



AGENDA ITEM 4

REPORT TO THE TEES VALLEY COMBINED AUTHORITY CABINET

22ND SEPTEMBER 2023

REPORT OF THE TEES VALLEY MAYOR

TEES VALLEY MAYOR'S UPDATE

SUMMARY

This report provides a general update on the key activities of the Mayor and Combined Authority since the last Cabinet meeting, which are not covered in other reports to this meeting.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Tees Valley Combined Authority Cabinet notes the report.

DETAIL

RAIL STATIONS

1. The redevelopment of the undercroft at Middlesbrough Station is making progress. The structural steelwork has been installed, a key milestone in the project, which will see the creation of a new station entrance, pedestrian walkway between Zetland Road at the south of the station and the existing subway, and two new premises. As part of the project, the current stairs in the ticket hall will be relocated to the concourse and there will be an open public space at the east end of the former car park.
2. Work on the Darlington Station project is progressing. Demolition and site clearance on the eastern gateway is complete, piling work is complete and work has begun to erect the steel frame for the new station building and multistorey car park. CGI images of the new station have also been released. Network Rail has begun enabling work at the station and this will continue, with preparatory work beginning in the existing train shed.
3. At Hartlepool station, the new footbridge and lifts have been installed and work to bring platform 3 back into use is progressing, with the canopy construction at an advanced stage. The remaining work is now being undertaken, with the project scheduled to be complete in the autumn. It is anticipated that the new platform will be operational for the December 2023 timetable change, enabling the new Middlesbrough to Newcastle semi-fast service to commence every other hour, in addition to the existing hourly service.

BUS ISSUES



4. Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) was allocated £1.5m of BSIP+ funding for 2023-24. Working collectively with all local authorities, TVCA has already used some of the funding to intervene on several of the service withdrawals made by Arriva. The second phase of work will involve 'kick-starting' a package of service enhancements and procurement of the services is now underway.
5. The DfT funded £2 fare cap has been extended until October 2023. This will be followed by a longer-term cap of £2.50, running from 1 November 2023 to 30 November 2024.
6. In terms of the Arriva concessionary fares settlement appeal, TVCA has now submitted all evidence to the adjudicator. The adjudicator's decision is now awaited, but TVCA has not been provided with a timeframe within which the decision will be made.

TEESSIDE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

7. Figures have shown that June was Teesside Airport's busiest month since September 2010, with 25,666 passengers pass through the terminal, followed by 24,781 in July, as part of the Airport's summer season. This follows news that the Cargo Handling Facility had its biggest week for business since it was established in August 2022. Recent movements included a number of thoroughbred championship horses set for York Races.
8. Teesside Airport was also successful in the next phase of Government's £8million Hydrogen Transport Hub demonstration, which will see a permanent hydrogen refuelling station based on its site. Element 2, which established the previous station, will set up a temporary refuelling station in 2024 ahead of a permanent station late 2024/early 2025.
9. Work has begun to turn part of the airport into a new Teesside Aviation Skills Academy to train and teach Teesside University aviation students. Construction is under way to turn part of the terminal building into a base from which students can learn on-the-job skills across a range of functions including air traffic control, management and engineering.

TEESWORKS

10. Steelwork is now being erected at SeAH Wind's £450million offshore wind monopile factory, following a £100million-plus deal between SeAH, British Steel and Severfield. This will see steel from British Steel's Teesside Beam Mill at Lackenby used in the facility. The first phase of the 1.9km South Bank Watercourse is complete, with the second phase under way. The system will initially help manage large volumes of water draining from the SeAH site, with a salt marsh habitat becoming part of the project in its third phase.
11. The independent review into Teesworks, led by Lancashire County Council Chief Executive Angie Ridgewell, is ongoing. TVCA and STDC continue to work with the panel to provide all relevant information.



CREATIVE PLACE

12. TVCA invested £2m to enable the delivery of The Tall Ships Races to visit Hartlepool at the beginning of July. Delivered by Hartlepool Borough Council in partnership with Sail Training International, the four-day event attracted coverage from BBC's 'The One Show' and attracted residents and visitors to meet the crews, visit ships and experience a diverse programme of live events and performances. Hosting the races also enabled c. 100 young people from across Tees Valley to join the crews of some of some of the ships and participate in incoming and outgoing legs of the race. Evaluation is still underway to capture the full impacts of the event.

TEES VALLEY BUSINESS

13. Made Smarter is a government-backed initiative designed to improve the productivity of manufacturers through the adoption of Industrial Design Technologies (IDTs). Tees Valley Business continues to work as part of a NE Cluster with the North-East LEP to deliver the 2023/24 programme. Tees Valley has an allocation of £800k, that will continue to support approximately 50 manufacturing businesses. The NE Cluster has now been invited to apply for an addition £1.2m for 2024/25.

CLEAN GROWTH AND INNOVATION

14. The Tees Valley's Cluster Plan for Decarbonisation was launched on 28th March at an event attended by representatives of the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ), Tees Valley's major industrials, and other key stakeholders. The advisory group from this project has now formed the Tees Valley Industrial Net Zero Leadership Group, which met on the 10th July with Darren Smith as the independent chair. The new group will work towards a single unified voice for the Tees industrial cluster and seek to foster collaboration on key challenges.
15. TVCA's flagship Trees on Tees scheme has seen strong progress, with a coordinator and team of officers appointed. A recent promotion via social media on the Trees on Tees Campaign Page has resulted in a total response by 64 businesses, 24 landowners, 10 schools, 19 community groups and 399 residents. Discussions with respondents has resulted in 25 offers of support coming forward from business and landowners including the identification of 7 small sites on which to plant trees, offers of financial support and an interest in corporate volunteering. Trees on Tees continues to support its LA partners in their planting projects and an Expression of Interest to become one of two new Community Forests in England was submitted on 21st July.
16. The Hub's Solar Schools Enabling Fund has received positive feedback from Abingdon Primary School in Middlesbrough, which has been able to install solar panels and reduce energy bills as a result of a grant received. A programme is being developed to deliver a second Solar Schools Enabling Fund to be delivered entirely by TVCA in Tees Valley.



FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

18. There are no financial implications to this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

19. There are no legal implications to this report.

RISK ASSESSMENT

20. This report is an update and therefore is categorised as low risk.

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