

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 November 2023 to the end of January 2024.

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 were 94.7% and 93.7%, respectively. During the busiest period of the year for the tram network reliability performance was sustained, despite a variety of challenges with weather conditions and a continued impact from third-party events. Storms have brought flooding, snow, high winds, and freezing temperatures to be dealt with. This period has also seen a significant increase in city centre footfall and traffic congestion, again impacting services. Most Saturdays throughout this period have also seen pro-Palestinian marches block tram and road routes, causing some delays on the busiest day of the week.
- 3.2 During the period, there continued to be an increase in third-party incidents, including minor collisions near the Fletcher Gate car park, Meadows Embankment and on Radford Road and Berridge Road. These types of incident can have a knock-on effect on services due to tram availability while repairs to damage are carried out.
- 3.3 On Thursday, November 30, a collision occurred between a tram and a wheelchair that had rolled onto the track. Investigations established that a brake had not been applied correctly by the individual pushing the wheelchair when they turned to close a gate. Although the tram driver responded quickly by applying his brakes, a collision was unavoidable, and the wheelchair user sustained head injuries and was taken to hospital for treatment. The resulting police investigation saw the road closed for approximately seven hours until the person's condition stabilised. Welfare support has since been provided to the tram driver.
- 3.4 Heavy rainfall and stormy weather during December caused issues with localised flooding across the network and debris being blown onto tracks and overhead line equipment with, at Bulwell Forest, the level crossing barrier blown onto the overhead line. Network Rail attended shortly afterwards this event to carry out a repair that allowed services to resume.

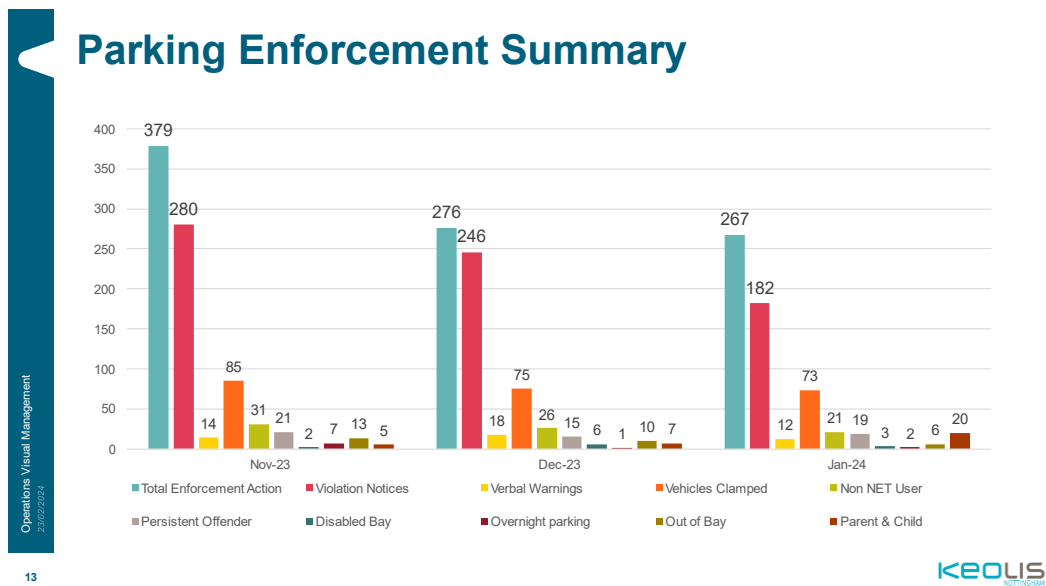
- 3.5 In January, Storm Henk brought heavy county-wide rain, taking the River Trent to record levels and flooding a section of the track at Wilford Lane. It took several days for the water to subside to enable cleaning ahead of service resumption. A cold front later in the month saw temperatures plummet to around -10°C causing issues with frozen screen wash and motors. High winds continued to affect the tramway and surrounding areas, with debris being blown onto tracks.
- 3.6 During 2023, NTL focused on recruiting and training more drivers to provide additional resilience to tram services. This has had a positive impact during the period and improved service performance levels.

4. ZERO TOLERANCE CAMPAIGN – REVENUE PROTECTION UPDATE

- 4.1 In December, a ‘Zero Tolerance’ campaign targeting fare evasion was launched. This saw the revenue team enhance their revenue protection operations with police and security support. It has also been an opportunity to educate customers to ensure they have validated their travel products correctly. This campaign has been very successful and has continued into the new year.

5. PARKING ENFORCEMENT UPDATE

- 5.1 The rollout of parking enforcement, covering all NET park and ride sites, was successfully completed in December. The majority of customer feedback received remains overwhelmingly positive, with parking enforcement having a positive impact on NET customers looking to use P&R sites. The approach has also contributed to the overall security of the network, with officers deterring anti-social behaviour and criminal damage. Enforcement action remains consistent throughout the period.



6. ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR UPDATE

- 6.1 Reports of anti-social behaviour continue to be received and, unfortunately, NET staff continue to experience abuse, and occasionally physical violence, when carrying out their duties. Close working with the police ensures that as much evidence as possible is provided to support prosecutions. Criminal damage to trams and tram stop infrastructure has increased over the period in the Highbury Vale and Bulwell areas. These issues continue to be linked to youth crime and are part of a wider issue in the area that has seen other transport providers also targeted. This has been escalated with police colleagues in the Transport Hub and additional patrols are being carried out to try and tackle the issue.
- 6.2 An increase in anti-social driving around the Toton Lane area and park and ride has been reported. Regular patrols continue to be undertaken and information is shared with the police, however this is part of a nationwide trend. New traffic calming measures are to be installed at the entrance areas to the park and ride site and opportunities for further funding for other measures are being explored with Broxtowe Borough Council. Dedicated patrols took place in the area during October, with a specific focus on deterring this activity.

7. FARES and TICKETING

- 7.1 In January, a month-long, limited-time, annual adult season ticket offer of £450 was launched, a reduction of £225 on the normal price. Also, from the end of January, and throughout February, special discounts on six-month passes were introduced for school and university students. Other NET ticket prices were increased from January 8th, with an adult single ticket increasing to £3.20 and an adult day ticket increasing to £5.30.

8. PARTNERSHIP WORKING AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 8.1 In November, a new initiative was launched with accessibility company, Widgit, to offer an illustrated guide to help those who may struggle to travel independently or may not speak English. The comprehensive guide uses specialist symbols and images to prepare the person for what they can expect when they travel on the tram, helping to reduce any stress and anxiety. A special one-page guide to use during their travel has also been created. A class of special needs children from Rosehill School assisted in part of the launch to test out the symbolised guides available to download from the NET website (QR codes are available at our TVMs and on window stickers on our trams) or pick up from the travel centre.
- 8.2 Following the shortlisting of ten charities for NET Charity of the Year 2024, the winner was announced as Nottingham Central Women's Aid. We look forward to raising as much money as possible for the charity and working to support them where possible.
- 8.3 A cheque for £2,500 has been presented by NET to The Pythian Club, the money having been raised through parking fines at the park and ride facilities. The money will support a scheme that includes the refurbishment of bicycles that young people can use to get to work or college or to access essential services. They will also use it to purchase England football kits to encourage participation in the sport.

Trevor Stocker, Head of Operations, Nottingham Trams