



Joint Transport Committee Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 15th December, 2022 at 10.00 am

Meeting to be held in a Mayor's Parlour - Sunderland City Hall (SR1 3AA)

AGENDA

	Page No
1. Apologies for absence	
2. Declarations of Interest	
3. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 13.10.2022	3 - 10
4. Transport Budget 2023/24 (Report to follow)	
5. North East Active Travel Strategy Update (Report to follow)	
6. Enhanced Partnership update (Report to follow)	
7. Public Health Specialty Trainee Placement with Transport North East (Report to follow)	
8. Forward Plan and Work Programme Update	11 - 16

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JOINT TRANSPORT COMMITTEE, OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DRAFT MINUTES FOR APPROVAL

DATE 13 October 2022

Meeting held South Shields Town Hall

Present: (Chair) – David Taylor-Gooby

(Vice-Chair) – Andrew Clark

Councillors: Paul Donaghy – Sunderland City Council
Paul Dean – South Tyneside Council
David Francis – South Tyneside Council
Les Bowman – Northumberland Council
Brian Gallacher – Northumberland Council
Craig Martin – Durham City Council
Thom Champion – Newcastle City Council
John Eagle – Gateshead Council
Sue Stonehouse – South Tyneside Council
Liz McHugh – South Tyneside Council
Kevin Shaw – Durham City Council
Lisa Ferasin – North Tyneside Council
Brenda Clelland – Gateshead Council

Officers: Rachelle Forsyth-Ward – Transport North East
Philip Meikle – Transport North East
Lucy Keating – Transport North East
Eleanor Goodman – Transport North East
Fiona Bootle – Transport North East
Phil Smith – TT2
Stephen Gwilym – Durham City Council

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor B Coult – Durham County Council
Councillor S Deinal – Durham County Council
Councillor D Snowdon – Sunderland City Council

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor J Eagle noted his employment with Nexus as a declaration of interest. The Committee were advised that he has been given dispensation to be a member of the Committee.

RESOLVED - That the declaration of interest be noted.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 28 JULY 2022

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on 28 July 2022 be approved as a correct record.

4. CONSULTATION PRINCIPLES

The Committee were advised of the intention of Transport North East (TNE) to formalise Consultation Principles.

The draft principles define the steps TNE will take, as an officer group developing policy and strategy on behalf of the North East Joint Transport Committee (JTC) to make sure that local people have ample opportunities to have their say on the development of region-wide transport strategies and policies.

Although the methods within each consultation will vary depending on the project, the principles define the general approach to public consultation. These guidelines are flexible and will be adaptable depending on the audience and nature of the individual consultation.

The draft Transport North East Consultation Principles outline that on behalf of the JTC we will:

- Ensure that consultations last for an appropriate amount of time, as per the Government's Consultation Principles (2018)
- Consideration will be given to the timing of consultations with reference to the groups the engagement is hoping to target
- Ensure information is clear, in plain English and informative
- Outline why we are consulting and how people can get involved
- Select the most appropriate ways of consulting on a case-by-case basis
- Make use of emerging technologies and a range of activities where possible to raise awareness, ensuring it is easy for as many people as possible to get involved
- Ensure consultation is embedded in our processes and that views are listened to and incorporated as appropriate
- Fully analyse consultation responses
- Publish a summary of consultation responses and decisions taken as a result
- Continue to learn from previous public consultations

- Be mindful of equality, diversity and inclusion and ensure that there is opportunity for all persons to access and contribute
- Work with key partners (including local authorities) to ensure consultations reach residents across the North East (including Durham, Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside and Sunderland).

The principles are still in draft form and will be taken to the Joint Transport Committee in November for approval.

It was suggested that dependent upon the subject being consulted upon that efforts are made to make sure the consultation is done properly to get across the message. It was noted that in a recent consultation the questions were open ended. It was suggested that efforts be made to get the consultation to the right people. It was noted that for example some residents have indicated they didn't get a chance to offer opinion as they were unable to access the consultation on line.

It was suggested that we are mindful of non English speakers and other options to make sure consultations are fully inclusive.

It was noted that currently questionnaires aren't automatically translated into alternative languages but can be on request the option for large print and audio versions are also built into the consultation strategy.

RESOLVED - That the information presented be noted.

5. MAKING THE RIGHT TRAVEL CHOICE STRATEGY

The Committee were informed of 'Making the Right Travel Choice' strategy. The strategy sets a target to encourage car users to switch one journey a week to public transport, walking or cycling and for people who don't have access to a car to continue to travel sustainably. This could result in around 200 million additional trips being made by sustainable transport every year, improving our environment and the health of local people.

In July 2022, the North East Joint Transport Committee (JTC) granted approval for the draft Strategy to progress to consultation. The consultation period commenced on 20 July and ended on 15 September.

The approach to the consultation was two-pronged. A public facing engagement campaign asked people what they think could be done to get people to travel sustainably more often. As well as this a formal consultation exercise with stakeholders also took place including, partners, business organisations, youth organisations, community groups and local transport operators.

The strategy will help tackle, poor air quality, physical inactivity and a reduction in CO2 emissions of around 214,000 tonnes in one year. It is acknowledged in the strategy that due to the region's diverse urban and rural mix there needs to be different solutions and expectations for peoples and businesses.

At the end of the consultation, we received-

- 674 responses to the public online survey
- 310 comment cards from the face to face events
- 57 responses to the stakeholder online survey
- Over 1,000 pieces of engagement in total

Stakeholder feedback

- Across the engagement there was overall support for the strategy and headline target;
- Support that the strategy recognises that a “one size fits all” approach will not achieve the strategy’s target;
- Widespread support for the central target;
- Support for the introduction of the personas;
- Some stakeholders queried whether the target was ambitious enough;
- There was a request that there could be further inclusions made on alternative forms of transport e.g. community transport.

Public feedback

- There needs to be greater emphasis on making public transport more attractive as an alternative to car use;
- We received a lot off feedback from face-to-face interactions that people are already prioritising green travel wherever possible;
- Responses indicated that people would be more likely to swap modes if car was a less appealing option, and if things like parking charges were increased and parking facilities reduced;
- Many responses highlighted that cost would be a key driver in making public transport a more viable transport option;
- There needs to be improvements to the walking and cycling network.

Following the conclusion of the consultation period, the following approach is being taken-

- All feedback which has been received has been reviewed by the project team in conjunction with senior managers;
- Key themes which emerged from the feedback have been discussed and an agreed process of how to embed the topic into the Strategy will be taken;
- A report which sets out all of the key feedback and how we intend to respond is currently being drafted. This will include some topics which may not be relevant to the Strategy. In these cases, we will set out why this feedback will not be embedded into a final draft.
- In addition, there may be some feedback which we utilise for future strategies, including the NE Active Travel Strategy;
- Members will be updated on this process and provided with a copy of the report.
- TNE will seek approval at NEJTC in November to publish the final Strategy.

The Committee commented that the felt that this was a really good aspiration to have. It was however suggested that the alternatives need to be more attractive than the car for people to use them.

It was also noted that care needed to be taken if thinking about introducing parking charges or increasing parking charges. It should be noted that Northumberland Council have taken the decision not to charge for parking in town centres. It was noted that car parking is not included in this strategy and is likely to be considered as part of the Road Infrastructure Strategy.

Committee members advised that they were supportive of the introduction of personas as a way of helping people understand options. It was also noted that it was positive that people

are already thinking about alternative travel options. It was noted that Committee members would like to see more improvements to cycle paths and footpaths.

It was suggested that the members of the Committee watch South Tyneside's give yourself a lift video which was also about encouraging different travel options.

It was queried what consultation was undertaken with Local Authorities and it was also suggested that work be undertaken with school children as parents dropping off their children cause traffic congestion for quite an intense timeframe of about 40 minutes.

It was noted that Transport North East work very closely with Heads of Transport within the Local Authorities and they have seen very early drafts of the strategy. It was also noted that in terms of general infrastructure there are several areas of funding such as the Active Travel Fund and the Transforming Cities fund which pass through Transport North East to Local Authorities. It is useful for officers to identify what could be put in the pipeline for the schemes to then be developed.

It was noted that in terms of more isolated communities and rural / smaller communities struggle to not use cars as busses stop at 8pm at night and sometimes only come once per hour.

Generally the Committee were encouraged by what they were hearing in terms of the move to a more greener sustainable environment.

It was noted that currently we don't have a co-ordination of fares between busses and trains and also the added difficulty of reliability.

RESOLVED - that the comments of the Committee be noted when presenting the final version of the 'Making the Right Choice' Strategy to the Joint Transport Committee.

6. TRANSPORT BUDGET 2023/24

The Committee were presented with a report setting out the process and timetable for the approval of the levies and other budgets relating to the Joint Transport Committee. At its meeting on 18 October the Joint Transport Committee will receive a report which had been due to be considered on 13 September but due to the death of Her Majesty was postponed.

The budget proposals will be developed and consulted upon over the coming months and decisions on the levies and other aspects of the Transport Budget will be taken by the JTC on 17 January 2023.

Proposals for the Durham and Northumberland levies will be driven by the Transport budgets for those authorities which are being prepared in tandem. The Tyne and Wear Levy is largely determined by the grant required by Nexus, with £2.1m currently retained to fund cost relating to the former Tyne and Wear Integrated Transport Authority and contributions to the work of Transport North East (TNE). It is recommended that this retained levy amount is kept at the same level for 2023/24.

The current recommendation is for the top-slice of the Local Transport Plan (LTP) Integrated Transport Block grant funding towards the TNE team to be maintained at the current level of £0.500m (equal shares equating to £0.063m per authority).

The report sets out that based on the initial estimates, indications are that it will be necessary to increase the Tyne and Wear Transport Levy in both 2023/24 and 2024/25, as reported during the 2022/23 budget setting process. Initial forecasts suggest an increase to the levy of 4% (£2.6m) in 2023/24 and 3/75% £.5m) in 2024/25 will be necessary. Nexus is experiencing significant inflationary budget pressures, particular in relation to high voltage power and the position relative to the Medium Term financial Plan (MTFP) presented to the JTC in January 2022m the position for 2023/24 and beyond has worsened significantly.

In order to set a break-even budget on the Tyne Tunnels, an increase will be required to the tolls for Class 2 and Class 3 vehicles early in the 2023 calendar year. These increase are necessary in order to meet increase in payments to TT2 under the concession contract which increase in line with Retail Prices Index (RPI) inflation. A report will be presented to the Tyne and Wear Sub Committee for consideration and decision at their meeting on 3 November.

The Committee raised the issue that it wasn't possible to really provide comments or scrutinise as there was little detail in the report. It was noted that the scrutiny committee won't get the budget until December. The report to the JTC in November will have cost proposals. The Committee were advised that there will be very much more detailed costs and will come back to this Committee before it goes to the JTC.

The Committee advised that they would like to see the financial plan with information that we currently have and some sort of a forecast in terms of this is the way we are going.

It was noted that the report presented to the OSC this time last year contained more detail. Whilst it is appreciated that there is more uncertainty this year when going into a public report there needs to be an honesty with the public and we need to be making sure they are aware times are challenging at the moment.

It was also suggested it would be useful to know where we would be if current trends continue and for example if bus use has not recovered to the level it was pre-pandemic and some forecasting information as to what this would mean long term in relation to financial performance.

It was noted that there is some concern re Nexus and how much are we relying on the new units coming on line. It was noted that we don't have the figures yet, it is anticipated that in the longer term there will be better patronage of the new fleet and it will be more reliable. More detail will be brought in the next report. It was noted that there are some risks with regards to the reserves position but it is looking better and there is scope built in if there are delays.

It was queried whether there would be a different in energy costs with the new fleet. It was noted that the new trains are regenerative and will consume an awful lot of electricity. It was noted that there was a reason that the system was a Direct Current which was with regards to the limits of clearances on the metro system.

It was agreed that further discussion would take place with officers through the Chair and Vice Chair and a more detailed report would be presented which would allow members of the Committee to understand better the financial position and which would have some forecast information if the current trend were to continue.

RESOLVED - that the comments of the OSC be incorporated into the report to the Joint Transport Committee and a further report be prepared in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair.

7. TYNE PASS APPRAISAL

The Committee received a report on the Tyne Pass Appraisal Scheme members had already received a detailed briefing on the appraisal and the findings.

The Committee heard that the Tyne Pass Scheme for barrierless open road tolling has been in operation since November 2021 and the number of customers paying the toll successfully for their journey is on an upward trend.

The majority of customers pay the toll by pre-paid account (76% of all payments in August 2022). These customers benefit from an optimum service as they can:

- Pay before or after their journey
- Use the auto-top up facility with a linked bank card
- Received regular email alerts and reminders if their balance is running low; and
- Received a 10% discount on every journey

In August the toll was paid on time for 96.5% of journeys meaning only a small percentage of drivers (3.5%) failed to pay and received a UTCN (Unpaid Toll Charge Notice).

Journeys have been increasing while the percentage of tunnel users received a UTCN has decreased month on month since November 2021 with a slight lift in June and July and anticipated during the summer months. At the TWSC meeting on 7 July 2022 members agreed that an appraisal of the Tyne Pass scheme should be undertaken. The scheme had been operational for almost 8 months and members considered it was timely to carry out such an appraisal in order to consider the customer experience and review feedback from customers and stakeholders, both positive and negative.

The nature of the Concession contract with TT2 means that the obligations, responsibilities and the performance of TT2 are regularly assessed by Transport North East to ensure that its performance and concessionaire is satisfactory. However, an additional review was considered useful at this state to evaluate the Tyne Pass scheme so far and to plan for the future operation of the scheme as it reaches a more mature stage in the development. The appraisal will also provide transparency for the benefit of customers and the wider public to ensure that they are provided with value for money and a high quality service.

The appraisal has outlined several recommendations for the future including:

- TT2 to carry out further system development for Pre-Paid accounts to make account set-up simpler, in terms of entering car registration details.
- Hardship support to be extended to include charities and Citizens Advice branches in the wider local region
- TT2 to assess alternative banking processes to further improve payment processes; and
- Further data analysis to be carried out by Transport North East on the 'Pay by Midnight tomorrow' payment window and on customer behaviour

It was noted that what has been done at the Tyne Tunnel is fantastic and the massive impact on air quality is excellent.

It was felt that the exemption for Blue Badge Holders isn't necessarily what the Blue Badge scheme is about, it was meant to be about being able to park directly outside a store or to

manage medical appointments. It was noted that during the public consultation there was support from members of the public and the decision was taken to keep the exemption.

It was queried whether the appeals were as a result of the teething issues with the payment system. It was noted that a dashboard of appeals is published on the website. It was noted that the proportion of appeals allowed is coming down quite steadily as people become used to the systems.

It was noted that there is an issue of large vehicles/lorries tailgating which can be intimidating. It was queried whether it would be possible to have some signage.

It was noted that there has been a bigger increase in usage at weekends. It is hoped that this is because the system is improving.

RESOLVED - that the information contained within the report be noted.

8. FORWARD PLAN AND WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Committee received the report for the Forward Plan and Work Programme for the Committee for 2022/23.

The Committee requested that further information be brought to the Committee on the issue with Electric Vehicle Charging and the issues around the procurement of new electrical vehicles. It was suggested that there were several issues which could be discussed when discussing the ZEV Strategy. It was also suggested that the issue of what went wrong which led to the procurement process had to be cancelled.

It was suggested that if some virtual working groups were set up this could help expediate bringing something detailed to a future OSC.

It was queried whether it would be possible to look at transport to hospitals, it seems that it is becoming more difficult to get buses to hospitals.

RESOLVED - (i) That the Work Programme be noted
(ii) That the suggestions from the Committee be noted

9. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will take place on 15 December 2022



North East Joint Transport Committee, Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: 15 December 2022

Subject: Joint Transport Committee Forward Plan and Scrutiny Work Programme

Report of: Policy and Scrutiny Officer

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the suggested work programme for 2022/23 for the Joint Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Recommendations

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- i. Review and comment on the suggested work programme.

1. Background Information

- 1.1 The Joint Transport Committee (JTC) Forward Plan is a document which the Joint Transport Committee is required to maintain under the Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017. The Forward Plan for the Joint Transport Committee, and its Subcommittees is published on both the North East Combined Authority's website and on the North of Tyne Combined Authority's website. It lists the decisions that the Joint Transport Committee and its Officers intend to take in the coming months and must include all decisions to be made in the next 28 days. The JTC Forward Plan template contains specific information relating to each decision, including the date the decision will be made, a brief explanation of the topic, the consultation to be undertaken, and contact details of the author. The JTC Forward Plan template has recently been updated and includes further information including if the decision is a 'Key Decision' and if an item will be discussed in private.
- 1.2 Details of each decision are included on the JTC Forward Plan 28 days before the report is considered and any decision is taken. This supports the transparency of decision making across the Joint Transport Committee and allows members of the public to see the items that will be discussed. There are special procedures for circumstances where publication for the full 28 clear day period is impractical or where there is special urgency. Both of these procedures involve the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and would be reported to the committee at the next meeting.

Role of Overview and Scrutiny

- 1.3 The Joint Transport Committee, Overview and Scrutiny Committee has been established in accordance with Schedule 2 (4) of The Newcastle Upon Tyne, North Tyneside and Northumberland Combined Authority (Establishment and Functions) Order 2018.
- 1.4 The Joint Transport Committee, Overview and Scrutiny Committee can examine any decisions of the Committee – be that by the JTC itself or a subcommittee, constituent authority, or officer holding delegated authority. This Scrutiny occurs in public and ensures democratic and public accountability.
- 1.5 One of the main functions of this Committee is the review and scrutiny of 'Key Decisions' made by the Joint Transport Committee and its Officers. The relevant regulations set out a test for what should be considered a Key Decision – being those which are most significant in financial or other terms. This is explained in the Decision-Making Protocol of the North East Combined Authority that was adopted by the Joint Transport Committee for its use at its inaugural meeting in November 2018.

Requests for Special Urgency/General Exception

- 1.6 In accordance with the Decision Making Protocol, it was agreed by Members that the request of any Short Notice Procedure that involved the Chair of the Overview

and Scrutiny Committee would be reported at the next Committee. The table below shows the number of requests made since the last meeting was held:

Type of Short Notice Procedure	Number of Requests since previous Committee
Requests for Special Urgency	0
Request for General Exception	0

Details of requests for Special Urgency and General Exception can be found at this website <https://northeastca.gov.uk/decision-making/forward-plan/special-notice-and-urgency-provisions/>.

Annual Work Programme – Approach for ongoing overview and scrutiny of Transport Plan

- 1.7 A JTC OSC working group was set up in March 2021 to discuss an approach for ongoing oversight and scrutiny of the Transport Plan when it comes into effect and recognised that that the Transport Plan gives the OSC clarity of the policy framework it is operating within and focus for the future.
- 1.8 At the 25 March 2021 OSC meeting members discussed and agreed that the Transport Plans objectives and policy statements can provide structure to the OSC's Work Programme over the next few years, by enabling it to focus on a particular area in each meeting. The committee also discussed an approach to structuring future meetings which involved receiving and debating an overview on progress being made on the Transport Plan and its objectives, planned future actions, and then providing the opportunity to scrutinise particular areas of the plan in more detail.
- 1.9 The scheduling of these areas of would be informed by whichever is the most advanced in the development of its delivery plan. This would provide the OSC the opportunity to have an effective and productive input into the delivery of the Plan. By the end of each meeting, the OSC should understand the Objective and its delivery plan so it is then able to monitor it and assist in providing ideas/proposals to support delivery or overcome obstacles (e.g. by identifying alternative actions for consideration by the JTC).
- 1.10 There is the opportunity to use, where appropriate, external input into the OSC meetings when considering the objectives and specific issues that may be on interest to certain groups.
- 1.11 The most recent version of the work programme (appendix two) has been compiled to allow the Overview and Scrutiny Committee the opportunity to consider items that will be of regional importance to the Joint Transport Committee, the JTC forward plan and items previously raised by Members. A link to the current forward plan can be found [here](#).

1.12 It should be noted that the work programme covers items that will be discussed at the meetings. It does not preclude 'deeper dives' providing more focused scrutiny of particular topics by a sub-group of the committee outside of these meeting dates. These topics can be raised with the Chair and Scrutiny Officer at any time.

2. Annual Work Programme – Update

2.1 The Committee is asked to review and discuss the suggested work programme.

3. Reasons for the Proposals

3.1 To provide an opportunity for Committee members to input on any additional items as part of continued planning for the Work Programme for 2022/23.

3.2 The work programme will be refreshed and updated at each meeting of the Committee throughout the year.

4. Alternative Options Available

4.1 There are no alternative options available.

5. Potential Impact on Objectives

5.1 Development of a work programme and review and scrutiny of decisions in the JTC Forward Plan will contribute towards the development and implementation of the policy framework of NECA, NTCA, Nexus and the North East LEP as well as providing appropriate challenge to decisions taken.

6. Financial and Other Resources Implications

6.1 No financial or other resource implications are identified at this stage.

7. Legal Implications

7.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from these recommendations.

8. Key Risks

8.1 There are no key risks associated with the recommendations made in this report.

9. Equality and Diversity

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

10. Crime and Disorder

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

11. Consultation/Engagement

11.1 On-going consultation takes place with Officers and Scrutiny Members across the local authorities that make up the Joint Transport Committee, in regard to the items for the Annual Work Programme as Appendix One.

12. Other Impact of the Proposals

12.1 The proposals consider the wider impact and take into account the Principles of Decision Making. They allow Members' consideration of the items on the JTC Forward Plan and allow them the opportunity to have an overview of all performance, decision making and developments across the Joint Transport Committee structure.

13. Appendices

13.1 Appendix One – Annual Work Programme

14. Background Papers

14.1 None.

15. Contact Officers

15.1 Gavin Armstrong, Policy and Scrutiny Officer
Email: gavin.armstrong@northeastca.gov.uk
Telephone Number: Tel No: (0191) 4247537

15.2 Mike Barker
email: mikebarker@gateshead.gov.uk
Telephone: (0191) 433 2100

16. Sign off

- 16.1
- The Proper Officer for Transport: ✓
 - Head of Paid Service: ✓
 - Monitoring Officer: ✓
 - Chief Finance Officer: ✓

17. Glossary

17.1 NECA - North East Combined Authority
North East LEP - North East Local Enterprise Partnership
NTCA – North of Tyne Combined Authority

**Joint Transport Committee: Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme
December 2022**

Standing Items for each Committee Meeting:

- Declaration of Interest
- Minutes of Previous Meeting
- JTC Forward Plan and Work Programme Report

Source of work programme and items of importance:

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee obtains work programme items from the following sources:

- a) Items submitted by Members of the Committee (and including items referred by other members of the Combined Authorities)
- b) Suggestions from Officers
- c) The Budget and Policy Framework; Transport Plan
- d) The JTC Forward Plan
- e) The Proper Officer for Transport
- f) Evidence for any policy review work regarding Transport

Suggested Work Programme 2022-2023

Meeting Date	Subject
March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ZEV strategy • Enhanced Partnership Update
July 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Road Infrastructure Strategy (TBC)</i> • TCF Programme Closure

It should be noted that the work programme covers items that will be discussed at the meetings. It does not preclude 'deeper dives' providing more focused scrutiny of particular topics by a sub-group of the committee outside of these meeting dates. These topics can be raised with the Chair and Scrutiny Officer at any time.