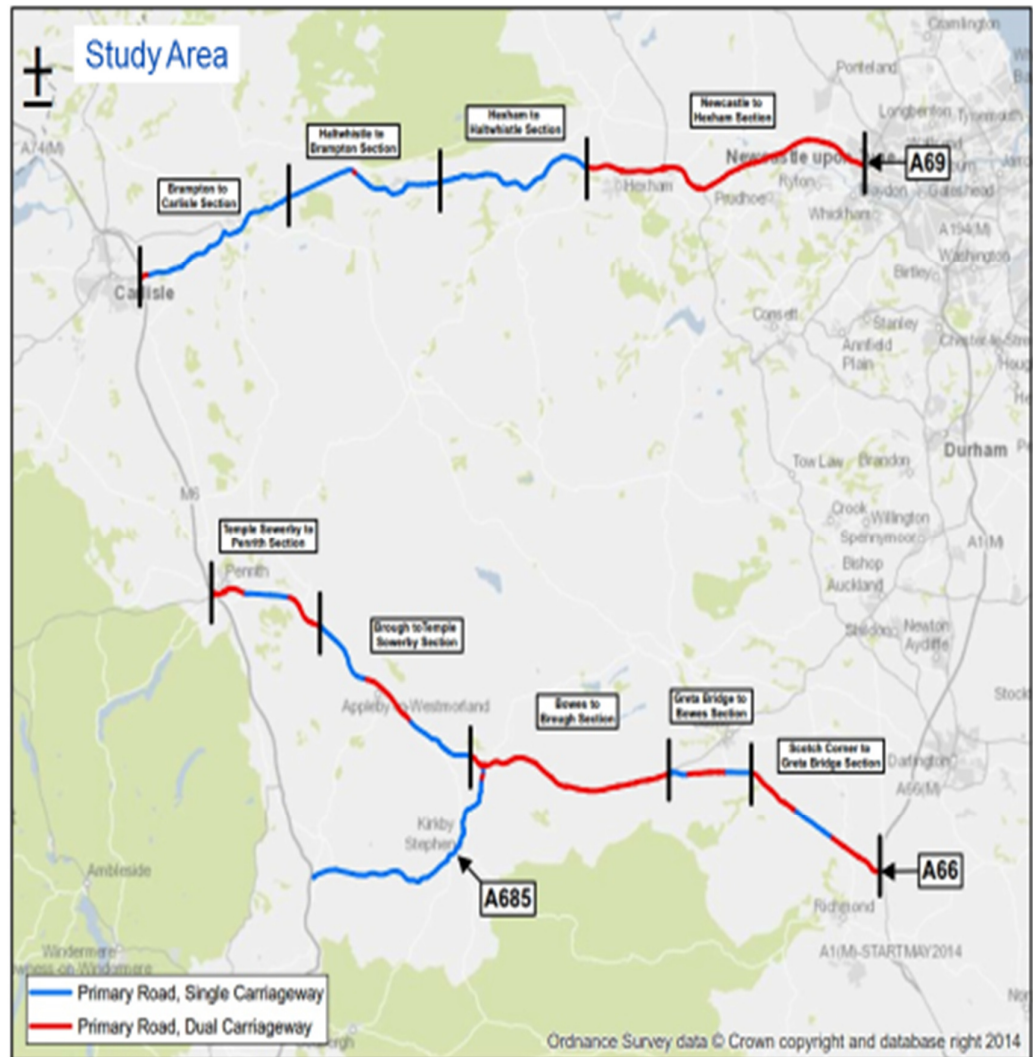
### **6. A66 and A69 (North TransPennine routes)**

- 6.1 These routes are important economic corridors linking the NECA area with the North-West (both Cumbria and the conurbations around Liverpool and Manchester) and are heavily used by freight traffic, especially the A66. As well as their strategic role, they also provide essential access to jobs and services for local communities. Sections of both routes have higher than average collision rates and both can be significantly affected by bad weather.
- 6.2 As part of Transport for the North's Northern Transport Strategy, Highways England are undertaking a strategic study on the A66 and A69 corridors (plus the A685) to plan the next generation of road improvements on this key TransPennine link, including the option of dualling either or both routes. TfN believe these corridors have the potential to relieve congestion on the M62, which is currently the only east-west motorway spanning the North. This would have particular benefits for freight movement since, at present, two out of every three lorries crossing the Pennines uses the M62. A new strategic link north of the M62 would improve access to East Coast ports.
- 6.3 In the March Budget, the Chancellor allocated funding of £75m for further development of the North TransPennine highway improvements, as well as the proposed TransPennine Tunnel between Sheffield and Manchester.

A map of the routes covered by the North TransPennine study is shown below.

# North East Combined Authority Transport North East Committee

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## 7. Devolution

As part of the proposed devolution deal, it is intended that the Government and the North East Combined Authority will enter into joint working with Highways England on the delivery of investment and operations for the SRN in the region, to help achieve better integration between local and national networks. Proposals for these joint working arrangements are being developed.

## 8. Finance and Other Resources

8.1 There are no specific financial issues arising out of this report.

## 9. Legal

# North East Combined Authority

## Transport North East Committee

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- 9.1 There are no specific legal issues arising out of this report.

### **10. Other Considerations**

#### **10.1 Consultation/Community Engagement**

All improvement schemes on the SRN are subject to extensive statutory consultation. The study into North TransPennine route improvements includes provision for appropriate stakeholder consultation.

#### **10.2 Human Rights**

There are no specific human rights implications arising from this report.

#### **10.3 Equalities and Diversity**

There are no specific equalities and diversity implications arising from this report.

#### **10.4 Risk Management**

Failure to improve the SRN in the region and address issues over route capacity would act as a barrier to economic growth in the NECA area.

#### **10.5 Crime and Disorder**

There are no specific crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

#### **10.6 Environment and Sustainability**

All road improvement schemes are subject to appropriate measures to mitigate any adverse environmental impacts. Many of the planned improvements to the A1 and the A19 will assist in improving safety and providing better crossing-points for cyclists and pedestrians.

The North TransPennine study includes provision for environmental assessment to consider how the measures might impact on the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

### **11. Background Documents**

- 11.1 None.

### **12. Links to Plans in the Policy Framework**

- 12.1 This report has a direct link to the forthcoming Transport Plan for the North East.

# North East Combined Authority

## Transport North East Committee

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### 13. Contact Officers

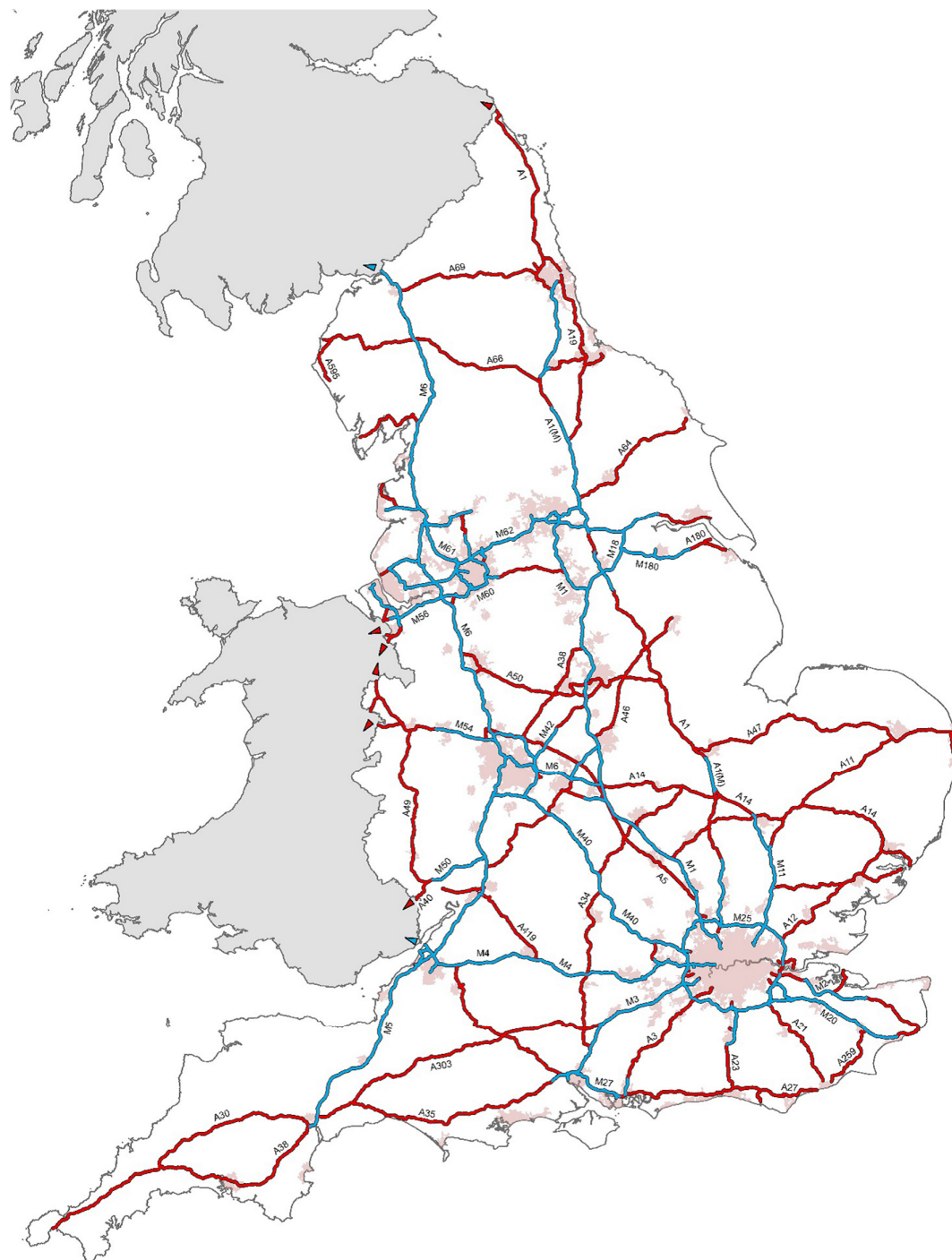
- 13.1 Mark Wilson, Head of Transport Policy (North East Combined Authority)  
[mark.wilson@northeastca.gov.uk](mailto:mark.wilson@northeastca.gov.uk) 0191 211 5679

### 14. Appendices

- 14.1 Map of the Strategic Road Network in England.

### 15. Sign off

- Head of Paid Service ✓
- Monitoring Officer ✓
- Chief Finance Officer ✓



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