

NET OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE AND PROGRESS UPDATE

1. SUMMARY OF ISSUES

- 1.1. The report updates the Committee on the performance and progress of NET from the beginning of June to the end of October 2016.

2. RECOMMENDATION

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

3. OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE

- 3.1. Tram service reliability and punctuality, during the five month period from June to the end of October, remained extremely high, with levels of 99.5% and 98.3% respectively achieved. This is not dissimilar to Line One operational performance prior to full service commencement.
- 3.2. Sadly, on 15th August, shortly before 11pm, a man was struck by a tram between Basford and David Lane tram stops, sustaining fatal injuries. The incident is currently being investigated by the police, the Rail Accident Investigation Bureau and the Office of the Rail Regulator and Nottingham Trams are assisting all organisations with their investigations. An inquest into the events surrounding the incident is due to take place in February 2017.

4. TICKETING

- 4.1. Following customer feedback, Group Tickets can now be purchased from the earlier time of 4pm, as well as at weekends and during school holidays. This offer was heavily promoted over the summer, with particular emphasis being given to travelling to the events that took place in and around the city.
- 4.2. A new short hop ticket has recently been introduced, enabling travel within the city centre for only one pound. The ticket offers a significant saving on the network's standard £1.70 single fare and is available from tram stop ticket machines at the Lace

Market, Old Market Square and Royal Centre as well as the Station and Nottingham Trent University stops.

- 4.3. The child age limit has also been raised from 16 to up to and including 18 across all tram fares, with the aim of encouraging young people to use the tram when travelling to and from school, college or their apprenticeship placement.
- 4.4. Students age 18 and over now have the option of purchasing Robin Hood season cards, which allow travel by tram, bus and train in the Greater Nottingham City area. Cards can be purchased for one, three, six or twelve month periods, as well as for an academic year. These are in addition to the various tram-only student season and day tickets that are available.

5. EVENTS

- 5.1. NET has worked closely with various event organisers throughout the period to raise awareness of travelling by tram. These events include Riverside Festival, Nottingham Carnival, Beeston Carnival and a number of community events in Clifton, which included the transformation of the park and ride site into a drive-in cinema over a weekend in September.
- 5.2. Emphasis on customer service has been prerequisite when planning special events, especially if disruption of service is necessary, and communication, both before and during the event is the key customer activity. The use of Travel Officers as Ambassadors to provide a 'here to help' service has been appreciated by customers and the general public during these events.
- 5.3. The route of the Robin Hood Marathon, which took place on 25th September, crossed the tracks at Lenton, requiring tram services to be suspended for a two hour period between QMC and Meadows Way Tramstops. A special ticketing arrangement with Nottingham City Transport, which allowed joint acceptance of tickets, was put in place, resulting in both bus and tram customers experiencing minimal disruption to their journeys.
- 5.4. The annual Goose Fair took place at the Forest recreation ground between 5th and 9th October, with record customer numbers achieved for the period. Travel Officers were deployed to ensure all customers had a valid ticket or smartcard before entering the compulsory ticket area at The Forest Tramstop and anybody without a ticket was sold one from a hand held ticket machine. The tram service was enhanced with additional trams operating during peak periods.

5.5. A special timetable was put into operation on Sunday 28th August to allow planned track replacement work at David Lane and Phoenix Park to take place. A dedicated replacement bus service was put in place to service affected stops and minimise any disruption to customers.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

6.1. NET has been involved in a wide variety of community engagement events during the period. These have included:

- sponsorship of the annual Nottingham Community Volunteer Services (NCVS) conference, and participation in their recently launched “Community Stars” campaign which will run throughout 2017 to give recognition to local volunteers and encourage others to get involved;
- the annual International Byron Festival, celebrating the life and works of Lord Byron in Hucknall. Activities along the Hucknall line included dance performances, with a Lord Byron look-alike taking a journey on the tram;
- partnership with the First Story charity to launch ‘Stories on the Trams’, for which school pupils created short written pieces exploring their ideas of ‘Nottinghamness’. Local screenwriter, William (Billy) Ivory, lent his support to the initiative and delivered a special workshop to pupils from The Farnborough Academy at the depot, on his own tram;
- sponsorship of chairs for the Fletcher Road street party on the Queen’s birthday;
- raising awareness of local charity Forces in the Community, when ex-serviceman, Rick Harrington, was helped by volunteers and armed forces veterans in pulling an entire 39-ton tram along a section of track;
- provision of safety talks to schools and other local organisations.

6.2. Thursday 25th August marked a year since the opening of NET Phase Two to Toton and Clifton. To celebrate, a number of activities were organised to thank customers for their support of the system over the last 12 months, including a commuter breakfast at QMC, and NETs Big Competition, working with partners across the City, including Smooth Radio, to give away prizes to customers.

6.3. The last of Nottingham’s new trams has been named after local artist Dame Laura Knight, whose childhood home now overlooks Noel Street Tramstop. She was the first artist to be made a Dame and the first woman to be elected to the Royal Academy.

7. 2016 LIGHT RAIL AWARDS

- 7.1. NET was named as the Most Improved System at the prestigious 2016 Global Light Rail Awards industry award ceremony, whilst Customer Service also won a highly commended award for Team of the Year. Judges in the Most Improved System category were impressed that within a few months of more than doubling the size of the network in August 2015, NET returned to the hugely impressive performance levels of 98 – 99%.

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