

**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 August to the end of October 2021.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

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

**3. OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE**

- 3.1 Reliability and punctuality of the tram service during the 3-month period from the beginning of August to the end of October was 94.4% and 93.3% respectively achieved.
- 3.2 During this period, following the lifting of national lockdown measures, NET has seen an increase in customer journeys on the tram network. Whilst customer levels remain significantly below pre-pandemic levels - end of October averaging 60% - patronage has grown as the people of Nottingham have returned to social activities, schools and universities, and some have returned to work.
- 3.3 Following changes to Government COVID guidelines, NET updated its measures in place to protect customers and staff. Trams returned to their full capacity, with the driver partition areas being removed during September. However, clear signage remains in place, asking all travellers to wear face coverings on board the tram. Compliance dropped over the report period as people have returned to levels of normality. Some Depot restrictions have been removed for staff, although the thermal monitoring station, hand sanitiser stations and hand washing guidance remains in place.
- 3.4 Government guidance changed on 30<sup>th</sup> November, following the detection of the Omicron variant in the UK, with a return to mandatory face coverings on board all forms of public transport.
- 3.5 Covid cases within the business have continued to fluctuate during the period. With cases rising again in October, after several weeks without any reported positive cases. NET has encouraged all staff to ensure they have had their Covid vaccinations to protect themselves from the virus. This continued level of cases has put pressure on employee availability across the business, with some services being affected when colleagues have correctly followed self-isolation instructions.

- 3.6 The tram network has also experienced a significant increase in third party events as the city has come back to life. A variety of issues, including road traffic collisions, emergency services incidents, and bridge incursions, have all had a negative effect on tram service performance.
- 3.7 On Wednesday 11th and Thursday 12th August, a section of the overhead line was reported as damaged. NET Control Room reported a loss of power between the Depot and Basford. Inspections showed that both lines had been damaged, with a tram stuck under a bridge at Basford. Trams in the affected section of line were stranded without power. NTL Technicians began the process of removing the tram and inspecting the extent of damage caused. Repairs to the overhead line equipment took several hours, and testing was carried out to ensure the system was safe to operate again. This caused significant disruption to the tram network, and a dedicated bus shuttle operated between The Forest and Bulwell, with cross ticket acceptance in place on other lines, to support customers with their journeys.
- 3.8 On 31st August, a car collided with the Cinderhill road bridge damaging the bridge wall and sending debris onto tram 214 below the road bridge as the tram approached the tram stop. The tram was substantially damaged with several windows and doors broken and bodyside and roof panels dented. There were no injuries on-board the tram or with the driver of the car. This closed the branch line for several hours. The OHLE was isolated to enable a digger to remove the debris.
- 3.9 On Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> September, the Nottingham Pride Parade took place in the city. The route crosses the tram tracks on Market Street and, due to the road closures required to protect the parade, significant delays were experienced for a number of hours whilst the network was reformed.
- 3.10 During September, the fuel shortages experienced in the UK also caused delays on the tram network, with a number of petrol stations adjacent to the tramway experiencing long queues that blocked tracks. Police attended and assisted with reducing traffic congestion around the petrol stations.

#### **4 TICKET VENDING MACHINE UPGRADES AND CONTACTLESS PAYMENT**

- 4.1 All Ticket vending machines are currently being upgraded across the tram network. The new machines feature a larger, easier to read information screen, contactless payments and the ability to purchase adult Robin Hood PAYG cards from selected locations. The first test TVM machine was installed at Wilkinson Street on 20<sup>th</sup> September, for a trial period. From the 19<sup>th</sup> October, machines are being rolled out, with the target for full completion at the end of January 2022.
- 4.2 Nottingham Contactless was launched on the tram network on the 27<sup>th</sup> September. For the first time, contactless payment was available from validators across the network, meaning that anyone wishing to purchase an adult single or day ticket, could do so by tapping their debit/credit card or mobile device with apple or Google pay at the start of their journey. Over a 1000 trips a day are currently being recorded using this new functionality. This is currently available as single operator on Nottingham Trams and Nottingham City Transport buses, however development is underway to include CT4N services, and to enable multi-operator day capping, allowing customers for the first time to pay using contactless cards across the different services.

## **5 PENALTY FARES**

- 5.1 On 1<sup>st</sup> October, the penalty amount for Penalty Fare Notices was increased from £50 to £70.

## **6 PARTNERSHIP WORKING**

- 6.1 Although anti-social behaviour levels across the network appear to be on a tentative downward trend, we continue to work with the Police through the Transport Hub, local schools and charities, to formulate a meaningful plan centred around engagement with young people across the city.
- 6.2 At Transport Hub meetings, we share updates with Nottingham City Council, NCT, Nottinghamshire Police, British Transport Police and Community Protection. The purpose of these meetings is to continue a formal process of effectively tasking and coordinating Police/Community Protection teams to address ASB problems across the entire public transport network in Nottingham and to share information in relation to trends and frequencies of offending on our network.
- 6.3 We continue to benefit from effective communication channels with Community Protection teams, with a significant number of patrols, both plain-clothed and uniformed, carried out on the network. In the report period almost 900 Community Protection patrols were carried out on board trams. In addition to these patrols, they have been proactive with our Travel Officer Teams and have been present during a number of Revenue Protection operations, where tickets are checked.
- 6.4 NET has supported a successful bid for Home Office funding, to support a Safer Streets campaign, with the aim to specifically tackle violence in the city area and make the night-time economy safer for women and girls. The project has now launched and will run between November 2021 and March 2022 and comprises a number of strands, including:
- Education and Training – delivery of face-to-face and online training which will also be delivered to appropriate NET staff, together with the development of an online training resource and wider education and awareness of safety issues faced by women and girls in the city.
  - Safer Spaces – A designated physical safe place for people to go to if necessary for two weekends each month between November and March.
  - NET/ Police patrols – this funding will allow for a team of a Sergeant and 6 PCs to exclusively patrol our network for one weekend night per month to provide a visible reassurance and crime deterrence function.
  - Public awareness campaign – NET will also support key communications and advertising to support this campaign.

**Trevor Stocker, Head of Operations, Nottingham Trams**