

North East Local Enterprise Partnership Board



Thursday 26 January 2017

17.00 – 19.00

Venue: Boardroom, Northern Design Centre,
Abbott's Hill, Gateshead, NE8 3DF

AGENDA

1. **Welcome from the Chair and apologies (5.00pm)**
2. **Minutes of the last Board Meeting held on Thursday 24 November 2016 (5.05pm).** The Board will be asked to agree the Minutes.
3. **Skills Presentation (5.10pm)**
Michelle Rainbow to present to the Board
4. **SEP Refresh – Paper attached (5.35pm)**
(Draft SEP document to follow on Monday)
Richard Baker to present to the Board.
5. **Budget 2017 /20 – Paper attached (5.50pm)**
Paul Woods to update the board.
6. **CONFIDENTIAL ITEM - Funding Updates (6.05pm)**
 - (a) **Enterprise Zone Update** (Paper attached)
 - (b) **The North East Property Fund** (Paper attached)
 - (c) **Fund update** (Paper attached)
Paul Woods and Ray Browning to update the Board.
6a, 6b and 6c are confidential items as they contains commercial information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person or organisation and is not for wider circulation.
7. **Delivery Plan Update – Paper attached (6.20pm)**
Michelle Rainbow to update the Board.

THIS IS NOT A PUBLIC MEETING

8. Devolution Update - Paper attached (6.30pm)

Andrew Hodgson to update the Board

9. Trade opportunities with India (6.40pm)

Ammar Mirza to provide a verbal update.

10. NECA Theme Updates (6.45pm)

- **Economic Assets and Infrastructure** – paper attached
Councillor Malcolm to update the Board
- **Employability and Inclusion** – paper attached
Councillor Davey to update the Board
- **Transport and Digital Connectivity** - paper attached
Councillor Forbes to update the Board

11. Any Other Business

12. Date and Time of next meeting – Thursday 23rd March 2017 from 5-7pm

26 January 2017

ITEM 4: Refreshing the Strategic Economic Plan

1.0 Background

- 1.1 At the meeting in November, the Board discussed a developed draft of the refreshed Strategic Economic Plan. Although welcoming the work which had been done and the proposed structure and approach, a further round of discussion with key stakeholders was requested to confirm some of the details which were not clear in that draft before sign off at the January meeting.
- 1.2 The Board also considered the proposal to vary SEP targets and agreed that further work should be done on the issue, including looking at the release of key employment data expected on January 18 2017
- 1.3 The proposal to develop some 'brands' for our 'areas of opportunity' was welcomed but a specific request was made that these should clearly reference the North East.

2.0 Current version

- 2.1 A further version is enclosed for Board approval. Since the meeting in November:
 - A number of additional meetings have taken place including at two meetings with Local Authority Economic Directors and one with Chief Executives. A range of individual comments have been received including from Board members. Specific conversations have been held with stakeholder groups including the leading members of the Digital Alliance and individual organisations including Universities and Local Authorities.
 - The Task Group and individual Programme Managers have continued to look at economic evidence and the direction of policy and confirmed the details of their programme.
 - Chapter titles have been identified for the opportunity areas which should lend themselves to additional presentation going forward – for example on line and in printed material
 - Work has been done on arrangements to publish the document.

3.0 Performance and targets

- 3.1 Work has been done by the Team in consultation with Economic Directors and working closely with Ekosgen, on the economic data. The latest version includes an update on four of the key targets following the data release on January 18, meaning that the key employment data is up to date to September 2016.
- 3.2 The long term trajectory continues to be encouraging with employment growth over the year on overall employment numbers and continuing falls in unemployment, but there was a small fall in the number of jobs in the region in last quarter figures. The 'Better Jobs' ratio continues to improve.
- 3.3 In discussion with Economic Directors and Ekosgen a consensus emerged that the focus of a target upgrade should be on the issue of 'Better Jobs' which is consistent with the message throughout the document about the need to drive productivity; national policy around Industrial strategy; messages we have received throughout the refresh process about the impact of technology on some kinds of jobs in the region; and the need to be delivering a more competitive region in the context of Brexit.
- 3.4 The proposal is therefore to upgrade the Better Jobs target to 70%. Notwithstanding this, there is still confidence that the employment figures will continue to grow and the revised foreword includes a commentary that we should expect to meet the 100,000 jobs target earlier than 2024 and stretch further. The proposal is to review this later this year when we have more quarters of employment data.

4.0 Next Steps

- 4.1 Assuming that the Board is satisfied that previous comments have been accommodated, work has been done on key next steps as follows:
- Briefings are being organised for mid-February for members of the LEP Executive Team, LEP Board and LEP Advisory Board members which will provide an opportunity to explain the key messages, content, discuss delivery arrangements and arm everyone with the tools to champion the document
 - A similar session is being organised with Local Authority Chief Executives and Economic Directors
 - A breakfast event is being planned for the morning of Friday March 10th to publish the new document. This is planned for the Gateshead Hilton.
 - A project has been initiated working across our programmes with the aim of developing a cross-cutting approach to evaluation of the SEP. This will look at making a clearer link between the outputs of individual programmes and the overall aims of the SEP. It is also consulting on the views of Programme Managers on research and evidence needs which could be addressed.

26th January 2017

**ITEM 5: Revenue Budget 2017/18 to
2019/20 and 2016/17 Budget
Update**

1. Introduction

1.1 This report provides the Board with a revenue budget update for the 2016/17 financial year, a proposed budget for 2017/18 and medium term planning budget for the two year period, 2018/19 and 2019/20.

2. LEP Revenue Budget

2.1.1 The budget provides the resource to support the delivery of the SEP and the Plan's six themes.

2.1.2 Table 1 provides a summary of the 2016/17 revenue budget, showing the forecast year end position against original budget. Table 2 provides the proposed 2017/18 budget, for approval. To aid effective financial planning, the medium budget forecast has been included in this report for consideration. The explanatory notes from section 2.2 to 2.9 provide further information, focusing on the 2017/18 budget proposals. The budget position was reported to the North East Combined Authority as accountable body for the LEP on 17th January 2017 and no issues were raised.

Table 1 – LEP Budget Update 2016/17

	2016/17 Original Budget £'000	2016/17 Forecast Outturn £'000	2016/17 Variance £'000
Expenditure			
Employees	1,550	1,234	(316)
Premises	95	95	0
Communications	247	251	4
Transport LGF Monitoring and Evaluation	400	385	(15)
Gatsby and Growth Hub Operational Costs	106	377	271*
Other Operational Costs	615	570	(45)
Inward Investment Contribution	160	140	(20)
Gross Expenditure	3,173	3,052	(121)

Income			
LEP Core Grant	(250)	(250)	0
Local Authority Match Contributions	(250)	(250)	0
LEP Strategy Grant	0	(250)	(250)
Local Growth Fund (2.5% Top-Slice)	(1,985)	(1,250)	735
NEIF / EZ Business Rate Receipts	(50)	(100)	(50)
Gatsby and Growth Hub Grants	(168)	(606)	(438)*
Other Grants / Enterprise Advisor	(175)	(31)	144
NECA contribution to HoPS	0	(36)	(36)
Interest on Balances	(295)	(305)	(10)
Gross Income	(3,173)	(3,078)	95
Net Budget (Surplus) / Deficit	0	(26)	(26)

Note –

* Growth Hub budget was confirmed after budget approved for 2016/17

Table 2 – LEP Budget Summary 2016/17 to 2019/20

	2016/17 Forecast Outturn £'000	2017/18 Proposed Budget £'000	2018/19 Proposed Budget £'000	2019/20 Proposed Budget £'000
Expenditure				
Employees	1,234	1,429	1,254	1,267
Premises	95	95	95	95
Communications	251	247	247	247
Transport LGF Monitoring and Evaluation	385	200	150	100
Gatsby and Growth Hub Operational Costs	377	249	0	0
Other Operational Costs	570	623	590	590
Inward Investment Contribution	140	140	140	140
Gross Expenditure	3,052	2,983	2,476	2,439

Income				
LEP Core Grant	(250)	(500)	(500)	(500)
Local Authority Match Contributions	(250)	(250)	(250)	(250)
LEP Strategy Grant	(250)	0	0	0
Local Growth Fund (2.5% Top-Slice)	(1,250)	(1,200)	(1,050)	(800)
NEIF / EZ Business Rate Receipts	(100)	(100)	(350)	(700)
Gatsby and Growth Hub Grants	(606)	(504)	0	0
Enterprise Advisor	(31)	(78)	0	0
NECA contribution to HoPS	(36)	(60)	0	0
Interest on Balances	(305)	(140)	(140)	(140)
Gross Income	(3,078)	(2,832)	(2,290)	(2,390)
Net Budget (Surplus) / Deficit	(26)	151	186	49
Brought Fwd Balance	(436)	(462)	(311)	(125)
Carry Fwd Balance	(462)	(311)	(125)	(76)

2.2 Employee Costs

- 2.2.1 The employee expenditure in the current financial year is lower than anticipated due to a number of vacant posts; these include a Skills Manager, two Economist posts (previously held by secondees) and a programme manager post. These vacant posts have now either been recruited to or recruitment is underway, which is reflected in the 2017/18 budget. The 2017/18 budget also includes the previously considered proposal for a life sciences specialist within the team.
- 2.2.2 A 1% annual pay award assumption has been factored in to the employee budget. The pay award for 2017/18 has been agreed nationally at 1%, awards for 2018/19 and beyond will be negotiated by trade unions in due course.
- 2.2.3 The NECA triennial actuarial pension assessment has now been completed. The assessment has reported a healthy pension fund position and recommends a 0% employer superannuation contribution for the 3 year period 2017/18 to 2019/20. When compared to the current contribution rate of 20.5% this provides a significant budget saving of over £200,000.
- 2.2.4 A staff turnover allowance of 3% has been factored into the employee budget for 2018/19 and 2019/20.

2.3 Premises

2.3.1 This budget supports expenditure primarily in relation to the current team base at St James Gate in Newcastle. The LEP entered into a 5 year lease for this accommodation in September 2015.

2.4 Communications

2.4.1 The successful delivery of the LEP communication strategy is a key aspect of ensuring an efficient and effective North East LEP operation. The proposed Communications budget for 2017/18 represents a continuation of the budget agreed by the Board at its meeting in March 2016. Key aspects of the budget include development of the communications activity related to delivering the SEP Refresh and the continuation of essential PR & Media support.

2.5 Transport LGF Monitoring and Evaluation

2.5.1 The 2016/17 expenditure total is forecast to be £385,000, which is below the original £400,000 allocated. Given the majority of LGF transport schemes will have progressed through appraisal during this financial year, activity is forecast to reduce from 2017/18 onwards, this is reflected in the reduced budget allocation. Costs are currently being managed by Newcastle City Council, with an evidenced recharge to follow at each financial year-end.

2.6 Gatsby and Growth Hub Operational Costs

2.6.1 Non-salary costs in delivery of the Gatsby Foundation and Growth Hub initiatives are forecast to be £249,000 in 2017/18. Employee related expenditure is included within the employee's budget heading.

2.7 Other Operating Costs

2.7.1 This budget area totals £623,000 for 2017/18. An on-going corporate delivery budget of £300,000 is required for general LEP running costs for example IT equipment, travel expenses and support services. In addition the North East LEP led SEP strands including Innovation, Business Support/Access to Finance and Skills have an operational allocation to ensure delivery and that the necessary progress can be obtained. Allocations for LGF finance and Legal support provided by NECA, Investment fund (NEIF) support and Enterprise Advisor delivery are also included.

The total 2017/18 budget is broken down over the noted areas as follows;

Delivery Area	2017/2018 Budget (£'000)
Corporate / General	300
Innovation	110
Strategic Policy & Economic Analysis	80
Business Support/Access to Finance	20
Skills	20
LGF Legal and Finance Support	50
NEIF and Enterprise Advisor Delivery	43
Operating Costs TOTAL	623

2.8 Inward Investment Contribution

2.8.1 As previously agreed by the North East LEP Board, funding to support Regional Inward Investment activity was to be made available over a 3 year period. The agreed allocation of £140,000 is included in the budget for 2017/18 and indicatively in future years.

2.9 Income

2.9.1 LEP Core Funding & Strategy Grant Funding – Confirmation of £500,000 Core Grant funding for 2017/18 was received from BEIS in December 2016. This funding award has historically been split over two separate £250,000 grant allocations (Core Grant and Strategy Grant), this has now been merged as one grant moving forward. The Local Authority Match Contribution requirement of £250,000 was agreed at the North East Leadership Board meeting held on 17th January 2017, this will be provided in equal 1/7th shares by the 7 constituent Local Authorities.

2.9.2 Local Growth Fund (LGF) – As previously agreed by the Board, a 2.5% top-slice of the Local Growth Fund allocation is available to support the delivery of the programme, primarily LEP team staffing costs. The drawdown of the balance of the top-slice budget is profiled to be made as follows;

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
LGF Programme Management	1,250	1,200	1,050	800

2.9.3 Enterprise Zone Business Rate Receipts – In November 2014, the Board agreed that business rates growth income surplus of up to £0.5m per annum could be utilised to support the revenue budget if required. At this stage the only costs being drawn down cover the direct LEP costs relating to the implementation of both phases of enterprise zones, which is a cost rather than a use of the surplus. The forecast requirement in the 2016/17 is £50,000 and a further £50,000 in 2017/18.

2.9.4 North East Investment Fund – A revenue contribution of £50,000 per annum from the NEIF is included within the current and future year budgets. This reflects the staff and external support time required to manage the fund.

2.9.5 Gatsby and Growth Hub Grants – The multi-year Gatsby Foundation funded programme will continue into 2017/18, the actual balance carried forward for utilisation in 2017/18 is still to be determined, but currently forecast to be £94,000.

The continuation of the Growth Hub grant funding has been confirmed for 2017/18. The grant level remains at £410,000.

2.9.6 Enterprise Advisor Grant - This project commenced in 2015 aiming to create a network of enterprise advisors across the North East to facilitate

closer links between schools and the business and enterprise community. Funding for two Enterprise Advisors was awarded to cover expenditure in 2015 and 2016 with match provided through North East LEP resource. Recently a third advisor has been approved with no match requirement. The extension of the full programme has been verbally notified for the academic year; Sept 2017 to August 2018, the 2017/18 budget has been set on this basis.

- 2.9.7 NECA Contribution to HoPS – The current LEP Chief Operating Officer is being seconded to also undertake the NECA Head of Paid Service role. NECA will provide a contribution towards salary costs. A contribution of £36,000 will be made in 2016/17 and £60,000 in 2017/18.
- 2.9.8 Local Growth Fund Interest – As the annual LGF grant allocation is paid by government in full at the beginning of the financial year, the cash balances held are able to attract sizable interest sums. An estimate for each financial year is included within the budget; the level of interest generated naturally reduces in line with the reducing LGF grant receipts in future years.

3. Recommendation

- 3.1 The Board is requested to:
- i. Note the update on the 2016/17 budget provided within this report;
 - ii. Approve the 2017/18 budget; and
 - iii. Approve the 2018/19 and 2019/20 medium term budget planning.

26 January 2017

ITEM 8: Devolution Update

1.0 Background

1.1 North East business leaders met the seven North East Local Authority Leaders on 5th January, to discuss devolution in the North East. There was senior representation from the North East England Chamber of Commerce, the CBI, the FSB and EEF, as well as the Chair and Vice Chair of the North East LEP.

The meeting was honest, open and conducted in a positive manner by everyone and allowed the business leaders to form a coherent and shared view on North East devolution.

2.0 North East Devolution - Business leaders' position statement

2.1 Following the meeting, these business leaders agreed the following set of key principles on which to seek Government's support and move the agenda forward:

1. Business leaders in the North East reiterate support for devolution throughout the North East and welcome the proposed pace to meet a timeline to May 2018.
2. Devolved powers and funding should be to as many willing local authority partners, who wish to commit and are intent on delivering to this timescale.
3. The business community must be engaged and acknowledged as a senior partner in the process and in dialogue, both within the North East and with Government.
4. There should be proactive encouragement and an 'open door' to local authorities outside the three North of Tyne local authorities, from both Government and the North of Tyne authorities, providing the process is not frustrated.
5. The Devolution Deal must not be any less than the previous North East deal, and should have more business focussed outcomes.
6. Government must commit to meet the legislative timescale required for a May 2018 Mayoral election.
7. The North East LEP-led Strategic Economic Plan remains the principal

North East policy document to inform economic growth, and the strategic role of the LEP covering the seven local authorities continues.

2.2 A letter has been sent to the Secretary of State seeking support for these principles and requesting an early meeting with him, the North East LEP and the business representative organisations, who wish to continue to be influential partners in any North East devolution discussions.

3.0 Next Steps

3.1 The LEP Chair with the business representative organisations will seek to:

- Confirm a meeting with the Secretary of State as soon as possible to discuss devolution to the North East and next steps.
- Be part of the negotiating team, where appropriate, to influence the agenda on behalf of the business community.

4.0 Recommendation

4.1 The Board is asked to note the content of this report.

Date: 17 January 2017

Subject: Economic Development and Regeneration Theme Update

Report of: Economic Development and Regeneration Thematic Lead

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on activity and progress under the Economic Development and Regeneration theme of the Combined Authority.

Recommendations

The Leadership Board is recommended to receive this report for information.

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1 Background Information

- 1.1 This report provides an update on activity and progress under the Economic Development and Regeneration theme of the Combined Authority.
- 1.2 The Leadership Board is recommended to receive the update for information.

2.0 Inward Investment

2.1 Inward Investment 2016/17 (Quarters 1 and 2) Successes

In Quarters 1 and 2 (April-September, in total there were 38 inward investments into the NECA area which will lead to the creation of 3,933 jobs. These were made up of:

a) Foreign Direct Investment

There were 21 investments leading to the creation of 2027 new jobs. Investors included:

- Teleperformance (Call centre outsourcer)
- Accenture (Software ICT)
- Janus international (Manufacturing)
- Unipress (Automotive)
- Sitel (Outsourcing)
- Convergys (Outsourcing)

b) Investments by UK-owned Companies from Outside of the Region

There were 17 investments leading to the creation of 1,906 jobs. Companies announcing investments included:

- ResQ (Contact Centre)
- Estover Energy (Energy)
- Fermeda (Life Sciences)
- Amicus ITS (IT Support)
- Lhasa (digital)

Successes in Quarter 3 (October–December) are currently being compiled. The excellent news that Nissan is to build the new model Qashqai and X-Trail in Sunderland has the potential to create thousands of new jobs in the North East.

2.2 Enquiries

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Enquiry levels have been encouraging towards the end of the year with enquiries coming through to the INEE team both through the new website and by an increasing number of DIT leads. This comes on the back of a quiet period spanning a number of months, due in part to the effect of Brexit.

Current enquiries on the INEE pipeline include both UK and foreign owned enquiries in a number of sectors from Life sciences, software, contact centres, automotive and other advanced manufacturing.

2.3 Invest North East England Website/proactive work

One way in which the INEE team is planning to increase the size and quality of its investment enquiry pipeline is by becoming a proactive service, actively generating new investment enquiries. A key element of this new approach is the launch of the new INEE website, which launched at the end of October 2016. To complement the website launch, an associated social media campaign is taking place, aimed at generating enquiries from key sectors.

To back up the website, a number of promotional brochures are being produced to provide hard copies (also available electronically) for investors/events etc.

The INEE team is currently procuring a lead generation contractor. It is planned for the contract to commence in February 2017. The contractor will provide in-market representation for North East England in London and the South East. The focus of the contract is twofold:

- Actively generate new leads for the NE, with a particular focus on software/digital, and financial, professional and business services.
- Work with key London-based intermediaries (e.g. property agents, solicitors, accountants etc.) to ensure they understand the NE offer to companies so they will consider the area for future client requirements.

2.4 MIPIIM UK

INEE had a coordinated stand presence at the UK's largest property investment event, MIPIIM UK, which was held in London on 19-21 October. Six private sector partner sponsors attended from the North East along with representatives from NECA's constituent local authorities. As part of the event, there was a business showcase event held with a private/public sector panel discussing key recent property deals and new opportunities available to investors in North East England.

The evaluation report compiled from feedback from the attendees is attached for information.

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2.5 Business Grants

Since the abolition of One North East in 2012, agencies in the North East seeking to offer grants to secure mobile investment have had four options open to them, all supported by Regional Growth Fund. This included the Let's Grow Fund, the Northumberland Business Grant Fund, national RGF bidding rounds, and Exceptional Regional Growth Fund (ERGF). In the 5 year period since mid-2011, these sources of RGF combined provided grant funding to business investment projects in the NECA area totalling £152m, an average of £30m pa. This includes grants for inward investment and strategic re-investment projects, as well as for indigenous SMEs. However, these important sources of funding are no longer available.

There will be no further national RGF funding following closure of the programme in Autumn 2015. The Let's Grow fund has now spent or committed its full allocation, while the Northumberland Business Grant Fund closed in 2015. Finally, there is no longer a ring-fenced budget for ERGF, and this tool is now reserved for highly exceptional projects creating a minimum of 1,000 jobs, so the likelihood of ERGF being used to support an investment in the NECA area is low.

A business case was prepared in the Summer of 2016 with the aim of developing a new grant fund for inward investment projects based on allocations of LGF3 and Devolution deal funding. This is no longer an option.

The lack of any regional grant scheme is becoming a growing concern, particularly as many of the potential inward investors the INEE team are talking to state financial incentives as a key requirement. The North East in this respect does not compare favourably to many other areas including Scotland, Wales and Tees Valley all of which have grant schemes in place.

The INEE team is working with local authorities, the NELEP and others to try to find a solution to this and the Leadership Board will be provided with updates in due course.

3.0 Regional Investment Plan / Project Pipeline

The Economic Development and Regeneration theme has the lead responsibility for coordinating efforts to enhance the region's important economic assets and to develop new ones that will promote growth.

A pipeline of both employment sites and housing sites has been developed to underpin this approach. This pipeline informed the North East Local Enterprise Partnerships (NELEP) submission to round 3 of the Local Growth

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Fund.

The Chancellor's Autumn Statement announced that Local Enterprise Partnerships in the North of England would be allocated £556 million. A breakdown of this allocation across the area has not yet been provided by Government.

4 Potential Impact on Objectives

4.1 The report sets out issues that will support the Authority in meeting its objectives.

5 Finance and Other Resources

5.1 There are no additional financial implications arising directly from this report.

6 Legal

6.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

7 Other Considerations

7.1 Consultation/Community Engagement

There are no issues arising from this report for consultation.

7.2 Human Rights

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

7.3 Equalities and Diversity

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

7.4 Risk Management

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

7.5 Crime and Disorder

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

7.6 Environment and Sustainability

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

8 Background Documents

8.1 North East Strategic Economic Plan – More and Better Jobs

9 Links to plans in the Policy Framework

9.1 This report links to the Strategic Economic Plan and other plans in the Policy Framework.

10 Contact Officers

10.1 John Scott, Corporate Lead – Business, Employment and Skills.
Email: john.scott@southtyneside.gov.uk Tel: (0191) 424 6250

11 Sign off

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

Please use ✓

**North East Combined Authority
Leadership Board**

Date: 17 January 2017
Subject: EMPLOYABILITY AND INCLUSION UPDATE
Report of: Thematic Lead for Employability and Inclusion

Executive Summary

This report provides an update as to the latest progress being made in delivering the Employability and Inclusion; and Skills themes of the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) for the North East.

Recommendations

The Leadership Board is recommended to note the contents of the report.

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1. National Policy Update

Northern Powerhouse Strategy

- 1.1 As part of its commitment to improve the productivity of the North of England, the Government published a Northern Powerhouse Strategy alongside the Autumn Statement. It recognises that a highly skilled and educated workforce is critical to economic growth and productivity - and as such the existing regional disparities in the education and skills system need to be addressed.
- 1.2 To this end from a skills perspective, the Northern Powerhouse Strategy focuses on the following key areas:

Schools

The Government launched the Northern Powerhouse Schools Strategy at the Budget 2016 and have subsequently published Sir Nick Weller's independent report (see below) which identifies the need to increase the supply of high quality teachers and senior leaders in the North, the limited capacity of multi-academy trusts (MATs), and the need for more schools to offer a stretching curriculum, as key challenges in the North.

The Government commits to consider the specific recommendations in the report further, but particularly welcome Sir Nick's proposals on attracting and retaining high quality teachers. To this end, the Government confirms that it will:

- design, fund and test a range of approaches (such as effective professional development) to attracting and retaining high-quality teachers in the North;
- invest in developing strong multi-academy trusts and sponsors to improve schools and grow capacity in the North; and
- work with the northern city regions and other areas in the North of England facing the greatest challenges, to explore options for improving the delivery of early years outcomes.

Careers

The Government recognises that the provision of careers education, advice and guidance is crucial to supporting young people to make the right choices about their futures. To this end, it will work with the North to ensure that local priorities are fed into the provision of careers advice, so that it is employer-led, integrated and meets local needs. This will involve joint working on the design of careers and enterprise provision for all ages, including collaboration on the work of the Careers and Enterprise Company and the National Careers

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Service. Where the government is piloting new approaches to careers advice and guidance, we will ensure areas in the North have the opportunity to be part of any trials taking place.

Apprenticeships

The introduction of the Apprenticeships Levy in April 2017 will fund a step change in apprenticeship numbers and quality in England. The Department for Education will work with the northern city regions, to support them to work with employers and providers to develop an ambitious, locally owned plan for promoting uptake of high quality apprenticeships.

Talent retention

Whilst the Government acknowledges that the North has a huge amount to offer people who live and work in the region, it also accepts that too often, young people feel they need to move to other parts of the country to pursue their careers. In order to enable northern businesses to access the skills they require, there is a need to do more to attract graduates and other highly skilled workers. The government is interested in supporting the region to trial new approaches to tackling this challenge. This means focusing on interventions which increase information about highly skilled jobs that are available. Sheffield's RISE scheme offers a promising model, involving placing recent graduates from Sheffield universities into local SMEs. The government will work with the northern city regions, and other local stakeholders, to develop innovative proposals for attracting skilled workers.

Northern Powerhouse Schools Strategy - independent review

- 1.3 In March 2016, the Chancellor and the Secretary of State for Education asked Sir Nick Weller to undertake an independent review of northern education and produce a report to inform the delivery of a Northern Powerhouse Schools Strategy.
- 1.4 He was asked to explore why there is a particular concentration of underperformance in the North and to make recommendations to raise educational attainment. This important review has been undertaken over a relatively short period of time with the aim being to gather as much evidence and insight as possible from a range of sources.
- 1.5 The independent report focuses on what we can do in the North to make teacher recruitment easier, develop greater leadership capacity, and close the very wide gap in the achievement of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged children. Above all, as school leaders in the North, more needs to be done to

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learn from and replicate success stories locally as well as from elsewhere in the country.

- 1.6 The Findings and Recommendations from the independent report are reproduced at Appendix 1, and it anticipated that the Government will respond to these in Spring 2017.

Work, health and disability green paper: improving lives

- 1.7 Employment rates amongst disabled people reveal one of the most significant inequalities in the UK today: less than half (48%) of disabled people are in employment compared to 80% of the non-disabled population. Making progress on the government's manifesto ambition to halve the disability employment gap is central to its social reform agenda by building a country and economy that works for everyone, whether or not they have a long-term health condition or disability.
- 1.8 To this end, this Green Paper sets out the nature of the problem and why change is needed by employers, the welfare system, health and care providers, and all of us. It considers the relationship between health, work and disability before setting out some proposed solutions and asking for views on whether the Government is proposing the right things to ensure that we are allowing everyone the opportunity to fulfil their potential.
- 1.9 The evidence that appropriate work can bring health and wellbeing benefits is widely recognised. Employment can help our physical and mental health and promote recovery. But the importance of employment for health is not fully reflected in commissioning decisions and clinical practice within health services, and opportunities to support people in their employment aspirations are regularly lost. Once people are on benefits, their chances of returning to work steadily worsen. There are systemic issues with the original design of Employment and Support Allowance with 1.5 million people now in the Support Group who are treated in a one-size-fits-all way and get little by way of practical support from Jobcentres to help them into work. This consultation seeks to address these issues, exploring new ways to help people, but does not seek any further welfare savings beyond those already legislated for.
- 1.10 These challenges are complex and pressing. The Government's vision is to create a society in which everyone has a chance to fulfil their potential, where all that matters is the talent someone has and how hard they are prepared to work. On this basis, the Government wants to:
- ensure that disabled people and people with long-term health conditions have equal access to labour market opportunities and are given the support they need to prevent them from falling out of work and to progress in workplaces which embed effective health and wellbeing practices;

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- help employers take action to create a workforce that reflects society as a whole and where employers are equipped to take a long-term view on the skills and capability of their workforce, managing an ageing workforce and increased chronic conditions to keep people in work, rather than reacting only when they lose employees;
 - ensure people are able to access the right employment and health services, at the right time and in a way which is personalised to their circumstances and integrated around their needs;
 - more effectively integrate the health and social care and welfare systems to help disabled people and people with long-term health conditions move into and remain in sustainable employment;
 - put mental and physical health on an equal footing, to ensure people get the right care and prevent mental illness in the first place;
 - invest in innovation to gain a better understanding of what works, for whom, why and at what cost so we can scale promising approaches quickly; and
 - change cultures and mind-sets across all of society: employers, health services, the welfare system and among individuals themselves, so that we focus on the strengths of disabled people and what they can do.
- 1.11 The Government is now seeking views as to what further action needs to be sustained across all sectors - and as such the Green Paper asks:
- how big a role can we expect employers to play in ensuring access to opportunities for disabled people, and how can the 'business case' for inclusive practices be strengthened?
 - how can work coaches play a more active role for disabled people and people with health conditions?
 - how can we improve a welfare system that leaves 1.5 million people – over 60% of people claiming Employment and Support Allowance – with the impression they cannot work and without any regular access to employment support, even when many others with the same conditions are flourishing in the labour market?
 - how can we promote mental and physical health and ensure that people have timely access to the health and employment support that they need rather than struggling to access services (particularly musculoskeletal and mental health services)?
 - how can we develop better occupational health support right across the health and work journey?
 - what will it take to reinforce work as a health outcome in commissioning decisions and clinical practice?

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- how can we best encourage, harness and spread innovation to ensure that commissioners know what works best in enabling disabled people and people with health conditions to work?
 - perhaps most crucially, how can we build a culture of high hopes and expectations for what disabled people and people with long-term health conditions can achieve, and mobilise support across society?
- 1.12 Based on our experience of the current system of employment support, our experience of delivering the Mental Health Trailblazer, and the approach advocated in the report of the North East Health and Social Care Integration Commission, a response to the consultation is being prepared.

2. Policy development in the North East

Travel to Learn

- 2.1 Travel to learn has emerged as a major consideration within the currently ongoing Area Based Review (ABR) of Post 16 training and education in the North East, with the Combined Authority together with its constituent local authorities and in collaboration with the North East LEP, preparing an issues paper to inform the process.
- 2.2 Within this context, it should be noted that:
- The North East geography covers 3,200 square miles and has around 2 million inhabitants and approximately 4.1m visitors each year.
 - Approximately 200,000 people commute on a regular basis into the urban centres.
 - There are three public transport organisations in the North East - Nexus, who act as the Passenger Transport Executive (PTE) for Tyne and Wear; Durham County Council; and Northumberland County Council.
 - The network of commercial bus services is provided by three primary bus operators - Arriva, Go NorthEast and Stagecoach. In addition, Nexus operates the Tyne and Wear Metro.
- 2.3 Under the Education Act 1996, all local authorities have a duty to ensure that learners of sixth form age are able to access the education and training of their choice and ensure that, if support for access is required, this will be assessed and provided where necessary. The legislation recognises that a local response to transport arrangements is important in enabling young people's participation in education and training as it allows local circumstances to be taken into account.

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- 2.4 In addition, the 16-18 transport duty relates to young people of sixth form age with learning difficulties and/or disabilities aged up to 19 (and beyond the age of 19 if they are continuing on a particular course started before the age of 19). Local authorities also have a duty under the Education and Skills Act 2008 to encourage, enable and assist the participation of young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities up to the age of 25 in education and training.
- 2.5 In meeting this duty, the seven local authorities in the North East face two primary challenges of accessibility and cost
- 2.6 With regard to access, these challenges are different depending on whether the student lives in the urban core (central part of Tyne and Wear) or in the urban fringe/rural areas (most of Durham and Northumberland; west Gateshead; and north-west part of North Tyneside). There are also specific issues for students with more complex needs. These are detailed in the table below.

Access considerations	
Urban core	Urban fringe/rural
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Frequent Metro and bus services and widespread cycling routes support ready access to learning within the core part of Tyne and Wear. This provision increasingly has features to make these services accessible to all. For example, on-screen and audio 'next stop' announcements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accessibility is such that students face long journey times (many in excess of an hour) and indirect routes which involve a number of service changes. This is compounded by the fact that many of the bus routes are radial via Newcastle, Sunderland and Durham city centres.• The support to students aged between 16 and 19 is in Northumberland and Durham particularly is targeted at those who are unable to travel independently or who don't have access to viable public transport options due to the remoteness of where they live.• Some of the Colleges fill particular gaps in provision through bespoke travel services they commission direct from the commercial bus operators.
More complex needs	

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- The specific needs of SEN students is rising and becoming more complex with the need for more responsive transport provision to address those needs. Many parent are also reluctant to consider the possibility of independent travel. This is increasing the need for more escorts.
- Meeting the specific travel needs of students who require wheelchair access is a particular challenge, which is more acute in rural areas

2.7 With regard to cost, the challenges vary depending on whether the student lives in the Tyne and Wear or in Durham and Northumberland. There are also specific issues relating to cross-boundary travel. These are detailed in the table below.

Cost considerations	
Tyne and Wear	Durham/Northumberland
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under 16s can travel on all forms of public transport for a standard day fare using an under 16 pop card. Those students who are over 16 can buy concessionary tickets. However, these are specific to each company and journeys which involve a change of bus/Metro can mean higher costs. The range and complexity of these concessionary travel options can be confusing and act as a barrier to learners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Durham, the offer of free travel (albeit discretionary subject to parental benefit status and employer supported costs) to young students is positive in facilitating learner choice. • In Northumberland, for students able to access public bus, the cost is circa £1000 per annum. Travel passes are not an option for many as routes aren't available or do not provide appropriate solutions.
Cross-boundary travel	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is potentially added cost and complexity for students accessing education and training provision outside of the local authority area (Durham, Northumberland or Tyne and Wear) they live in. The bespoke transport services funded by Colleges is often responding to this challenge, particularly in accessing those communities that are inherently reluctant to travel outside the familiar local area to access education and training. 	

2.8 In addition to this ABR-led analysis, Nexus presented, on 3 November 2016, a paper to the Transport North East Committee (TNEC) highlighting the complexity and cost of public transport fares for young people. The relevant extract from this report is reproduced at Appendix 1.

2.9 In considering this material, TNEC agreed to:

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- establish a task and finish group to gain a better understanding of the current youth offer for those aged under 19 years old in more detail, and to explore what options might be available to improve the situation; and
- commission an independent report to outline the opportunities that an improved ticketing offer for young people could have on the North East's economy, skills base and society.

2.10 Skills policy lead officers are now meeting with officers from the public transport organisations to ensure that both these processes are integrated and inform each other - and that the emerging recommendations from the ABR process are "travel proofed". Further updates will be presented to the Leadership Board as this work progresses.

Labour Market Intelligence (LMI)

2.11 The Labour Market Intelligence (LMI) Portal for the North East continues to be delivered and developed. Discussions about future developments are taking place with the North East LEP and a number of digital partners who are designing some innovative tools to present data and information to various audiences.

2.12 The work to produce a number of Careers Videos to promote our key priority sectors has been completed. An initial soft launch took place at the LMI Conference in November (see below) with the formal launch planned for January 2017. The videos, which involve local employers and younger employees (apprentices) who can talk about what it is like to work in a particular industry, are entitled 'What you can't do in the North East', 'Routes to Success' and 'Your Chance of Success. They will be supplemented by information packs and lesson plans for teachers. The videos will also be publically available so that they can be embedded into other useful websites to ensure a wide audience has access.

2.13 An LMI Conference, arranged by CfBT (the North East provider for the National Careers Service), took place in Durham on Thursday 17 November 2016 with over 60 attendees. The event's objectives were to:

- Gain an understanding of the North East labour market
- Gain an insight into some of the key sectors in the North East and the skills demands for these
- Understand the challenges and opportunities facing the North East labour market
- Understand the routes to accessing and using LMI to better understand the Labour Market

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The event included a number of keynote speakers in the morning followed by a choice of workshops in the afternoon, covering various sources of LMI. Discussions are now underway to consider similar events in 2017.

- 2.14 Work is ongoing to support various initiatives with their LMI needs including the Good Career Guidance Benchmarks, development of Devolution proposals and support to ensure that ESF proposals meet our strategic priorities.

3. Programme and Project Update

DWP European Social Fund Opt-In for the North East

- 3.1 The DWP 'Opt-In' programme is utilising £6m European Social Fund (ESF) to test a local approach to help long term unemployed residents into work, focusing on those with significant barriers to work, including mental and/or physical health conditions. Integration of employment support with both physical and mental health treatments will be the key delivery driver.
- 3.2 Working Links was awarded the contract and will begin delivery on 9 January 2017. The contract target is to support 2,500 residents between January 2017 and December 2019.
- 3.3 NECA and NELEP officers met DWP in November to determine local input into performance management arrangements and facilitating integration with other services at each LA level. This will include coordination with the wider European Social Investment Fund programme. Monthly local engagement meetings will be established to discuss contract performance and take actions to support the contract and mitigate under-performance as needed. Evaluation will be carried out as part of ESF monitoring.
- 3.4 An inception meeting with DWP and Working Links in late November included a presentation outlining the delivery model and supply chain arrangements in each LA area. Working Links will deliver a mix of direct provision, mainly in the north of Tyne area, and supply chain arrangements in the south of Tyne and County Durham areas. Stress was placed on how the programme must co-ordinate with other employment services and integrate with local services, particularly health provision. Each local authority area will work with the provider to facilitate this approach and ensure local fit. A request was made to have performance data available at local authority level as a minimum, and preferably at ward level, to ensure performance is effective in each LA and in areas of greatest need (including monitoring of performance in rural areas). DWP will confirm the level of data sharing available.

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NE Mental Health Trailblazer

- 3.5 The North East Mental Health Trailblazer is piloting integration of employment support with Increasing Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) services in each NECA LA area. Employment coaches are being placed with the IAPT teams in each area to work in coordination with clinical staff. The pilot target is to support 1,500 job seekers with mental health conditions to find work across the NECA area by October 2018.
- 3.6 The first staff were placed in IAPT services from late November in County Durham, Gateshead and South Tyneside. The other areas will follow in January with staff projected to be in place in each area by the end of January. Referral processes have been established with Jobcentres in each area.
- 3.7 Launch publicity for early 2017 is being agreed with DCLG as part of a wider trailblazer communication including the other trial areas (West London and Blackpool).
- 3.8 A report to the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) forum requesting CCG support was delivered on 1 December. Two sponsors were identified to cover both the County Durham and the Northumberland, Tyne and Wear areas with a role to facilitate work with the IAPT services they contract and support developments for more sustainable implementation following the trial. A multi-agency strategic level steering group including CCGS, DWP and local authorities will meet quarterly from early 2017.
- 3.9 Trailblazer purpose and design is consistent with the findings of the NECA North East Commission for Health and Social Care Integration and performance will be reported to governance arrangements between LAs and the NHS to implement the recommendations. Performance will also be reported to Health and Wellbeing Boards in each area.
- 3.10 Both the trailblazer and DWP Opt-In models are pertinent to the Improving Lives Government Green Paper consultation on the role of employers and work coaches, service innovation, occupational health support and changing the culture around work and health.

Generation NE

- 3.11 Generation NE has been operational since July 2014 and the programme has supported in excess of 3000 young people, of which 1274 have moved into employment to date and over 250 have gained work experience; 707 of those gaining employment have now sustained employment for 6 months or more.

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- 3.12 The programme is continuing to deliver very good value for money compared to original expectations and this has been highlighted in a 'mid-term review' of the programme; a full report of the review findings was presented at to Leadership Board on 20 September 2016.
- 3.13 Delivery of Generation NE has now extended to cover the full NECA geography and the service is being received positively by Jobcentre Plus in Sunderland and South Tyneside with over 150 young people referred to date.
- 3.14 Generation NE is demonstrating the impact that can be achieved through a programme that is locally led, both strategically and operationally and that can impartially 'make sense' of a complex and fragmented system. In order to continue to contribute to tackling our local economic challenges it is suggested that Generation NE should be extended and widen its focus, delivering support for those young people that do not claim benefit and are generally ineligible for much of the mainstream government support. In principle agreement has been given by DCLG and DWP to this proposal.
- 3.15 Funding that may support this extension is available under Investment Priority 1.2 of the European Social Fund. The lifetime of the programme may be extended for up to 3 years and the impact of the programme broadened to support a wider cohort of young people outlined above should additional resources be secured. Support will continue to be delivered to the existing eligibility group of young people who claim Jobseekers Allowance and Universal Credit. Opportunities to apply for this funding are expected in early 2017.

Good Career Guidance Benchmarks

- 3.16 From June 2015 and in partnership with The Gatsby Foundation, North East LEP has been supporting the application of the Good Career Guidance benchmarks. This provides the opportunity to test the benchmarks in action; lead the development of practice which will have local impact and national profile; and improve the quality of provision and opportunity for young people.
- 3.17 The benchmarks have gained significant national traction and the skills team at the North East LEP are receiving requests every week from organisations who are interested in the North East model. The Enterprise Academies Trust, Ark Academies Trust and Greenwood Academies Trust have all made enquiries. This appetite to use the career benchmarks is also reflected by the growing number of schools in the North East who wish to use the North East LEP Career benchmark audit tool.

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- 3.18 Schools and colleges involved in the pilot continue to make progress. Interim reviews of year 2 progress will take place with each individual institution between January and February 2017.
- 3.19 The North East hosted a very successful practice sharing event with The Edge Foundation on 22 November. The North East LEP and our 16 pilot schools and colleges hosted schools from London, Crewe, Walsall, Lincoln and Nottingham. Feedback was extremely positive and the LEP team have been approached to run several more.
- 3.20 From October to December the North East LEP team have shared learning at a series of high profile events, both within the region and nationally. This included showcasing impact at the North East Chamber of Commerce 'linking business to education' event at King Edward VI School in Morpeth, delivering the keynote speech at the National Careers Education Summit 2016 with Sir John Holman, addressing the National Careers Leaders and Advisers Conference in York with David Andrews, delivering a joint conference with the National Careers Service in the North East on Labour Market Information, delivering the keynote address at the Talentino 'Same but Different' conference in Reading, exploring how young people with special educational needs and disabilities can be supported to make progress, speaking at the independent Schools Northern Network meeting and finally being part of a panel of experts at the public policy exchange forum in London on the theme of 'helping young people to fulfil their ambitions: ensuring high quality careers guidance in schools and colleges'.
- 3.21 Additionally, the North East LEP hosted a very successful visit by the Department of Education on 29 November, where we were able to showcase the impact of the benchmarks in two schools (Excelsior Academy in Newcastle and King Edward VI in Morpeth). Allison Britton (Head of Careers at DfE) also met with Enterprise Coordinators and spoke with business leaders who have been working with schools as enterprise advisers. We have received very positive feedback from the DfE and have sent further supporting information.

Enterprise Advisors

- 3.22 This key Government-backed initiative was initiated in September 2015. The Careers & Enterprise Company (CEC) is an employer-led organisation that has been set up to inspire and prepare young people for the fast-changing world of work. Its role is to take an umbrella view of the landscape of careers and enterprise, supporting programmes that work, filling gaps in provision and ensuring coverage across the country.

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- 3.23 The North East LEP has taken the opportunity to shape and adapt the original CEC model to enhance the opportunities for school and business engagement. A dedicated coordinator was recruited in November 2015 and another in May 2016.
- 3.24 To date 69 Enterprise Advisers have signed up and they are a mixture of predominantly tier 1 (55) and some tier 2 (14) providers. 36 schools and colleges have returned their self-assessment and supporting Enterprise Adviser action plan. Of the 36 schools, 28 have been matched with an EA, and an additional 4 pending matches for early in 2017 (which means an EA has been identified and first meeting to be arranged). 16 other schools and colleges who have met with an Enterprise Coordinator are in the process of completing the self-assessment document and are being followed up.
- 3.25 The Career and Enterprise Company has allocated further funding for activity support including £1 million available for programmes in Opportunity areas (Blackpool; Derby; Norwich; Oldham; Scarborough and West Somerset). Additionally and in partnership with the Education Endowment Foundation and Bank of America the CEC has indicated that an additional £4 million would be available in England for programmes which include the following themes: Enterprise education; transition skills development; volunteering and work experience. The North East LEP is continuing to work alongside the CEC to try to ensure that North East schools and organisations are beneficiaries of these funds. Latest cold spot analysis reveals that the North East LEP region is 'in need' in 3/7 indicators.

Apprenticeships

- 3.26 The North East has a strong and active part to play in meeting the Government's target of three million apprentices by 2020. However, there is also a recognition that there is still much to be done to deliver the ambitious targets that the region has set within the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP).
- 3.27 The Apprenticeship Growth Partnership (AGP) continues to meet on a quarterly basis with a remit to support businesses, to encourage the development of apprenticeship vacancies, to promote higher level apprenticeships and to engage sector groups to develop standards and liaise and promote the development of high quality apprenticeships.
- 3.28 The latest and final rules and guidance to the apprenticeship reforms were published in October including further information for employers about the way apprenticeship funding is changing and final details about the apprenticeship levy being introduced from 2017.

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- 3.29 The SFA have released a comprehensive 'apprenticeship' toolkit consisting of power point presentations on various apprenticeship topics including the employer levy, DAS and the new standards and also various up to date material and resources that can be used within a training events for employers.
- 3.30 A series of events are being planned, one within each local authority area to encourage and support businesses, especially SMEs to engage and consider apprenticeships as well as to provide clarity on funding levels and how to make use of the online resources SFA have made available. The events may stand-alone or may be part of other activities being undertaken by sub-regions.
- 3.31 Nationally the SFA are focussing, the Get In, Go Far Media Campaign towards SME businesses to encourage the development of apprenticeship opportunities. All marketing and social media material have been shared with NECA and local authorities.

Skills – capital investment

- 3.32 Four from five original LGF Skills Projects are now physically completed and the remaining project at Northumberland College commenced on site in early December 2016.
- 3.33 Following the project call in March 2016, two new skills focussed projects have been approved, both are social-enterprise led – Foundation of Light in Sunderland and Eagles Foundation in Newcastle. Both are using sport to connect and engage young people, raising their aspirations and introducing them to college courses and other providers.
- 3.34 Proposals for the Growth Fund Round 3 and Large Transport Scheme were submitted in mid-July 2016. The pausing of the NECA Devolution Deal had implications for the scale and nature of the NELEP submission to Government and a re-submission of a prioritised project list was made on 31 October. In the Autumn statement the Chancellor confirmed budget allocations in the Northern Powerhouse area. It is currently expected that the specific allocation for the North East LEP will be confirmed by Government early in 2017.

4 Potential Impact on Objectives

- 4.1 The work being taken forward is consistent with the Combined Authority's stated objectives

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5 Finance and Other Resources

5.1 Financial plans will be developed and reported to the Board as appropriate.

6 Legal

6.1 The legal implications of the work will be considered as delivery progresses.

7 Other Considerations

7.1 Consultation/Community Engagement

No consultation or community engagement has been undertaken at this stage in the work programme.

7.2 Human Rights

There are no specific issues arising from this report.

7.3 Equalities and Diversity

There are no specific issues arising from this report.

7.4 Risk Management

Appropriate risk management arrangements will be put in place as delivery progresses.

7.5 Crime and Disorder

There are no specific issues arising from this report.

7.6 Environment and Sustainability

There are no specific issues arising from this report.

8 Background Documents

- Northern Powerhouse Strategy
- Northern Powerhouse Schools Challenge - independent review
- Work, health and disability green paper: improving lives

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9 Links to the Local Transport Plans

- 9.1 Accessibility to employability, inclusion and skills provision is a key challenge for the North East that is appropriately reflected in the emerging Local Transport Plan.

10 Appendices

Appendix 1: Northern Powerhouse School Strategy - independent review: findings and recommendations

Appendix 2: Extract from the NECA Concessionary Travel report presented by Nexus to the Transport North East Committee on 3 November 2016

11 Contact Officers

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12 Sign off

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

Please use ✓

**Appendix 1:
Northern Powerhouse Schools Strategy - independent review
The Findings and Recommendations**

Building teaching and leadership capacity

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Teacher effectiveness is the most important determinant of pupil outcomes. Raising educational standards in the North requires us to attract, train and retain high quality teachers and leaders in the region so that every child is taught by an effective teacher. In my view, the most important step we can take to address educational underperformance in the North, particularly for schools in areas of deprivation, is to meet the challenge of teacher supply.

Firstly, we need to understand teacher supply issues better, including at a local level. I recommend that:

- DfE should find additional sources to capture fluctuations in vacancy rates across the school year and to measure the degree of churn schools are experiencing after the termly resignation deadline in May each year; and
- DfE should improve its teacher supply model to take better account of local need, including by subject.

Secondly, DfE should support schools with the biggest challenge in attracting and retaining teachers and build evidence of what works. I recommend that:

- DfE should pilot a new 'Teach North' scheme to attract and retain talented newly-qualified teachers in disadvantaged schools in the North; and
- Northern Powerhouse cities should take the lead on regional marketing initiatives to attract teachers to live and work in the North and I propose that funding should be allocated to support these initiatives.

Research tells us that school leadership is second only to teaching in improving pupil performance. Having an effective pipeline of talented and skilled school leaders has become increasingly important as we move towards a school-led system. I recommend that:

- DfE should consider how it can enhance existing and new leadership initiatives and programmes in the North, which will encourage more participants to take up the challenge of closing the disadvantage gap where it is greatest and raise the status of a career in northern 'cold spots'.

School improvement capacity

Academy sponsorship is an important school improvement mechanism, which in my experience, enables outstanding head teachers to make a difference in more than one school. MATs can also support better recruitment and retention of teachers and help share effective practice across schools.

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The academies movement has progressed more slowly in the North and I believe accelerating growth of MATs is key to driving up standards. To go further faster, I believe we need to be more challenging to successful schools in the North, who should feel a moral imperative to support struggling schools through sponsorship arrangements. There should also be greater challenge to schools requesting to convert to academies.

Sustainability is key to success. Schools that convert to academy status must have strong performance to ensure successful transition. I recommend that:

- In addition to an outstanding or good judgement, standalone conversion to academy status should be restricted to schools with strong evidence of progress over three years; and
- The governing boards of standalone academy trusts (SATs) and small MATs of 1–3 academies should consider amalgamating with others to build a more sustainable MAT. The retirement or departure of the head teacher or executive head teacher might be a particularly appropriate time to do this.

Northern local authorities must also do more to support academy programmes. Northern Regional Schools Commissioners (RSCs) and their offices are key to facilitating this. I recommend that:

- National consideration should be given to RSC resourcing in areas where there are endemic issues, including issues with previous decision-making; and
- It is important that all northern local authorities accept that every Government for almost two decades has had an academy policy. They should encourage and facilitate the growth of strong and effective Multi Academy Trusts in their area because it is in the interests of local children and young people to do so.

I believe that strong MATs require strong leaders and we need to develop ways of spreading the influence of strong MATs in the North and the rest of the country. I recommend that:

- DfE should assign funding to MAT CEOs from northern ‘cold spot’ areas to attend MAT CEO training; and
- DfE should assign funding to a mentoring scheme whereby successful MAT CEOs from across the country mentor CEOs of new or expanding MATs in the North, offering support on effective school improvement models, data analysis, financial management and growth planning.

Effective governance is also crucial to MAT success. Ofsted report that the “best governing bodies are increasingly professional, with members who have the knowledge and background to effectively challenge senior leaders”. However, the evidence tells us that recruiting skilled governors is more difficult in rural, urban or deprived areas and in those schools that ‘require improvement’ or have lower than average pupil attainment. Further work is required to encourage trusts to build board capability. I recommend that:

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- New academy trusts should review their governance arrangements and in many cases must recruit governors with additional skills if governing bodies are to successfully transition into their new role as a board of trustees;
- DfE should use their review of governance training activity to assess the specific development needs of MAT boards and MAT board chairs, and should fund training and development activity to meet these; and
- DfE should ensure that funded programmes to recruit people to governance roles (Academy Ambassadors and Inspiring Governance), address the particular issues faced by northern schools and MATs when planning campaigns to recruit new volunteers to governing boards.

Finally, system leaders, with experience of achieving high standards and turning schools around in challenging circumstances, are important to supporting school improvement. The Educational Excellence Everywhere White Paper identified a shortage of both National Leaders of Education (NLEs) and of Teaching School Alliances as a feature of ‘cold spots’, many of which are in the North. We need a more sophisticated mechanism to identify those schools and leaders who can best contribute to building educational capacity in our hardest to reach communities. I recommend that:

- National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) should press ahead with plans to enable the best schools with good Ofsted judgements to apply to become Teaching Schools and NLEs as soon as possible. The revised designation approach should also take greater account of those heads that have a track record of transforming the schools they lead and support, and consistently achieve high levels of progress for pupils with low prior attainment.

Raising standards by closing the disadvantage gap

Large pockets of deprivation are a feature of the North, whether they are in former mining towns, coastal towns or rural areas. We need to understand why there is a large gap between children in the North and better performing areas such as London, including at the end of reception. Although this report does not attempt to cover early years education prior to Reception, I recommend that:

- DfE should commission research into the early years gap in the North as well as effective practice for closing it; and
- DfE should identify the schools that are most effective at closing the gap in Reception classes and support them to disseminate best practice to schools in the North.

We also need to bring together best practice from schools in closing the disadvantage gap and identify the most effective approaches for teaching, managing behaviour, and creating a whole school culture and ethos that supports high standards and raises aspirations for all pupils. I recommend that:

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- DfE should bring together schools who have a track record in closing the disadvantage gap and raising attainment of the most disadvantaged pupils to report on what works effectively for different schools and circumstances.

Curriculum

London's success in recent years is at least in part attributable to very strong performance at primary. Northern primary schools could go even further in preparing students for success at secondary schools through outstanding evidence-based teaching of literacy and numeracy. I recommend that:

- DfE should work with the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) to scale up the North East Literacy Campaign to other priority areas in the North; and
- DfE should work with the EEF Research Schools to further develop EEF's focus within northern schools, to identify and evaluate effective programmes and practice with children who do not meet age-related expectation or who are not secondary-ready.

A sound academic education to age 16 helps open doors and enables pupils to make genuine choices about post-16 pathways, whether academic or high-quality technical education. Many schools in the North have tended to offer a less academic curriculum and have been slower to change. Some northern schools need to be more responsive to curriculum change and offer a high-quality academic curriculum, in line with many schools serving disadvantaged communities in London. I recommend that:

- Northern schools, which have not already done so, should revise their curriculum offer. We should all ensure that the curriculum and qualifications we offer are of sufficiently high status to open up 10 opportunities for our students, rather than so low in status as to close them down.

System conditions

A feature of the North is the large number of 'cold spots', which tend to have high levels of deprivation, low levels of attainment and few good or outstanding schools. We need to make sure that conditions in the system in which schools operate enable schools to build the capacity and capability to improve.

Firstly, we need to make sure that there is adequate funding for high-need pupils and sufficient special school provision in 'cold spot' areas. I recommend that:

- DfE should reform funding to ensure schools with high concentrations of students with special educational needs are fairly funded; and
- DfE should provide local authorities with additional support and funding (including capital) so they can ensure Special School provision is sufficient to meet demand, particularly in 'cold spot' areas.

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Secondly, we need to tackle mono-cultural disadvantage which I believe is a particular problem in the North. I recommend that:

- DfE should review the Admissions Code to ensure clarity for both schools and adjudicators on how nodal points and catchments can be used to encourage greater diversity; and
- Schools with high concentrations of mono-cultural disadvantage should consider how changing their admissions policy might encourage a more diverse mix of students, for example randomised selection from a citywide or whole-town catchment.

Finally, we need a stable system in which head teachers can have confidence. Curriculum and exam changes in recent years have made it more difficult for head teachers to directly compare their schools results year on year. I recommend that:

- DfE and Ofqual should address schools' concerns about the examination system; and
- DfE and Ofqual should monitor the impact of recent changes to the examination system on disadvantaged students, and take this into account when making future refinements to the examination system.

Appendix 2:

Extract from the NECA Concessionary Travel report presented by Nexus to the Transport North East Committee on 3 November 2016

Public Transport ticketing for young people under the age of 19

The Education and Skills Act 2008 made it mandatory for young people under 18 to be in full time education, with an interim minimum leaving age of 17 set in 2013, with the full rise to 18 from 2015.

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In recent times, the complexity and costs of youth fares on public transport has been highlighted as a key issue. The UK Youth Parliament 'Make your mark campaign' balloted over 28,385 people in the NECA area (excluding Gateshead) aged 11-18, and found that transport was third biggest issue with 3,944 votes, after Curriculum and the Living Wage.

The Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) outlines that whilst public transport accessibility in the North East is generally good, improvements could be made in the area of fares and ticketing. A key target includes the introduction of a single network, multi-operator ticket being established

In August 2016, Go North East introduced a new fares structure for young people aged 18 and under, including a £1 single fare on all buses across the Go North East network. The new policy simplifies the Go North East ticketing options for a young person travelling on a Go North East bus. Competing schemes are offered by Arriva North East and Stagecoach that are valid on their bus services.

For those who are 16 and under, various single tickets are on offer. Nexus offers the 'Under 16 Pop Card' (available for a £5 fee), which allows multi operator travel in Tyne and Wear for £0.60. For those under 16 who do not have an 'Under 16 Pop Card' Nexus also offers a Metro-only commercial fare for £0.80. Go North East offers its Under 18 single ticket for £1 on Go North East buses North East Combined Authority Transport North East Committee only. Arriva offers an under 18 'Teen Card' valid on all Arriva North East bus services, which is a half fare or £1, whichever is lowest. Stagecoach offers an under 16 single fare at £0.90 for those traveling on Stagecoach bus services. This demonstrates how variable ticketing options can be, with different ages and different fares applicable to each different operator, with different validity policies depending on who provides the services.

The picture is further complicated for those aged between 16-18 and students, as no multi operator day ticket is currently offered anywhere in the area. However multi-operator weekly, monthly and annual tickets for 16-19 year olds are available in Tyne and Wear through Network One (a ticketing company comprising all of the transport operators). Metro offers a '16-18 MetroSaver' valid for 7 days for £7.50, Go North East offers a ticket priced at £15.50, Stagecoach at £8 and Arriva North East offer a number of variants of a weekly ticket ranging from £13.30 for a 1 zone ticket to £19.30 for all zone ticket.

This report has highlighted some of the complexities that under 19s are potentially facing when using public transport. This complex issue should be explored further and the following actions are proposed:

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- A 'task and finish' group is proposed with the aim of better understanding the current Youth offer in more detail, and to explore what options might be available to improve the situation; and
- Nexus and the Regional Transport Team propose to commission an independent report (with input from the LEP) to understand the opportunities that an improved ticketing offer for young people could have on the North East's economy, skills base, and society.

The NECA's Overview and Scrutiny Committee has been undertaking a review to further understand the impact of transport in the Combined Authority area and, in particular, any barriers people face preventing them from getting into employment, travelling to work, school or college. The work that Overview and Scrutiny Committee has undertaken will be cross referenced with what is proposed here, and will feed into the proposed task and finish group.

DATE: 17th January 2017

SUBJECT: Transport and Digital Connectivity Thematic Lead Update Report

REPORT OF: Thematic Lead for Transport

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report gives details of progress towards delivering the Transport Manifesto commitments.

A number of NECA's specific transport schemes were not awarded funding in the Autumn Budget Statement, although the area may benefit from a number of wider announcements covering road maintenance and safety enhancements, promotion of low-carbon vehicles, and digital infrastructure.

Work to secure funding for a replacement Metro fleet is progressing well, and the Buses Bill is about to enter the House of Commons stages.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Leadership Board note the contents of this report.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 We have a strong agenda for transport in the north east, aimed at making it easy to access employment and training opportunities, helping businesses to thrive and making the area attractive to inward investors, improving the quality of life for people who live and work here, and making sure our transport networks are reliable and environmentally friendly. This is all set out in our Transport Manifesto, and we are now working on the more detailed Transport Plan.
- 1.2 Over the past year we have laid some important foundations to deliver on our Transport Manifesto commitments: we have agreed a new Metro and Local Rail Strategy and decided to re-integrate Metro operations with the rest of the system; used our role in Transport for the North and Rail North to identify improvements to our rail links; developed some major highways investment schemes; invested in smart and digital technology and cycling infrastructure; and used our experience of bus regulation policy to input into the government's new buses bill.
- 1.3 This all puts us in a good position to move forward and deliver real and tangible improvements. We have the expertise, the experience and the ability to innovate. We also have a strong asset base – including the Tyne tunnels and the Metro – from which to build outwards. However, in order to make a major difference we also need extra funding and powers to deliver, and a good deal of these remain in the hands of the national government. The speed at which we can make improvements to our transport system is therefore dependent upon the priority the government gives to our area. I describe our progress below.

2. Autumn Budget Statement

- 2.1 The Chancellor's recent Autumn Statement included a number of announcements relating to transport. Many of these have limited detail and we are expecting further information in due course from the Department for Transport and other departments such as BEIS (Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy). Details of announcements are given below, under three headings: schemes/programmes that have confirmed funding, schemes declined for funding and finally other announcements whose specifics have not yet been confirmed.
- 2.2 Disappointingly, specific schemes submitted by the NECA have not been successful in securing government funding. Six of the 12 large local major schemes selected for funding in the Autumn Statement are in areas developing devolution deals. The area may benefit from a number of other announcements, as set out below.
- 2.3 Funding confirmed:

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- **Strategic Roads and Pinch Point Fund:** £220 million will be made available to improve congestion hotspots on the Strategic Road Network managed by Highways England. Further details will be announced in due course but, as part of this Fund, there will be upgrades to two A69 junctions (Bridge End roundabout at Hexham and Styford roundabout at Corbridge).
- As a conclusion of the Northern Trans-Pennine Strategic Study, remaining sections of the A66 will be dualled as part of the second Roads Investment Strategy (2020 to 2025).
- **Highways Maintenance:**
There will be another round of the 'Potholes Fund', allocating £70m, including £3.2m for authorities in this region. The Government estimates that this could fix 61,500 potholes. A second tranche of the Local Highways Maintenance Challenge fund will be announced shortly and a second round of the Local Highways Maintenance Incentive/Efficiency Element Funding will be formally launched shortly;
- **Road safety:** Funding of £175 million is to be targeted at upgrading some of the most dangerous local roads where rates of fatal accidents and serious collisions are the highest. Proposals will be sought from local highways authorities. In the NECA area, the roads identified are the A67 in Durham and the A1290 in Sunderland
- **Local Growth Fund:** The government will provide a further £556 million to northern Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) through a third round of Growth Deals. There is no detail yet on how this has been broken down, but there are 11 LEPs in the 'northern' area, including the North East LEP.

2.4 Funding declined:

- **Large Local Major Scheme Funding:** The North East submitted three schemes to this fund, these were Ashington Blyth and Tyne rail improvements, Metro Futures and Sunderland Commercial Links. Despite strong cases, these have not been selected for funding. Detailed written feedback will be sought on reasons they have not been taken forward. 18 schemes nationally are in receipt of funding to develop Business Cases. Two schemes in the Tees Valley (the new Tees crossing and Tees Valley East-West connections (improving the link between the A1(M) and A66) received funding to develop a business case and there will be some benefits to the NECA region if these are taken forward.

2.5 Other relevant announcements:

- **Local Improvements:** An additional £925 million will be allocated

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for local highway and public transport improvements which meet a set of criteria including reduction of congestion at key locations and upgrading or improving the maintenance of local highways assets.

- **Airports:** The Government is publishing a summary of consultation responses on Air Passenger Duty devolution and how to protect regional airports. The Government intends to review this again after we have exited the EU as there was no consensus on the next steps to be taken. In the short term, therefore, there will be no help for Northern airports such as Newcastle with the level of APD.
- **Digital Infrastructure:** Over £1 billion investment in digital infrastructure by 2020-21, which includes £740 million through the National Productivity Investment Fund, targeted at supporting the market to roll out full-fibre connections and future 5G communications. This also includes £400 million for a new Digital Infrastructure Investment Fund, at least matched by private finance, to invest in new fibre networks over the next 4 years. Opportunities provided by a new 100 per cent business rates relief for new full-fibre infrastructure for a 5 year period from 1 April 2017.
- **Other funding:** There are a number of other funding streams announced for which there are no further details as yet, these include:
 - Access Fund: The NECA made a joint bid to the Access Fund, a revenue fund from 2017/8 to 2019/20 intended to encourage walking and cycling. An announcement relating to this Fund is expected in January alongside confirmation of the Government's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy
 - £80m for ULEV Charging Infrastructure, £150m for Low Emission Buses and Taxis and £100m for connected/autonomous vehicles
 - £450m to trial digital rail signalling technology
 - £80m to accelerate the roll-out of smart ticketing including season tickets for commuters in the UK's major cities
 - £100m nationally to make roads more resilient to flooding, including roads which flooded last winter

3. Transport for the North (TfN)

- 3.1 TfN is developing a Transport Strategy and Investment Plan. Our involvement in this workstream is critical to make sure that our aspirations for key strategic transport links are taken into account. The overarching Strategic Transport Plan will be supported by two daughter documents covering Rail (Integrated Rail Report) and Road (Strategic Roads Report).

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- 3.2 'Northern Powerhouse Rail' (NPR) continues to be developed. The main focus of the work up to February / March 2017 (as it affects the North East) is now to further explore options for a significant upgrade of the East Coast Main Line to speed up journeys and assess the impacts of stopping at York, Darlington and Durham (the preferred option).
- 3.3 A study into ways of improving strategic road links across the Pennines is continuing and the Chancellor's Autumn Budget Statement announced plans for new investment in the A66 and A69.
- 3.4 Work continues on Freight and Logistics, international links through ports and airports and smart travel opportunities, to help inform the Transport Strategy and Investment Plan that will be published this spring.

4. Rail

- 4.1 Northern Rail and TransPennine Express have generally performed well against the Franchise performance targets and are starting to deliver improvements as outlined in the Franchise award.
- 4.2 Throughout both of the Franchises, step changes in services and train fleets are planned. One of the first of these planned changes, an enhanced service from Newcastle to Manchester commenced in December 2016 with four more trains per day along this route.
- 4.3 Progress is also been made with the introduction of new and/or improved trains. Both TPE and Northern have placed orders for new trains and have also started on their train refurbishment programme. It will still be some time before the new and refurbished trains enter service but both companies are on track for 2019/2020, in accordance with the franchise obligations. TPE's new Hitachi trains are to be built at Newton Aycliffe and will be the ones that eventually serve the North East on a half hourly service.

5. Metro

- 5.1 Following Leadership Board approval of the new Metro and Local Rail Strategy, Nexus has been holding a series of discussions with the government to discuss investment in the Metro fleet. Initial assessments suggest that there is a strong case for a new fleet. The case for investment is expected to be considered by the DFT Investment Committee, to be held in January 2017. The matter will then be referred to the Treasury.

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- 5.2 A DfT Office of Government Commerce (OGC) Gateway Review into the project's progress has also taken place. This gave an amber/green rating meaning: 'Successful delivery of the project/programme to time, cost and quality appears highly likely and there are no major outstanding issues that at this stage appear to threaten delivery significantly'. This is a very good review outcome, and a number of recommendations were made to further strengthen the position.
- 5.3 A public consultation into the design of future Metro trains has been well received, with almost 3,000 people taking part in three strands of research. This gives Nexus unrivalled insight into local people's aspirations for the design of the new Metro fleet when an approach to suppliers is made next year by Nexus.
- 5.4 Punctuality on the Metro has gone down during the autumn period when low rail adhesion is a big factor. Also passenger numbers have dipped slightly below the peak of 40 million seen at the start of 2016 primarily due to a fall in leisure travel, although the recent Snowdogs campaign has helped offset some of the decline
- 5.5 Works associated with the Asset Renewal Programme continue. The refurbishment of Central Station is now complete, as is site survey work at Killingworth Road Bridge, paving the way to undertake the scheme in summer 2017. Track re-railing within the central area tunnels is now completed and this was achieved during overnight works, avoiding disruption for Metro passengers. A major two year project for the system wide renewal of the overhead line is expected to get underway in March 2017. This work will be undertaken in-house by Nexus and staff training in line renewal has already commenced.

6. Buses

- 6.1 A region-wide bus strategy is being prepared which, once endorsed by TNEC, will be used to guide future decisions about delivery options for buses. Bus operators that provide commercial services across the NECA area are updating the constitution of the North East Bus Operators Association (NEBOA), widening its coverage to include Northumberland and Durham. This will make it easier for NECA to engage with NEBOA in taking forward the bus strategy as NEBOA's wider geographical footprint will enable service improvements to be discussed across the whole NECA area.
- 6.2 Officers continue to monitor the Bus Services Bill. The Bill has completed its Lords stages and was introduced into the Commons on 24th November 2016, although its planned Second Reading in December will now happen in the New Year. Royal Assent is still anticipated by spring 2017.

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- 6.3 The House of Lords introduced a number of amendments, some of which address NECA aspirations. Most significantly, an amendment provides all types of local authorities (not just Mayoral Combined Authorities) with bus franchising powers. Other amendments include:
- Removal of a clause that would have prevented local authorities forming new companies to run bus services
 - Amendment to give local transport authorities the ability to enforce traffic offences
 - Making it mandatory for new local buses to meet standards set out by the Office for Low Emission Vehicles
 - Where consultations are to take place on creating a new local transport authority, an amendment adds employee representatives to a list of people who must be consulted before any new authority is created
- 6.4 Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport Andrew Jones MP has indicated that the government will seek to overturn these amendments.
- 6.5 The Commons Transport Committee has also been reviewing the Bill. They say that the Bus Services Bill is a major opportunity to transform passengers' experiences of bus services and support local authorities having the freedom to set up their own local bus operator if that is the best solution for their community.
- 6.6 The Committee is encouraged by the aspects of the Bill which give local authorities the power to introduce simplified ticketing systems and have called on the Government to bring into force existing statutory provisions which would allow local authorities to enforce moving traffic offences should they so wish.
- 6.7 A "Task and Finish" Group has been established to investigate the bus fares offered to young people across the region and to see if there are ways to improve the attractiveness of what is on offer. The Group is chaired by Councillor McCarty from TNEC and other members from across the NECA region are involved in it. A preliminary meeting has been held and the Group's first full meeting, which will include bus operators, will be held in the New Year. Early engagement with the youth community has taken place in an effort to understand the best ways to engage with young people and gain awareness of their priorities.
- 6.8 The conclusions of a policy review on transport related barriers to education, employment and training was presented to Overview and Scrutiny Committee (O&SC) on 14th December 2016. The findings of the review suggested that transport barriers are most acute for young people. The findings from this report are potentially of great value to the future work of the "Task and Finish" Group, and an invitation for an O&SC member to sit on the Group has been accepted.

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7. Digital Connectivity Update

7.1 NECA Digital Leads are working collaboratively alongside the North East LEP to support delivery of the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP). Three sub-groups have been established to share knowledge and support development of our efforts to grow and promote Digital Skills; to ensure the region is well placed to benefit both economically and socially from Open Data; and to map and exploit 'Internet of Things' (IoT) potential. This work reaffirms that Digital Connectivity is a direct enabler of economic development and productivity uplift across our smart specialisation sectors, as well as providing the conditions for business growth and improved competitiveness.

7.2 The North East Digital Leads group are making significant progress with their work to position the region as a 5G Connectivity trailblazer and to sustain and grow the region's competitiveness in the Digital Economy. Working collaboratively to support the region to develop the Digital Skills needed to deliver the SEP, we are ensuring the north east is well positioned to support people and businesses to benefit from future devolution of employment and skills functions.

7.3 In December 2016, the joint NECA/ NELEP proposition was one of only three sub-national projects explicitly championed by the National Infrastructure Commission's report into preparedness and roll-out of 5G Technology. We are currently working with the National Centre for Excellence at Surrey University to deliver on this proposition for a nationally-significant addition to the north east's offer to people and businesses.

7.4 The group has worked with Nexus and other partners, to develop an investible proposition for an IOT test-bed. A Project Manager is in the process of being appointed to lead on development of the business case; building on positive feedback from government and partners. This is consistent with our aspiration that the North East is increasingly seen, not only nationally but globally, as a location of choice for testing, refining and rolling out Digital products and services.

8. Next Steps

8.1 Work is continuing on:

- Development of the NECA Transport Plan
- Progressing the various TfN workstreams and the Network Rail Long Term Planning Process
- Production of a new NECA Bus Strategy
- Engagement with the Department for Transport to discuss the

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- business case for government investment in the Metro fleet
- Consultation with Network Rail and TfN to develop options for NPR and start the refining of options to be recommended for more detailed design and economic appraisal
- Delivery of the joint NECA/NELEP Digital Connectivity proposition

8.2 The TNEC “Task and Finish” group will continue to meet to discuss the issues regarding young peoples’ public transport ticketing

9. Potential Impact on Objectives

9.1 Successful delivery of the various transport and digital connectivity schemes and investment proposals outlined in this document will assist the Combined Authority in delivering its objective to maximise the area's opportunities and potential.

10. Finance and Other Resources

10.1 The report includes information on funding and financial opportunities. There are no specific additional financial implications for NECA arising from this report.

11. Legal

12.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

13. Other Considerations

13.1 Human Rights

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

13.2 Equalities and Diversity

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

13.3 Consultation / community engagement

Many of the transport programmes outlined in this report have been the subject of consultation, at either a regional or national level.

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13.4 Risk Management

This report is for information only and there are no specific risk management implications arising from it.

13.5 Crime and disorder

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

13.6 Environment and Sustainability

Delivery of the various rail and public transport measures listed in this report should assist in meeting our objectives for a more sustainable transport system and improved air quality.

14. Background Documents

None.

15. Links to plans in the policy framework

The various transport schemes and programmes listed in this report link to the forthcoming Transport Plan for the North East that is covered in section 3 of this report.

16. Appendices

None.

17. Contact Officers

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18. Sign off

North East Combined Authority

Leadership Board

Head of Paid Service

Monitoring Officer

Chief Finance Officer