

---

## Tees Valley Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Cavendish House, Teesdale Business Park, Stockton-On-Tees, TS17 6QY  
Thursday, 14th October, 2021 at 10:00am .

---

**Present:**

Cllr Hobson (Chair) (Middlesbrough Council)  
Cllr Smith (Vice Chair) (Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council)  
Cllr Barlow (Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council)  
Cllr Dulston (Darlington Borough Council)  
Cllr Harker (Darlington Borough Council)  
Cllr Harrison (Hartlepool Borough Council)  
Cllr Hobson (Middlesbrough Council)  
Cllr Jones (Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council)  
Cllr Renton (Darlington Borough Council)  
Cllr Riordan (Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council)  
Cllr Stephenson (Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council)  
Cllr Wells (Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council)

**Officers:**

Julie Gilhespie - Group Chief Executive TVCA  
Alison Fellows - Group Commercial Director  
Tom Bryant - Head of Transport TVCA  
Phil Forster - Managing Director - Teesside International Airport  
Peter Judge - Chief Legal Officer, Monitoring Officer TVCA  
Sharon Jones - Governance & Scrutiny Officer TVCA

**Also in attendance:**

Cllr Scott - Leader, Darlington Borough Council

**Apologies for absence:**

Cllr Loynes (Hartlepool Borough Council)  
Cllr Branson (Middlesbrough Council)

### 1        **Declarations of interest**

None

### 2        **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 15th September were agreed as a true record.

### 3        **Chief Executive's Update**

A paper was circulated giving Members an update on activity of the Combined Authority since the last meeting.

The Committee were advised that the biggest concern for TVCA currently is around funding that will be received in place of previous European funding. Post Brexit the funding is winding down and we are waiting to understand what will replace this, and any impact on the Investment Plan. We are hoping to receive

some confirmation by the end of October. There seems to be a move towards Combined Authorities bidding for smaller pots of funding, but this is not a strategic way of working. With transport funding we feel reasonably comfortable. A wider funding settlement has already been agreed and we have the flexibility to do what we need within this. By the next meeting, and with the release of the draft budget in December, we should have a better understanding of the funding available moving forward.

Covid Response - It was agreed to circulate a breakdown of the number of businesses across each Local Authority that have received assistance from the Covid Recovery Fund and also a breakdown of the 60 schools who have benefitted from the Education Recovery Fund.

It was questioned when the promised Teesworks jobs will start to materialise. The long term, higher skilled jobs will start to come through with the investment of businesses. GE will be the first business to come to site, the building of the factory is due to start next month and will take a couple of years to complete. It is then that we will see the higher-level jobs being filled. There is a skills challenge with this, and we need to make sure we upskill our future workforce to allow those jobs to be fulfilled when they arrive. We are already working with BP and BEIS to work through how we train people for those jobs in advance. There are construction jobs available on site currently.

Resolved that the detail of the report was noted.

#### **4 Transport Portfolio Update**

A report was circulated providing members with an update on transport activity across the Combined Authority. A presentation was also delivered.

Discussion took place around the following areas:

Do we anticipate an Oyster card type of travel pass for Tees Valley? The aspiration is for passengers to be able to tap on and off, but this will take several years. There is a national project for this for buses and the next step will be to try and integrate this with rail.

Cycle paths - whilst the plans for new cycle paths are ambitious there are already numerous issues with the existing paths that need addressing as part of the plan. Issues raised include cars being able to park on the tracks, security and safety issues and overgrown trees and shrubs blocking the routes. TB advised that he would pick up any issues raised around existing cycle paths with the relevant officers in the Local authority.

Is the funding for the Northern Link Road ever likely to be forthcoming? At the minute there is no government commitment to fund this project. There are other schemes we have got onto the government agenda as we have put forward a strong case for the funding. That is not to say that we won't be able to get the funding in the future and we will continue to look at this, and other options for possible funding packages.

Further detail on the plans for the new Tees crossing will be circulated following

the meeting.

Tees Flex service - The trial for this service was launched just before Covid so it is not felt that we have seen a true reflection of usage at this stage. We are looking at ways to try and encourage people to travel together, possibly with a discounted fare for doing this. There are a high number of cancellations and currently no penalties for cancelling trips. The service is carrying about 1500 people a week, those people would have no public transport without this service. The trial will continue and once we have another 6-12 months' worth of data to analyse then we will have a clearer pattern of usage. Customer satisfaction regarding the service is high. Tees Flex is being utilised in some areas for school children getting to and from school, but we need to make sure this is balanced with the needs of the general public also.

It was questioned if the service could be used on an evening as a means of transport for people to get home where there are long waits for taxis. TB advised that he would have a conversation with Stagecoach around this suggestion and see if it could be a viable area to explore further.

It was agreed to circulate some more in-depth data regarding the service and those utilising it.

Wheels 2 Work - further data on the cost of this per person will be circulated following the meeting.

The presentation delivered in the meeting will be circulated to Members.

Resolved that the detail of the report and the presentation is noted.

## **5 Delegated Decisions**

A report was circulated detailing the Delegated Decisions taken by the Combined Authority since the last meeting.

Resolved that the detail of the report was noted

## **6 Meetings and Forward Plan**

The meeting schedule and Forward Plan for the Committee was circulated.

Volunteer members for the Finance & Resources Sub-Committee will be sought. The sub committee will be chaired by Cllr Sandra Smith.

Resolved that the Forward plan and meeting schedule is agreed.

## **7 Teesside International Airport Update**

The Chair proposed, and the committee agreed to pass a resolution to exclude the press and public from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the Teesside International Airport update.

A report was circulated to Members giving an update on Teesside International Airport, this included the Confidential Business Plan. A presentation was also delivered by Phil Forster, Managing Director.

Resolved that the detail of the report and the presentation is noted.

**8 Appendix 1 - Teesside International Airport Business Plan**

Resolved that the detail of the Business Plan is noted.