

Question:		Answer:
Agenda Item 4: Bus Service Update Report		
1.	Why has the TVCA waited nine years to survey bus shelters, especially regarding timetable information?	<p>All maintenance and/or improvements to shelters, and the provision of timetable information has previously been the responsibility of the local authorities. Within the Tees Valley Bus Service Improvement Plan, enhanced customer experience is a priority in the 5-point delivery plan and as part of this TVCA agreed to take on responsibility for updating timetable information from July 2024. Through the Enhanced Bus Partnership, it was agreed to use some of the BSIP funding allocated to Tees Valley to improve at-stop information and carry out a study of all 3,735 bus stops across Tees Valley to help inform a future investment programme.</p> <p>Upon taking over the role of providing timetable information, TVCA started to receive feedback about locations where information could not be installed at stop as a result of missing or damaged infrastructure. The decision was therefore made to undertake the survey so we could understand what improvements were necessary. The feedback from the survey will be shared with each local authority area once available.</p> <p>Bus shelter maintenance primarily remains the responsibility of the relevant area authority, with the exception of a number of advertising shelters which are owned and maintained by Clear Channel UK.</p>
2.	Would the TVCA now prioritise the majority of bus shelters within the Tees Valley which display no timetable information whatsoever?	<p>Since taking over the responsibility of at stop timetable provision from the local authorities back in July 2024, TVCA has made every effort to ensure all bus stops across Tees Valley are showing accurate, and up to date information on local services. However,</p>

		<p>upon taking over the role of providing timetable information, TVCA received feedback about locations where information could not be installed at stop as a result of missing or damaged infrastructure. The decision was therefore made to undertake a survey to understand what improvements were necessary and the cost of doing so.</p> <p>Bus shelter maintenance primarily remains the responsibility of the relevant area authority, with the exception of some advertising shelters which are owned and maintained by Clear Channel UK. TVCA therefore await the outcome of the survey report so that this information can be shared with local authorities and used to help inform a future investment programme. The survey will help to identify the amount of funding that will be required to improve timetable information provision and help to inform an approach to prioritisation, which will take into account a number of factors including the expansion of information provision but also degradation and the need to replace cases at a number of sites.</p>
3.	The Tees Flex vehicles are now reaching 'end-of-life'. Does the TVCA intend to replace them?	Tees Flex vehicles are the responsibility of Stagecoach as the service operator. Any provider appointed to provide the service must ensure vehicles are fit for purpose and meet legal requirements.
4.	Tees Flex ridership is now at its lowest level for 4 years. Why does the TVCA intend to extend the TVCA contract from March 2025 until August 2025?	Tees Flex continues to provide a service which saw over 17,000 trips made from October - December 2024. TVCA has extended the contract until August 2025 to ensure continuation of service for current users, some of which would have no alternate public transport provision should the contract end.

5.	How much will the proposed 5-month funding allocation to the Tees Flex contract cost?	The 5-month extension has been agreed with the service operator at a cost of £532,708.55.
6.	Given the failure of Arriva Northeast to introduce Zero Emission Buses in Redcar and Cleveland, will consideration now be given to re-tendering the relevant bus services to another bus company, who could provide such vehicles?	<p>Local bus services are primarily operated on a commercial basis and are therefore not tendered or financially subsidised by ourselves.</p> <p>TVCA and Arriva planned to introduce 7 Zero Emission Buses into Arriva's Redcar Depot, funded through a successful bid into the Zero Emission Bus Regional Area (ZEBRA2) funding scheme. Concerns were identified by Arriva about the current range capabilities and battery degradation of Electric Vehicles (EV's) currently available and their suitability for operation on the routes from the Redcar depot where the distances covered are greater and the gradients are more severe.</p>
7.	Stagecoach advertises free wi-fi on its buses, but this hasn't been available for over a year now. When will the TVCA address this issue?	Tees Valley Combined Authority does not have responsibility for additional discretionary services provided by an operator.
Agenda Item 5: Government Policy Update		
8.	When does the TVCA intend to introduce integrated Page 40 ticketing between the two main bus providers in the Tees Valley, Stagecoach and Arriva NorthEast?	<p>Work to introduce integrated ticketing is being progressed on a national level as part of a UK Government priority. TVCA will continue to track the progress and assess the implications for introduction locally.</p> <p>Multi-operator ticketing options are available, allowing passengers to purchase one ticket that is accepted across Stagecoach, Arriva, and Go North East services across the Tees Valley.</p>

		More information on our SmartZone tickets can be found here - https://www.stagecoachbus.com/regionaltickets/north-east/teesside/smart
9.	When does Stagecoach intend to introduce 'Tap In Tap Out' digital ticketing to its Tees Valley services, as introduced by Arriva Northeast two years ago?	Tees Valley Combined Authority does not have responsibility for how operators choose to sell tickets.
10.	When does the TVCA intend to introduce an integrated public transport payment app such as Oyster, which was introduced by TfL 21 years ago?	Account based ticketing solutions such as TfL's Oyster are expensive to implement / operate at a regional level. However, this is a government priority, and integrated ticketing is something that is currently being progressed on a national level, rather than on a regional basis, with proposals currently being developed for a single nationwide scheme to achieve this single solution across bus operators initially. TVCA therefore continue to track the progress of integrated ticketing through this stream of work whilst continuing to work with bus and rail operators to understand their commercial position. TVCA will continue to review and evaluate opportunities from newer technologies with the aim of introduce a cost-effective multi-modal ticketing solution.
11.	Given that Tees Flex is only accommodating 64% of requested journeys, compared with 2020/21, when it was accommodating 86% of requested journeys, does the TVCA consider that Tees Flex provides Value for Money?	Tees Flex continues to provide a service which saw over 17,000 trips made from October - December 2024. TVCA has extended the contract until August 2025 to ensure continuation of service for current users, some of which would have no alternate public transport provision should the contract end.
12.	When does the TVCA intend to replace commuter trains within the Tees Valley, given that these trains are some of the oldest in the UK, and none of them has level boarding?	TVCA does not have direct responsibility over rail services in our area, including the provision of new rolling stock. Level boarding is the responsibility of Train Operating Companies

		(TOCs) to consider in the specification of their new trains. TVCA is investing significant sums of money in improving accessibility at our stations across Tees Valley with the aim of ensuring that all stations have step free access to all platforms and making further improvements to ensure they comply with current guidance for station standards.
13.	Since the inception of the TVCA nine years ago, no mention has been made of refurbishing the low platforms at Seaton Carew railway station. The state of these platforms makes it impossible for travellers with certain disabilities to board and alight trains here. When will the TVCA fund accessibility improvements to this station?	TVCA is assessing the feasibility and cost of various station improvements across the Tees Valley including at Seaton Carew, with this feasibility work due to complete later in 2025.
14.	When does the TVCA intend to lengthen the platforms at Redcar and Yarm railway stations so that they can accommodate TPE trains?	TVCA is assessing the feasibility and cost of various station improvements across the Tees Valley including at Yarm and Redcar Central, with this feasibility work due to complete later in 2025.
Agenda Item 6: Draft Transport Programme Update		
15.	Now that the station subway works have been completed at Middlesbrough railway station as part of the £35 million refurbishment, will the subways now be waterproofed, to ensure that commuters are no longer inconvenienced by flooded walkways?	The purpose of the TVCA investment was to create the new entrance from Zetland Road connecting into the existing subway and creating the new business premises. Maintenance issues remain the responsibility of Network Rail as the asset owner and Trans-Pennine Express (TPE) and the Station Facility Operator.
16.	The stepped pedestrian entrance from Zetland Road to Middlesbrough railway station was closed five years ago. It is in a state of disrepair, and is fenced off. Why wasn't the repair and reopening of this entrance specified as part of the overall refurbishment of Middlesbrough railway station?	Entrance to the station is now provided by the Zetland Square station entrance to pedestrians and vehicles and the new entrance connecting into the subway from Zetland Road. The steps that form an additional entrance to the station concourse add very little

		to the pedestrian flows and would see little use. Improvements at this location were not included in the initial scope of works due to budget constraints in the delivery of the main investment project.
17.	When does the TVCA intend to replace the missing glazing panels above the platforms at Middlesbrough railway station? Were glazing panel repairs included in the specification for the refurbishment of the station?	The glazing panels are a maintenance issue to be addressed by Network Rail as asset owner and Trans-Pennine Express (TPE) as the Station Facility Operator.
18.	Will the rail electrification feasibility study be enhanced to ensure that the Tees Valley is no longer the largest urban area in the UK without any electrified railways?	<p>TVCA has allocated funding to develop a feasibility study for electrification of the Tees Valley rail network with a particular priority focus on the route between Northallerton and Middlesbrough / Saltburn and also the Darlington to Eaglescliffe link to provide connectivity for freight and for high-speed long-distance services enabling the area to benefit from it's connectivity to the East Coast Main Line (ECML) and the Trans-Pennine Route Upgrade (TRU).</p> <p>This project will provide a feasibility assessment of the anticipated electrification investment required for the Tees Valley Combined Authority area. Furthermore detailed feasibility work will then be required to start develop an investment proposition and working with the rail industry and government an investment strategy to enable this to be delivered</p>
19.	<p>'The existing footbridge at South Bank station, which provides both access to the eastbound platform and a pedestrian and cycling access over the railway, has recently been closed'.</p> <p>Would the TVCA agree that it would be inaccurate to describe a closure which happened five months ago as 'recent'?</p>	<p>The bridge at South Bank Train Station is owned and maintained by Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council (RCBC).</p> <p>TVCA have been working with RCBC, Network Rail and Northern Trains to find a suitable resolution to the problem. The current approach is to therefore look for a temporary solution that can be</p>

		delivered relatively quickly to enable the station to re-open to passengers, and to enable pedestrians to cross the railway line, as soon as possible.
20.	Given that the demolition of the footbridge at South Bank railway station is now the only viable option, would the TVCA give an estimate of the opening date of a new footbridge, and reopening of Platform 2 at the station?	<p>The bridge at South Bank Train Station is owned and maintained by Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council (RCBC).</p> <p>TVCA have been working with RCBC, Network Rail and Northern Trains to find a suitable resolution to the problem. The current approach is to therefore look for a temporary solution that can be delivered relatively quickly to enable the station to re-open to passengers, and to enable pedestrians to cross the railway line, as soon as possible.</p>
21.	Funding has still not been put in place for the Eaglescliffe to Northallerton W12 Gauge Clearance, first promised by the TVCA in 2016. When does the TVCA anticipate that this work will commence?	<p>TVCA has allocated £7.1m of funding from the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) programme as a funding contribution to the delivery of this project. Additional funding is earmarked from DfT's Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline (RNEP) funding pending completion of the feasibility work and preparation of a Business Case to submit to the Department to secure the funding.</p> <p>Network Rail and their contractors are carrying out the feasibility work, which is complex due to the work that is needed for a particular structure along the route. Substantial additional work has been required to consider the options as to how the necessary clearances can be achieved.</p> <p>Current guidance for the CRSTS funding is that this money has to be spent by March 2027, so TVCA are working very closely on this project with Network Rail to ensure that this can be achieved.</p>

22.	What is the projected cost over-run on the Darlington Station Eastern Gateway project?	The second sectional completion on the TVCA-led multi-storey car park station building was completed in November on time and on budget. Work continues to progress well on the TVCA led element with completion scheduled for later in 2025. There are pressures on the project to deliver the full scope of works due to inflationary cost pressures and a significant scope of works that is being mandated by the Local Highways Authority as part of planning conditions for the scheme. Discussions are ongoing to value engineer and descope some items to seek to manage the delivery of the project within the budget envelope.
23.	Would the TVCA provide a provisional estimate of the cost over-run on the Redcar Central Station Improvements project?	The updated costs of delivering the Redcar Central Station improvements will be estimated as part of the feasibility work which is currently underway. TVCA has £3.5m allocated as part of the CRSTS programme which runs until March 2027. There is a funding gap as a result of the project not securing Access for All funding from a bid submitted by Northern. Once an updated cost is known for the improvements this will be reported to Transport Committee and Cabinet as part of the Quarterly Transport Investment Programme report, together with details of the proposed funding strategy to deliver this scheme.
24.	<p>The TVCA states that “there is no agreement as yet Appendix 1, Page 106 for the funding mechanism for the temporary bridge’ at South Bank station. However the Programme Update makes no mention of this difficulty.</p> <p>Could the TVCA explain this discrepancy?</p>	A high-level summary is provided in the main report with more details provided in the Appendix. Until the costs of demolition and the construction of a temporary footbridge have been estimated and discussed between TVCA / Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council, Network Rail and Northern there has been no agreement about funding contributions from any parties.

25.	<p>Why has the start date for the Darlington Northern Link Road been delayed from March 2027 to March 2030?</p>	<p>This is incorrect. The information in the appendix shows an estimated start date of April 2027 and an estimated completion date of March 2030. This has not changed since the last report and is an early stage estimate of the time that would be needed to construct this project.</p>
26.	<p>Could the TVCA confirm that Teesside International Airport Limited intends to charge the TVCA an annual fee of £144,000 for staff car parking places?</p> <p>Will this new charge take effect from 1 April 2025?</p>	<p>In accordance with the Public Participation Protocol this question has been rejected as it does not pertain to an item on the agenda.</p>
27.	<p>In Appendix 1 it says about the Darlington Northern Link Road that it will “provide a new strategic link better connecting the A66 to the A1(M) to the north of Darlington enabling growth along the A66 corridor”. The part about enabling growth along the A66 corridor is a new addition to what’s been presented in the past.</p> <p>What type of growth and would that growth have anything to do with the proposed Skerningham Garden Village?</p>	<p>The A66 provides important east-west connectivity between all of Tees Valley from Darlington to Redcar and incorporates a number of key housing and employment sites along the way, including the Teesworks site, the proposals for the Health and Care Innovation Zone and the Tees Marshalling Yards site, Middlesbrough Development Corporation, Teesside Airport Business Park development, etc. Economic growth is a key mission of the government and so these sites will play an important role in the future of Tees Valley moving forwards.</p> <p>Whilst every effort is being made to ensure sustainable growth and limit the impact on the road network, it is inevitable that there will be some additional road traffic as a result of these developments and this will include vehicles travelling between Little Burdon and A1 junction 59. This growth cannot be accommodated within the existing road infrastructure of north Darlington and therefore the Darlington Northern Link Road is an important part of unlocking the economic growth potential of the area.</p>