

NET OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE AND PROGRESS UPDATE

1. SUMMARY OF ISSUES

1. This report updates the Committee on the performance and progress of NET from the beginning of August 2023 to the end of October 2023.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is RECOMMENDED that the Committee notes the report.

3. OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE

- 3.1 The reliability and punctuality of the tram service during this three-month period was 94.6% and 95.1% respectively. These positive figures demonstrate a substantial improvement in performance, including the excellent delivery of services during the 2023 Goose Fair Event. Over the past two months a series of track works have also been successfully completed. However, the network continues to experience some external events and incidents involving third parties that have impacted on tram services. These include a truck pulling down the overhead line in Beeston and storms causing flooding in the Wilford area.
- 3.2 Between 18th and 31st August, planned works to fully upgrade the tracks and the points at The Forest were successfully completed. An operations plan was created to enable customers to reach their required destinations while services were temporarily suspended between Wilkinson Street and Old Market Square, with a dedicated bus replacement service operating between these two locations. The works were completed to schedule with full service resuming on 1st September.
- 3.3 Track replacement works were also undertaken at Middle Hill, between 22nd and 24th October, and works to repair damage caused to the track bed at Cator Lane, following the burst water main incident and subsequent flooding in the area, that occurred earlier this year, took place between 28th October and 3rd November. Full operations plans, amended timetables and staffing rosters were created, and replacement bus services were arranged, to provide passengers with a robust service during both of these events.

- 3.3 On 17th August, an IT network issue caused a system wide AVLS (radio comms & tram management software) and other safety critical systems outage occurred at the beginning of service. Since it was not possible for the control room to communicate with drivers, all trams were withdrawn to the Depot shortly after 0700. It was not until late in the day that the cause of the fault was identified and, following overnight repair work, services were able to resume the following morning.
- 3.4 On 21st August, shortly after 0900, a lorry carrying a telehandler unit hit the overhead line at Beeston Centre causing the overhead line to de-wire, resulting in over 1km of OLE being damaged over a busy road junction. Several vehicles were trapped in the area, but thankfully no one was hurt. Due to the nature of the damage and the electrical isolation required, there was no service between University Boulevard and Cator Lane, with NCT cross-ticket acceptance being put in place. The NET engineering team and external contractors were mobilised, closely liaising with County Council traffic management teams to facilitate the road closures required to complete the repairs. On 24th August, trams were able to operate again through the area, a fantastic turnaround given the initial damage. NTL have reported this incident to both the Health and Safety Executive and the Office of the Rail Regulator.



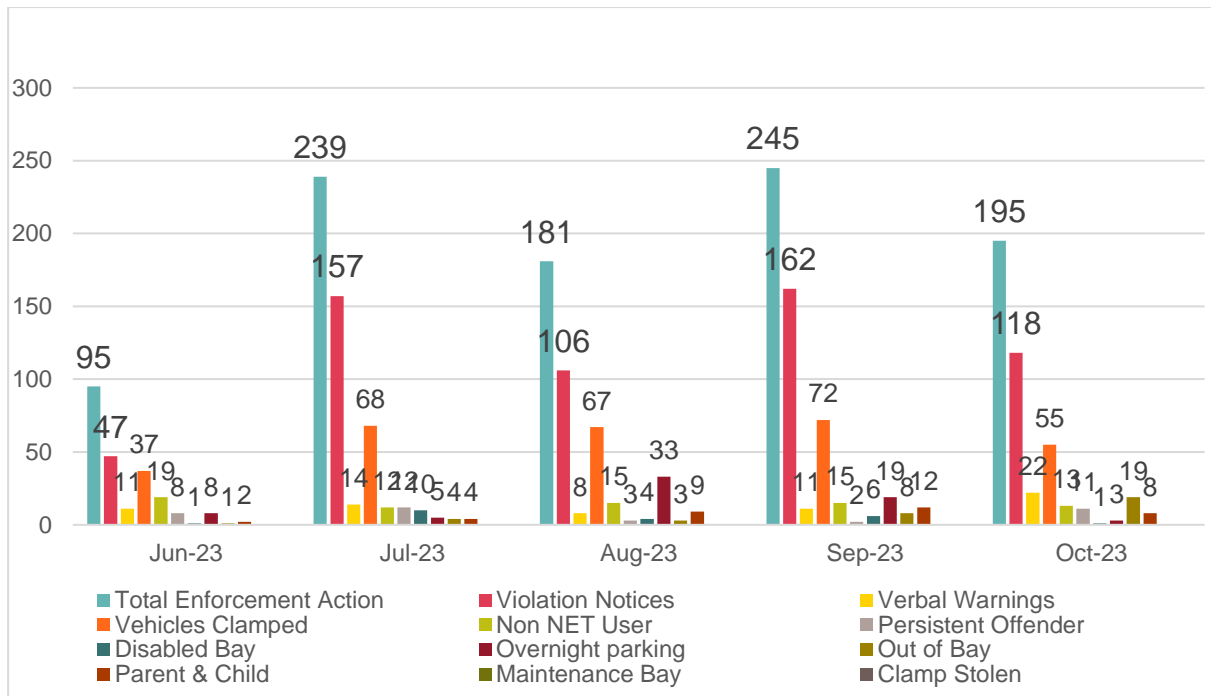
- 3.5 NET is recording a significant increase in contractors carrying out unauthorised work around the tramway as highlighted above, posing safety risks and possible damage and delays to the tram network. We are working with agencies to act against contractors and are liaising with other tramway operators who are noting a similar increase. As an industry, through the Light Rail Safety & Standards Board, safety campaigns are being prepared to further alert contractors when working around tram networks.

- 3.6 A robust operations plan was implemented during this year's 10-day Goose Fair, to provide a customer-focussed timetable and service. The plan added an additional two minutes time in the core of the network between The Forest and Nottingham Station, the additional time providing greater resilience for safe boarding and alighting. During the event an effective barrier system enabled crowds to be managed and revenue to be protected during this busy period. The enhanced timetable, together with improved tram and driver availability, resulted in exceptionally good performance throughout the duration of the event.
- 3.7 On 20th October, Storm Babet brought heavy rainfall across most parts of the UK, and in Nottingham it resulted in the Rivers Leen and Trent overflowing in some locations adjacent to the tram network, such as at David Lane. The situation was closely monitored as it developed, and several temporary tram speed restrictions were implemented where standing water affected the tracks. Following this, a burst watermain on Wilford Lane on 22nd October resulted in trams being unable to operate between Southchurch Drive and Wilford Lane tramstops, with NCT cross-ticket acceptance put in place. Services were able to resume on 24th, once the water had cleared and Severn Trent had addressed an issue with a failed pump in their system.



4. PARKING ENFORCEMENT

- 4.1 During the period, parking enforcement patrols were extended to Hucknall and Moor Bridge park and ride sites. Patrols continue to have a positive impact for our customers looking to use the car parks, whilst also contributing towards the overall security of the network, with officers deterring anti-social behaviour and criminal damage. During the period a small group of youths was noted at The Forest causing damage to vehicles; the activity was disrupted and reported to the police.



4.2 Parking Enforcement Patrols are planned to progress to Clifton South and Phoenix Park during December bringing all park and ride facilities under the same scheme.

5. ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

- 5.1 Anti-Social behaviour reports have been at a sustained level over the period. There are some positive signs with a reduction in physical violence against front line staff noted in October and criminal damage of tram infrastructure has also remained lower over the period. However, youth crime and disruptive behaviour continues to impact staff, customers, and the network. Working with external agencies is embedded in everyday operations and forms a fundamental part of how the network can be improved for customers.
- 5.2 Reports of anti-social driving around the Toton Lane area continues to be monitored. Over 50 hours of dedicated patrols took place in the area during October with a specific focus on deterring this activity.
- 5.3 NET Customer Experience Agents (CXAs) have taken part in Operation Reach, working with 11 plain clothes covert officers to identify fare evaders and anti-social behaviour. The operation was deemed a success with several fare evaders stopped from abusing or running away from the CXAs. They also managed to stop and contain a large group of eight youths identified by the team as previously causing damage and abusing the network. The police now have their details, and one has been arrested.

6. REVENUE PROTECTION

- 6.1 During December NET is re-launching its Zero Tolerance to fare evasion campaign. This campaign will focus on education and enforcement of the “buy before you board” rules. There will be an increased presence of staff and police on the system throughout month to target fare evaders on the network together with an extensive publicity campaign.
- 6.2 At the Global Light Rail awards, held in October, NET received the “Best Customer Initiative” award for the work that has already been undertaken around the Zero Tolerance campaign on revenue protection.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 7.1 As part of Keolis Passenger & Innovation Day on 20th September, the NET management team went to one of the system’s most popular stops, Royal Centre, to host a ‘Meet the Manager’ session. The day was spent talking to passengers about the tram service and handing out freebies and goody bags. The team were also joined by The Pythian Club as part of their outreach work.
- 7.3 NET has met with the Thomas Pocklington Trust, a national charity which supports blind and partially sighted people, to discuss how further support can be provided to the visually impaired and blind people when using the tram system. A feedback session has been set up in the new year for a group of visually impaired people to travel by tram and provide comments on how NET can be made more accessible to allow them to travel independently.
- 7.4 NET attended a Safety and Wellness Fair, organised by Nottingham Trent University in October to introduce students to various health, wellbeing and safety initiatives, both internal and external to the university. The event provided the opportunity to highlight that NET is a safe way to travel by drawing attention to the CCTV available across the network and to the emergency help buttons available at all tramstops and onboard trams.

Trevor Stocker, Head of Operations, Nottingham Trams