



## Public Questions and Responses: Transport Committee 28<sup>th</sup> May 2024

### Agenda Item 4: Tees Valley Bus Service Improvement Plan Review

	Question	Response
Bus service to New Marske	What is being done about the regular cancellation of the last bus to Marske Estate, leaving residents having to pay for taxis who are unable to walk the substantial distance from the centre of the village?	<p>This relates to a commercial bus service operated by Arriva. Arriva can be contacted at <a href="#">Contact Us   Arriva Bus</a> or 0344 800 4411.</p> <p>If a customer disagrees with the response received to any complaint by an operator, they can approach Bus Users UK. The contact details for Bus Users UK are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Address: Bus Users UK, Terminal House, Shepperton, TW17 8AS.</li><li>• Telephone: 0300 111 0001</li><li>• Email: <a href="mailto:enquiries@bususers.org">enquiries@bususers.org</a></li></ul> <p>If necessary, they may refer the complaint to the Bus Appeals Body (<a href="http://www.busappealsbody.co.uk">www.busappealsbody.co.uk</a>)</p>
Tap On Tap Off (TOTO) ticketless travel	Arriva introduced TOTO in March 2023, but Stagecoach still issues paper tickets, so customers don't benefit from the daily price cap if they switch between bus companies. When will this be resolved?	<p>Arriva has implemented Tap On Tap Off technology for customers using their services. Through the Enhanced Partnership, TVCA is encouraging Stagecoach to introduce the technology, but it is a decision that TVCA has no direct control over. TVCA has an aspiration for multi-operator fare capping across all operators and is engaged with a national project to roll-out the required back office system. The timeframe is dependent on the roll-out of the national system and subject to agreement with all operators.</p>

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<p>Bus Service Improvement</p>	<p>Bus services throughout the TVCA region are in a parlous state. This is partially down to insufficient funding. There is evidently, interest in purchasing part of the Airport equity. Could proceeds from such a sale be put into bus service improvements?</p>	<p>TVCA does not agree with the statement about bus services in the Tees Valley. Analysis has been undertaken to compare the Tees Valley bus network pre and post COVID-19. The analysis considers Tees Valley residential properties within 400 metres of a bus stop (this being considered the distance that most people can walk within 5 minutes) at which there is a regular service of a minimum of 1 bus per hour operating Monday – Saturday between 9:00 am and 6:00 pm. The analysis shows that coverage has slightly improved, with 91.56% of Tees Valley residential properties able to access a bus service based on this definition. Whilst the commercial network has decreased marginally, the supported network over this period has increased because of the investment made by TVCA. This analysis also excludes Tees Flex, which does provide a service in many of the areas without a commercial service.</p> <p>The TVCA constitution defines the purpose and responsibility of Transport Committee, which does not include any reference to Teesside International Airport. Therefore, it is not appropriate to answer the question regarding the airport.</p>
<p>Electric buses, and decarbonisation of transport</p>	<p>What is the average age of the <b>Arriva</b> diesel bus fleet on Teesside, and how is it different from five years ago?</p>	<p>Tees Valley Combined Authority does not hold this detailed information. This query would need to be directed to Arriva.</p>
<p>Electric buses, and decarbonisation of transport</p>	<p>What is the average age of the <b>Stagecoach</b> diesel bus fleet on Teesside, and how is it different from five years ago?</p>	<p>Tees Valley Combined Authority does not hold this detailed information. This query would need to be directed to Stagecoach.</p>



**Agenda Item 5: Tees Valley Timetable Updates, Bus Shelter Upgrades and Real Time Information**

	Question	Response
Timetable updates	Will all new timetables have braille or a service announcement for visually impaired users?	Braille timetables are available from the bus operators on request. There is an ambition in the Bus Service Improvement Plan to introduce audio-visual next stop announcements in all buses, but this is a decision for the bus operators and one that TVCA has no direct control over.
Middlesbrough Bus Station Screens	The information screens at Middlesbrough Bus Station were switched off in February 2023. Why are the screens still out of order 15 months later?	Middlesbrough Bus Station is currently owned and managed by Middlesbrough Council, therefore queries about why the screens have been out of order for so long should be addressed to the Council.  TVCA has been working on a temporary solution to enable the information screens to be reinstated.
Middlesbrough Bus Station Screens	The decision to share the Bus Station Screen Software with Durham County Council is a suboptimal solution. Relying on this 3rd party supplier will inevitably increase the risk of failure to provide timely and accurate information to passengers. Will the TVCA reconsider this decision?	TVCA do not agree with this assertion and the work has already progressed to an advanced stage. Working with Durham County Council, and the supplier they have procured, enables the screens to be up and running quickly without the need to procure a new and expensive back-office system. It provides the most cost-effective solution, working with an established supplier. Further work will be undertaken to consider options in the longer term.

**Agenda Item 6: Tees Valley Local Bus Service Performance**

	Question	Response
Tees Flex	Is Tees Flex making a profit?	Tees Flex is a subsidised bus service that was introduced to provide coverage in areas with limited commercial bus service coverage. Providing bus services in areas that are not commercially viable requires public subsidy.

Anything is possible



Tees Flex	Monthly rides have remained constant at around 7,000 rides per calendar month since 2021. How much money does this service lose per calendar month?	The monthly contract price for the provision of the Tees Flex service is £100,478.50.
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**Agenda item 7: Integrated Transport Programme Update**

Item	Question	Response
Marske Station - timescale for disability access	In Ben Houchen's recent election promise literature it showed in the future that Marske Railway Station was going to become disability compliant, can you please advise the cost and timescale for this project?	<p>Proposals for improvements at Marske Station are at an early stage of development and as this work progresses, the cost and timescales for delivery will be confirmed.</p> <p>Any queries regarding election literature should be addressed to the person / organisation sending out the material.</p>
Middlesbrough Railway Station	The projected cost for the completion of this project was recently announced at £50m in April. It is now projected to cost £80m a month later. Can you please quantify the extra £30m and what it will be spent on?	<p>The phase 3 works at Middlesbrough Station, to deliver the additional platform, track and infrastructure, to provide more reliability and capacity are at an advanced stage of development. The costs have increased due to an increased scope of works following discussions between Network Rail and the rail industry about ensuring sufficient future capacity for growth in the longer-term.</p> <p>TVCA approved a £22.5m allocation to this project. It was intended</p>

		<p>to seek additional funding from the Department for Transport Railway Network Enhancement Pipeline (RNEP). However, significant pressure on RNEP from across the UK created a risk of failing to secure the required funding and subsequent delay.</p> <p>To ensure capacity is delivered as soon as possible to deliver benefits to passengers and Tees Valley as a whole, a revised funding strategy was developed for TVCA to provide all funding to deliver the project. This was approved by TVCA Cabinet in January 2024.</p>
Hartlepool railway station improvements	The original deadline for completion of these improvements was 29 June 2023, but it is now expected to be 31 May 2024. What is the reason for this delay? What is the expected final budget for this project?	The project has been delayed due to a number of risks which materialised on this project, including land acquisition, supply chain issues for materials and industrial action in the rail industry. Many of these risks were quantified and risk / contingencies factored into the budget accordingly. The expected final TVCA budget allocation is predicted to be circa £11,656,925.
Proposed direct rail service between Hartlepool and Darlington	When is the cost/benefit analysis of this project going to be published? What is the benefit/cost (BCR) of this project?	Development work is on-going to produce a business case, which will need to demonstrate value for money. The timeframe for completion of this work still needs to be finalised.
South Bank railway station improvements	On 4 May 2024, the TVCA stated that the budget for this project was £40m. It has now risen to £60m. What is the reason for this?	TVCA Cabinet approved a £40m allocation to this project in January 2024. The budget has not changed.
New Rail and Bus Station at Teesside Park	This £150m project was announced by Ben Houchen on 2 January 2024. When is the cost/benefit analysis of this project going to be published? What is the benefit/cost (BCR) of this project?	TVCA Cabinet approved a £150m allocation to the Stockton Health and Care Zone project in January 2024, which includes funding for improvements at Thornaby Station and a proposed new Teesside Park Station. Development work is on-going to produce a business

		case, which will need to demonstrate value for money. The timeframe for completion of this work still needs to be finalised.
East Cleveland Rail	Numerous feasibility studies have been conducted on this scheme, all of which have demonstrated that it can never be viable. Why is the TVCA spending £1m on yet another feasibility study?	<p>There have been previous high-level feasibility studies on the potential to reinstate passenger train services on the Saltburn to Boulby freight line in East Cleveland. However, these studies have been desktop in nature and more detailed work is needed aligned to Network Rail and Department for Transport processes for the development and delivery of rail projects to determine whether this scheme is viable.</p> <p>This more detailed feasibility study will focus on two key elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the strategic case for the project, including potential future demand, which is fundamental to the viability of extending rail services into East Cleveland.</li> <li>• Define the infrastructure requirements, including what interventions would be required to the track and signalling, identifying potential station locations, and providing a cost estimate for the project.</li> </ul>
Eaglescliffe Railway Station Improvements	Will the station be manned in case of lift failure? If not, how will wheelchair users or those otherwise mobility impaired gain access or leave the station? The incline of the current footbridge in use is dangerous and not accessible to wheelchair users or those otherwise mobility impaired. In winter it turns to black ice making it dangerous to all. How will you improve this?	<p>As part of the project at Eaglescliffe Railway Station, in addition to the new lifts and footbridge that are to be installed, it has been decided to retain and refurbish the current footbridge to provide a secondary means of access / escape.</p> <p>Operational management of the station itself is the responsibility of Network Rail and Northern as the Station Facilities operator. Queries relating to the operation of the station need to be directed to them.</p>
Active Travel Program	When will you be implementing the removal of the	Tees Valley Combined Authority is currently working through the

	Linthorpe Road cycle lane in Middlesbrough?	detail. There are several steps to consider, including detailed design, statutory processes, procurement of contractor and construction. A timeframe will be available once this work is complete.
Billingham Railway Station Improvements	This station is not manned. How are wheelchair users or those otherwise mobility impaired supposed to gain access or leave the station when the lifts are out of order?	Operational management of the station is the responsibility of Network Rail and Northern as the Station Facilities operator. Queries relating to the operation of the station need to be directed to them.
Station Accessibility and Modal Integration Enhancements	Which stations have been identified for this?	Proposals for appropriate improvements at all rail stations across Tees Valley are at an early stage of development and part of this work will confirm costs and timescales.
Station Accessibility and Modal Integration Enhancements	Have you consulted disabled people organisations on access needs including level boarding?	Level boarding is an issue for the Train Operating Companies to consider. This query needs to be directed to the Train Operating Companies running services in the Tees Valley.
Autonomous Trams	Who is developing the proposal for the autonomous trams?	Tees Valley Combined Authority is developing the proposal in conjunction with industry experts. There will also be a need to develop it in partnership with the local authorities, given their responsibility for the highway.
Transporter Bridge	When will the outcome of the structural surveys be published?	Middlesbrough Council and Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council are responsible for the Transporter Bridge as the joint asset owners. This question needs to be directed to them. TVCA Cabinet has approved a funding allocation of £30m to bring the bridge back to full operational capacity.

## Agenda item 8: Tees Valley U21 Bus Fare Offer

Item	Question	Response
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# TEES VALLEY

Spend

Is the U21 bus fare scheme costing £3,468m for one year?

The total budget allocated for the scheme is £3,468m. Operators will be paid on a 'no better, no worse' basis, based on the actual number of trips. There is therefore an element of contingency within the budget.