

NET OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE AND PROGRESS UPDATE

1. SUMMARY OF ISSUES

- 1.1. This report updates the Committee on the performance and progress of NET from the beginning of June to the end of July 2020.

2. RECOMMENDATION

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

3. OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE AND RESPONSE TO COVID-19

- 3.1. NET continued to provide an essential service to the travelling public during June and July, as Nottingham began to emerge from the period of Covid-19 lockdown.
- 3.2. Although non-essential shops were allowed to reopen from 15th June, and pubs and restaurants were also allowed to reopen from 4th July, the Government's advice, to only use public transport for essential journeys, remained in place until 20th July and, as a consequence, demand for tram travel remained relatively low. Following this, the Government amended its advice on social distancing, from 2 metres to "1 metre plus", resulting in an increase to the maximum capacity of a tram from 24 to 32 people. In response to this, new on-tram signage was introduced, along with "keep safe save this space" signage on tram seating. The wearing of face masks on public transport also became mandatory during the period.
- 3.3. Additional cleaning of trams and tramstops has continued to take place, including the deployment of cleaning teams at the four termini, and other key locations, to ensure that frequently touched surfaces are regularly disinfected. Drivers are continuing to stop at all tramstops, with all doors opening automatically. Customers are being advised to purchase e-tickets via the website or app, whenever possible, instead of using the ticket machines.
- 3.4. A Sunday timetable continued to be operated throughout June and July. The full weekday timetable was reintroduced on 3rd August, providing increased capacity, as the number of daily passengers began to rise to approximately 20% of normal levels. The NET Travel Centre, on King Street, also re-opened to customers in early August.
- 3.5. Reliability and punctuality of the tram service remained extremely high during the period, with levels of 99.3% and 98.7% respectively achieved.

3.6. TRACK REPLACEMENT WORKS

- 3.7. Works to install new rails and a replacement tram crossing between Royal Centre and Old Market Square were successfully completed on Monday 13th July, six days ahead of programme. During the period of the works, tram services from Phoenix Park and Hucknall terminated at Royal Centre, with those from Clifton South and Toton Lane terminating at Nottingham Station. A replacement bus service was available to use between Royal Centre and Nottingham Station, although customers were advised to walk between tram stops if they were able to do so.
- 3.8. Measures were introduced to ensure that the safety of staff and the public during the pandemic were observed, with the period of the works coinciding with the date on which non-essential retailers were able to open their stores, resulting in increased pedestrian traffic.
- 3.9. Very few complaints about the works were received, from either residents, business owners or members of the public, and it is pleasing to note that no major incidents were recorded.

4. CUSTOMER SERVICES AND MARKETING

- 4.1. A “chat bot” service, which is able to provide answers to questions raised by customers on the NET website, when staff are not present, has been introduced and integrated with the instant chat feature. The new service has been created using the extensive knowledge database built up from pre-existing customer questions and responses.
- 4.2. In a further initiative to encourage the increased use of digital communications, WhatsApp has been integrated with the NET customer management system, allowing customers to make contact instantly via the messaging app., with the ability to pick up and drop off conversations as they please. Currently this has seen a soft launch, advertised on new posters and social media, as the system is being trialled and tested.
- 4.3. A six-month season product, available to adults, students and U19s, has been launched in recognition of the uncertainty that still surrounds the return to work or regular travel for many people. One, three and six-month products were also added to the Tram2work range, previously only available as annual tickets.
- 4.4. The Group Ticket offer was made available throughout the summer holidays. This allowed travel for two adults and up to three children for £6, or £5.50 if bought via NETGO! This promotion was offered in conjunction with the Government’s Eat Out to Help Out scheme.

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