

Nottingham City Council

Greater Nottingham Light Rapid Transit Advisory Committee

Minutes of the meeting held at Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham, NG2 3NG on 12 March 2024 from 2.02 pm - 3.10 pm

Membership

Nottingham City Council

- ✓ Councillor Helen Kalsi (Chair)
- ✓ Councillor Angela Kandola
- ✓ Councillor Michael Savage
- ✓ Councillor Hayley Spain

Nottinghamshire County Council

- ✓ Councillor Jim Creamer
- ✓ Councillor Richard Jackson (substitute)
Councillor Eric Kerry
Councillor John Ogle
Councillor Francis Purdue-Horan
Councillor Gordon Wheeler

NET User Representatives

- Roger Bacon (Travel Watch East Midlands)
- Ian Bates (East Midlands Chamber of Commerce)
- ✓ Justin Donne (Nottingham Federation of Small Businesses)
Helen Hemstock (RiseWise)
Chris Roy (Nottingham Trent University)
- ✓ Lorraine Salt-Pulford (Nottingham City Disability Involvement Group)
- ✓ Jim Thomas (Nottinghamshire Better Transport)

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| Jo Bentley | - Head of Customer Experience, Nottingham Trams |
| Andrew Conroy | - Chief Operating Officer, Tramlink Nottingham |
| Andrew Holdstock | - Senior NET Project Engineer, Nottingham City Council |
| Alison Sweeney | - Head of Marketing, Tramlink Nottingham |
| Phil Wye | - Governance Officer |

26 Apologies for Absence

Councillor Eric Kerry – personal reasons
Councillor John Ogle – other Council business
Councillor Francis Purdue-Horan – other Council business
Councillor Gordon Wheeler – other Council business

27 Declarations of Interests

None.

28 Minutes

The Committee confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 12 December 2023 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair.

29 NET Operational Performance and Progress Update

Jo Bentley, Head of Customer Experience, Nottingham Trams, presented the report updates the Committee on the performance and progress of NET from the beginning of November 2023 to the end of January 2024, highlighting the following:

- (a) 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;
- (b) 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;
- (c) 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;
- (d) 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;
- (e) 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;
- (f) 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 dropped 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;
- (g) 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;

- (h) 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;
- (i) 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 Park and Ride sites. The approach has also contributed to the overall security of the network, with officers deterring anti-social behaviour and criminal damage;
- (j) reports of anti-social behaviour continue to be received and 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;
- (k) 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;
- (a) 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;
- (b) following the shortlisting of ten charities for NET Charity of the Year 2024, the winner was Nottingham Central Women's Aid. Also, a cheque for £2,500 was 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.

The following points were made during the discussion which followed:

- (n) it is difficult to predict the times that anti-social behaviour will occur, which can make it difficult to deploy police patrols accurately;
- (o) there has been a noticeable difference at the Forest park and ride, with a larger police presence meaning that fewer people are trying to board trams for free. Local residents have made positive comments on this impact;
- (p) traffic calming measures at the Toton Lane park and ride are not working and anti-social driving continues to be an issue for the local residents. Tramlink is working with Broxtowe Borough Council on the implementation of an injunction for the area which would allow for an increased police presence and enforcement;
- (q) the car park at the Forest park and ride can only be used by tram users. Enforcement officers are on hand to make sure that this is the case, and also that people do not just buy a tram ticket and then walk away. Signage has been improved and there is an alternative car park for park users;
- (r) the Clifton South park and ride is also only to be used by tram users, and should not be used by those only using the Nottingham Trent University hopper bus.

Resolved to note the report

30 Customer Survey Results

Alison Sweeney, Head of Marketing, Tramlink Nottingham, delivered a presentation on the results of an online customer survey of 1,200 participants from areas that have traditionally seen commuting into Nottingham City Centre, undertaken in Summer 2023, and highlighted the following:

- (a) tram users tend to be those with no children or young families, working full time, travelling in and around Nottingham weekly. Most users are 18-34 year olds travelling for work, followed by families travelling for leisure and students;
- (b) tram users tend to be full time workers with high usage of the internet and social media. 72% of tram users use the tram 1-4 times a week, reflecting the prevalence of hybrid working;
- (c) awareness of NET is very high among tram users and non-users and they are very well regarded. Perception of the service is good for convenience, frequency and speed. Those with season tickets are more likely to say that it is good value for money;
- (d) the tram is the favoured mode of public transport and its usage is likely to increase, with respondents saying they are likely to increase their tram usage in future;
- (e) the tram scores higher than the bus in almost all categories, the exception being Helpful Staff. This could be because tram drivers are less able to interact with passengers, being behind a window. However, season ticket holders are more

likely to report friendly staff;

- (f) those travelling with weekly or season tickets are most likely to have travelled during trackwork and say they have received the most useful information from social media. 91% of respondents said that the information released during these periods was useful;
- (g) satisfaction is high and almost all tram passengers would recommend the NET service. Of the small percentage who wouldn't recommend NET, the highest reasons were price and reliability. Things that would encourage people to use the tram more include better value tickets, more routes, and late-night trams.
- (h) the £2 bus ticket scheme continues to have an impact on the tram as a travel provider. NET cannot compete and undercut the buses, so must make sure that the service is affordable and reliant, working with the buses to create a quality integrated transport network across Nottingham;
- (i) a representative sample of tram users were surveyed. This included older and disabled people;
- (j) the cost of a season ticket on the tram is lower than the Workplace Parking Levy. However, it has been a struggle at some employment sites to encourage people to switch away from their cars.

Resolved to

(1) note the information;

(2) request that the full report of the survey results be circulated to Committee members.

31 Work Plan

There were no changes to the usual work plan.

Nottingham City Council, at its meeting on 4 March 2024, approved a reduction in the number of meetings of this Committee in the 2024-25 Municipal Year to two, in July and January. All Committee Members have been informed of this by email.