

**TEES VALLEY  
ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP PLAN AND SCHEME**

**FINAL DRAFT**

10<sup>th</sup> December 2021

# **ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP (EP) PLAN AND SCHEME - CONTENTS**

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Final Draft

## PART 1 - EP PLAN

THE TEES VALLEY ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP PLAN FOR BUSES IS MADE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 138G(1) OF THE TRANSPORT ACT 2000 BY THE TEES VALLEY COMBINED AUTHORITY (TVCA).

### Definitions

**Affected Operator** – When agreeing a bespoke variation to the Scheme, an affected operator is considered to be one where at least one of their currently registered local bus services would use the proposed facility, or be impacted by the proposed measure.

**Bus Gate** – short stretch of road carriageway that is restricted to use by buses and (where specified) taxis and other authorised vehicles as indicated on appropriate signage on the approach.

**Bus Lane** – signposted lane, designated for use by registered local bus services and (where specified) taxis and other authorised vehicles, at the times also indicated by signage.

**CCTV** – closed circuit television system, whereby static or mobile cameras are used to record offences or for surveillance and safety and security purposes.

**EP Scheme Area** – area to which this EP Scheme document applies.

**Euro VI equivalent standards** – Euro VI diesel bus or a bus with Clean Vehicle Retrofit Accreditation Scheme (CVRAS) approved technology retrofitted to a diesel bus to reduce nitrogen oxides (NOx) and particulate matter (PM) emissions and achieve Euro VI equivalent standards.

**Facilities** – physical assets that are provided at specific locations along particular routes (or parts of routes) within the EP scheme area or new and improved bus priority measures. This is deemed for such purposes by section 138D(1) of the Transport Act 2000.

**Measures** – improvements with the aim of:

- increasing the use of local bus services serving the routes to which the measures relate or ending or reducing a decline in their use; or
- improving the quality of local bus services.

**Local Authorities** – prescribed under section 23 of the Local Government Act 2003.

**Local Highway Authorities** – Local Authority with responsibility for the maintenance of highway infrastructure in its local authority area. In the case of this EP Scheme, this means Darlington Borough Council, Hartlepool Borough Council, Middlesbrough Council, Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council and Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council.

**Local Transport Authority (LTA)** – the Tees Valley Combined Authority.

**Multi-Operator Ticketing** – common fares and/or ticketing products applied and accepted by multiple operators.

**Network Stability Protocol** – specified dates throughout the year, agreed between TVCA and bus operators, on which local bus service changes take place.

**Real Time Information** – using technology to track the location of buses in real time. Information is transmitted to bus stops or devices to indicate to passengers the predicted arrival time at a particular point.

**Registered Local Bus Service** – as set out in Section 2 of the Transport Act 1985.

**Road and Street Works Permit** – permit issued by Local Highway Authorities to any organisation that wishes to undertake street works, with the aim of managing works on the public highway. Local authorities have powers to operate permit schemes under Part 3 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 and The Traffic Management Permit Scheme (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015.

**TRO** – Traffic Regulation Order, made under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 or any other enactment regulating the use of roads or other places.

**TVCA Enhanced Partnership Plan** – document made pursuant to section 138A of the Transport Act 2000 and which is required to be in place for an EP Scheme to be made.

**Zero Emission Vehicle** – vehicle that emits no pollutants at its tailpipe.

## Introduction

Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) was formed in 2016 and prior to this there was no strategic body with statutory responsibility for transport at a regional level. This meant the region was at a comparative disadvantage to many other combined authority areas who had invested in their regional transport systems for many years.

The Tees Valley is now on the cusp of transformative economic growth that will have a national impact and we need to deliver a world-class transport system at pace to make this ambition a reality. A fundamental component of this is the shared commitment with operators to transform the Tees Valley bus services and grow passenger numbers.

### Transforming bus services

The detailed narrative set out within the Tees Valley Enhanced Partnership Plan for Buses (“The Plan”) outlines, in as much detail as currently practicable, the collective actions to transform buses across the Tees Valley over the five-year period from 2022/23 to 2026/27.

The EP Plan and scheme are closely aligned with the Tees Valley Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP).



Working in close collaboration with stakeholders including the Tees Valley local authorities, local bus operators, neighbouring authorities, statutory consultees, businesses and the public (both bus users and non-users), TVCA has developed a Plan that can be transformational with the right level of funding.

It should be noted that, at the time of making the Plan, measures and facilities included are subject to award of suitable funding from Government, and completion of relevant statutory processes, and will be detailed in the Scheme through bespoke variation arrangements once agreed.

The Tees Valley Strategic Transport Plan (STP) 2020 – 2030 was developed following extensive public consultation and stakeholder engagement. The STP includes a package of required outcomes, two of which are to:

- deliver and maintain a frequent, high quality, reliable and integrated public transport network; and
- develop and improve transport interchanges, ticketing options and information to provide a seamless integrated experience for the travelling public.

This Plan is pivotal to the delivery of these outcomes.

### Five Key Priorities

The Plan has been developed following detailed work identifying the current state of bus provision and areas for improvement. It sets out how we will stabilise and then grow bus patronage following the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic. The actions are structured around five key priorities:

- **Decarbonisation** – one of the first regions in the UK to have an entirely zero emission local bus fleet;
- **Fares** – simpler fares and targeted promotions to drive growth;

- **Customer Experience** – putting the needs of customers at the heart of service delivery and improving information provision with one brand identity;
- **Infrastructure** – new infrastructure investment to prioritise bus on core corridors and improve customer experience; and
- **Network** – a collaborative approach focused on core corridors and integration with the [Tees Flex](#) on-demand bus service. This will provide greater network stability, ensure services respond to changing demand, better connect more people to opportunity and facilitate modal shift.

### **Supporting Policies**

The [Tees Valley Strategic Economic Plan](#) sets out our aspiration to drive the transition to a high-value, low-carbon, diversified and inclusive economy. The [Tees Valley Local Industrial Strategy](#) identifies an overarching ambition that Tees Valley will be a global leader in clean energy, low carbon and hydrogen. The area will achieve a net zero carbon industrial cluster by 2040, providing good jobs with long term prospects that local people can access.

Teesworks, which incorporates the UK's largest Freeport, is focused on offshore wind, clean energy, advanced manufacturing and the chemicals and process sectors. This, alongside other Freeport sites in each of the five boroughs, is the cornerstone of the economic transformation of the Tees Valley and will generate an additional 41,780 net direct jobs and £3.2bn of GVA to the region.

The [Tees Valley Strategic Transport Plan](#) (STP) 2020 – 2030 sets out how we will deliver a world-class transport system and provides the framework for transport investment.

### **Competition Test**

The Tees Valley Combined Authority has undertaken an assessment of the impacts of the EP Plan and Scheme to be made on 1 April 2022 on competition and believes it will not or is unlikely to have a significantly adverse effect on competition, for the purposes of Part 1 of Schedule 10 of the Transport Act 2000.

There are currently no proposed changes to services or impacts on operators that could be considered disproportionate to the expected benefits. As the funding is yet to be defined, most interventions are only set out in the Scheme at a headline level with the detail to be agreed through bespoke variations.

### **Extent of the Enhanced Partnership**

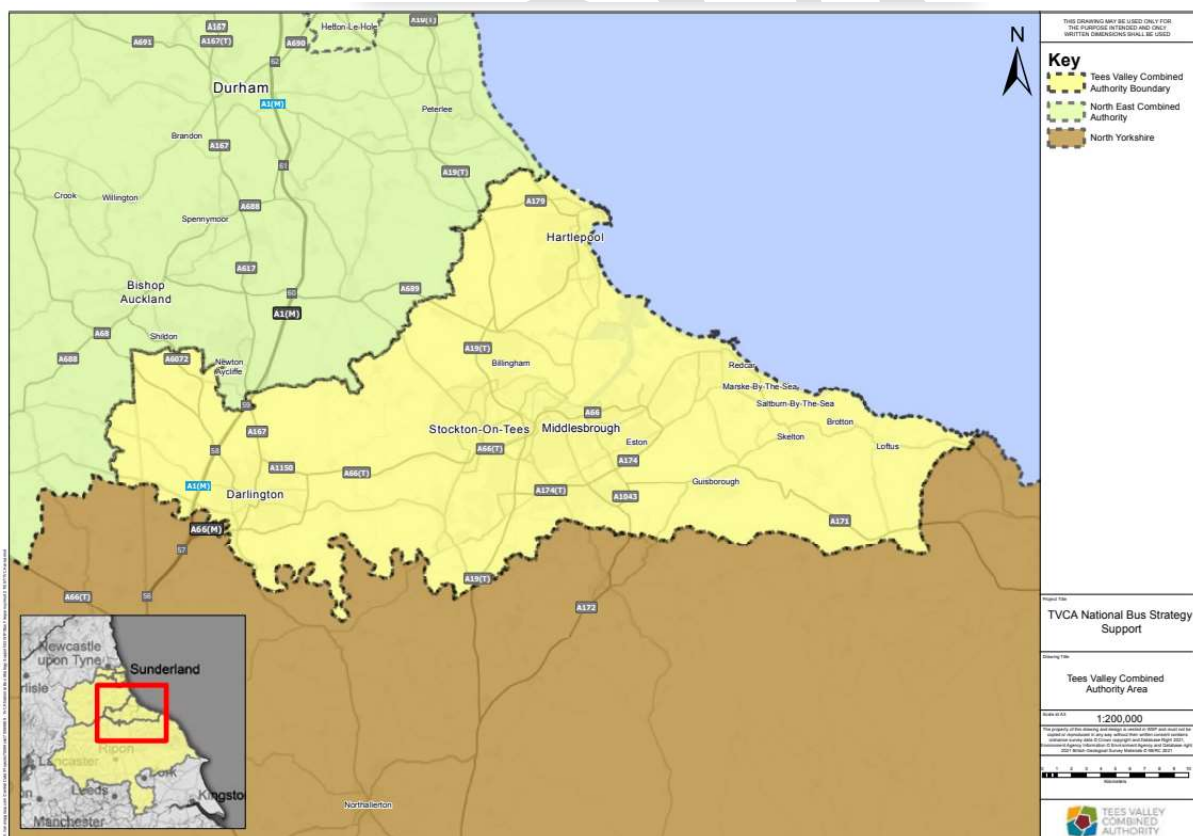
In response to the Government requirement, TVCA has published a notice of intent to prepare an Enhanced Partnership Plan and accompanying Enhanced Partnership Scheme, in accordance with section 138F of the Transport Act 2000.

The Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme will make a substantial contribution to the implementation of The Tees Valley Bus Service Improvement Plan.

It will bring benefits to passengers using local bus services across the Tees Valley by improving the quality and efficiency of the public transport network. It will support the efficient use of the road network and the delivery of sustainable growth, limiting the impacts of additional traffic congestion and air pollution.

Both the Enhanced Partnership Plan and Enhanced Partnership Scheme are proposed to cover the entirety of the Tees Valley Combined Authority area, which includes Darlington Borough Council, Hartlepool Borough Council, Middlesbrough Council, Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council and Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council. The Tees Valley covers around 3,300 square miles and has a population of approximately 670,000. Neighbouring Authorities who have been engaged during the production of this BSIP include North Yorkshire County Council (immediately to the south) and the North East Combined Authority (immediately to the north). They will continue to be engaged during implementation of the EP Scheme to ensure consistency for cross boundary issues.

The map below identifies the geographical area covered by the Enhanced Partnership Plan and Enhanced Partnership Scheme and the relationship with neighbouring authorities.



All operators running bus services in the Tees Valley have been invited to participate in the preparation of the Enhanced Partnership Plan and accompanying Scheme. The Scheme will come into effect from the 1 April 2022.

The Plan will have no specific end date but is initially intended to cover the five-year period from 2022/23 to 2026/27. The intention is to review progress on a quarterly basis and prepare publicly accessible update reports on a routine basis.

## Bus network overview

The Tees Valley Enhanced Partnership Plan can be transformational with the right level of funding and the improvements will:

- deliver a step change in bus provision for current and new bus users; and
- provide a high-quality alternative to car travel.

### Operators and the market

The two main bus operators in the Tees Valley are Arriva and Stagecoach, with a smaller number of services operated by Go North East and independent operators.

Market share based on the number of operational local bus service vehicles is dominated by Arriva (63.3%) and Stagecoach (28.8%), with Go North East holding just over 3%.

Operator	Stagecoach	Arriva	Go North East	Coatham Coaches	Hodgsons	Paul's Travel	Scarlet Band
Fleet Size <sup>^</sup>	90	198	10	1	11	1	2
Market Share %*	28.8%	63.3%	3.2%	0.3%	3.5%	0.3%	0.6%

<sup>^</sup> Fleet Size – Based on weekday Peak Vehicle Requirement (PVR) on local bus services

\*Market Share – Based on number of operational local bus service vehicles

Some services are also operated by smaller independent operators: Coatham Coaches in Redcar & Cleveland; Hodgsons in Darlington; Paul's Travel in Hartlepool; and Scarlet Band in Darlington. These services together represent around 5% of the operational market.

There is limited operator competition in Darlington and Redcar & Cleveland where services are almost operated exclusively by Arriva. In Hartlepool, services are operated almost exclusively by Stagecoach. In Middlesbrough and Stockton-on-Tees, both Arriva and Stagecoach operate. This has an influence on the types of ticket available in each area.

### Fleet

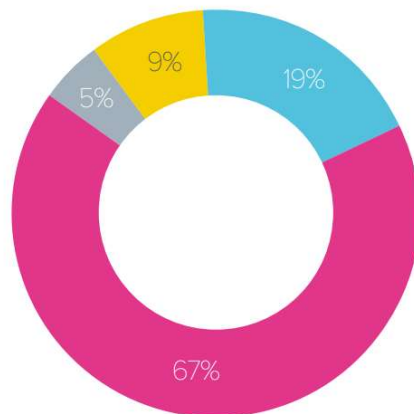
The total vehicle fleet for all operators across the Plan area has an operational Peak Vehicle Requirement (PVR) of approximately 313 vehicles. The spare level is estimated at 13%, which means the total fleet is circa 350.

The profile of the fleet is dominated by Euro V vehicles (two-thirds) with smaller proportions of newer and older vehicles (see figure below).



**Tees Valley Fleet composition**

■ Euro VII ■ Euro V ■ Euro IV ■ Euro III



*TVCA area bus fleet composition*

### **Factors affecting the local bus market**

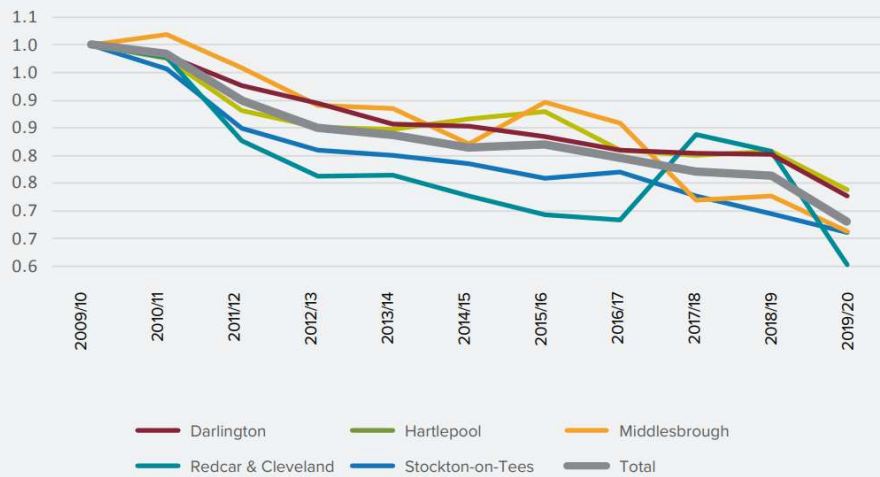
There are a number of factors which are likely to affect, or have the potential to affect, the local bus market over the life of this Plan:

- a long-term trend of declining bus patronage coupled with the impact of Coronavirus impacting on revenue and driver/service availability;
- specific locations and corridors on the Key Route Network (KRN) that are already at capacity or will be over capacity by 2025, which is impacting on bus service punctuality and the reliability of bus services;
- a requirement to continue to decarbonise and modernise the bus fleet;
- a requirement for bus services to connect new housing and job opportunities;
- a requirement to connect rural areas of the Tees Valley and the challenge of longer journey times when compared to the car;
- a complex fares and ticketing system;
- the cost and convenience of bus when compared to other modes; and
- the cost of transport being a barrier for people in deprived communities and/or low paid jobs, particularly when seeking work or starting new employment.

### **Patronage**

There has been a decline in patronage on bus services in the Tees Valley over the past ten years, which has been relatively consistent across all local authority areas. Overall, patronage in 2019/20 (pre-Coronavirus pandemic) was around 70% of that observed in 2009/10, as shown in the graph below.

### Patronage Trends for TVCA Districts



Tees Valley Patronage Trends – 2009/10 – 2019/20 (Source: DfT BUS 0109a - Passenger journeys on local bus services by local authority, England)

In addition, analysis of passenger journeys per head of population has also been undertaken, which shows a similar trend in that totals have fallen since 2009/10 to 66% of the baseline figure by 2019/20. This means that trip making by bus, as well as overall passenger journeys, have both consistently declined over the last decade.

The onset of the Coronavirus pandemic had an unprecedented impact on national bus patronage and all other forms of transport as a number of restrictions on movement and social interaction were implemented by Government to protect public health. The chart below illustrates the impact over time from March 2020 as patronage immediately dropped to around 11% of normally observed levels.



Use of bus (outside London) during the pandemic. DfT Statistics

In the Tees Valley patronage levels as of early October 2021 were between 71% - 76% of the figure pre-pandemic. It is difficult to accurately project further passenger growth by April 2022 when the Enhanced Partnership is implemented. Therefore, there is a real risk that the residual impact continues into 2022/23, and the funding ask reflects the need for continued recovery funding to ensure that the full bus network is restored and then maintained. Should the recovery funding required to sustain the current commercial network not be forthcoming, then this will have an impact on what service improvements as set out in the BSIP can be delivered.

### **The bus network offer**

Detailed analysis of the bus network has been undertaken to understand:

- the relative provision of bus services and levels of service (frequencies and spread of operation by day);
- accessibility to a range of destinations including town centres, education, employment and essential services; and
- the provision and adequacy of passenger infrastructure.

There are nine core bus corridors across the Tees Valley where there is significant potential to grow passenger numbers. Aligned to the Government's ambition for bus priority schemes, there is a programme to deliver improvements to prioritise bus on these corridors with a focus on two aspects:

- Measures to make it easier for buses to travel on these corridors, which could be physical, for example junction improvements and the introduction of bus lanes, or digital, for example giving buses priority at traffic signals; and
- Measures to improve passenger experience, for example improved waiting facilities and combined real-time information underpinned by a passenger charter setting out expected standards of delivery.

This investment package is a fundamental component of our five priorities and further detail is included in the Scheme.

### **Passenger Information**

Passenger information across the Tees Valley is currently available through several channels. The operators provide service and ticketing information via their own websites and apps, and the Connect Tees Valley website and social media channels provide comprehensive travel information across a range of modes.

Printed timetables, and occasionally separate network maps, were generally produced by the bus operators for their own services under their own branding, but this ceased with the outbreak of the Coronavirus pandemic and it is doubtful if they will be reinstated. The availability of timetable and mapping information from the bus operators is now wholly online and can appear to be disjointed from a passenger perspective because of the number of sources, styles and variations in presentation.

The only multi-operator information is that produced under the Connect Tees Valley brand. Printed bus stop timetables, which include all operators' services, are produced to a standard format and posted by the local authorities. Similarly, the Connect Tees Valley website hosts a comprehensive Tees Valley bus map featuring all services, along with timetables for all services and town centre bus stop location and service allocation plans. Printed versions for individual areas are currently being developed.

### **Travel Planning Information**

The Let's Go Tees Valley service delivers a programme of behaviour change activity. This includes personalised travel planning (PTP) targeted at employees within large organisations, students and job seekers. There is also a programme of promotional, incentivisation and marketing activity to encourage behaviour change. Traveline is used by the Tees Valley as the journey planner.

### **Brand identity**

TVCA is developing the concept of a new Tees Valley transport brand that can be used for multiple purposes from general travel information to the promotion of new infrastructure and campaigns. The objectives for this brand are:

- to provide timely travel information for users of public transport;
- to promote different ways to travel around the region and try to influence consumer behaviour to make sustainable modes first choice; and
- to communicate the transport improvements and investments we are working on around the region.

The brand will ensure a single source of accurate and consistent information provision across the Tees Valley. It will be customer focused, ensuring that the provision of information meets customer requirements and encourages different travel behaviours. There will be digital functionality and a physical presence on the ground, for example bus stops, cycling routes, etc. The brand will be developed to enable integration with the Government's new national bus brand.

### **Stakeholder views and feedback**

The Plan is underpinned by several engagement exercises, which provide insight into the attitudes, views and perceptions of bus users, non-users and stakeholder organisations. There have been four main areas of research:

- public consultation undertaken during the preparation of the Tees Valley Strategic Transport Plan and Bus Implementation Plan;
- a survey of irregular and non-users of buses commissioned by Let's Go Tees Valley;
- the various tranches of the Transport Focus Bus Passenger Surveys; and
- a more recent public and stakeholder engagement exercise during the production of the BSIP in September 2021, to get an up-to-date view from both bus users and non-users.

The **Strategic Transport Plan consultation** asked respondents to indicate the level of priority for each of the Strategic Transport Plan outcomes. The results revealed that to *'Deliver and maintain a frequent, high-quality, reliable and integrated bus network'* was the highest priority for the Strategic Transport Plan with 84% of respondents selecting this as either a very high or high priority. In addition, and very relevant for bus was to *'Improve accessibility and the equality of opportunity for more remote and deprived communities'* with 81% of respondents selecting this as either a very high or high priority.

This was supported by a further question that asked respondents which mode of transport they would use if improvements were made to infrastructure and services. The results indicated that usage on buses could increase by 21% with the appropriate investment in infrastructure and services.

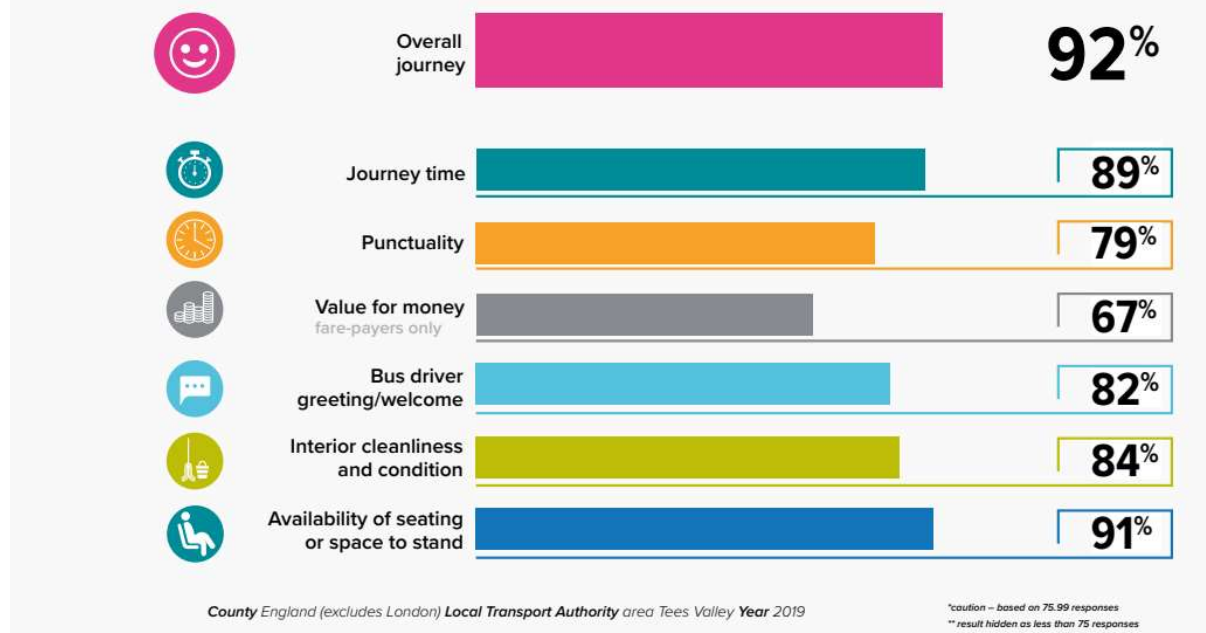
Key findings from the **survey of irregular and non-users of buses** was:

- Car was the most frequently used method of transport, with 74% travelling by car as a driver at least once a week and 52% travelling by car as a passenger at least once a week.
- Having an alternative means of transport was the top reason for not using buses, or not using buses more, with 63% of respondents giving this as a reason.
- 39% do not use a bus because they would have to use more than one to get where they need to go, 33% because buses are too expensive, 32% because they cannot get to the destination they need to by bus and 31% because buses are not frequent enough.
- The top three things that would encourage respondents to use buses, or use buses more, were cheaper fares (48%), more frequent services (43%) and more reliable services (38%).
- The top factors that respondents thought are important in making a good bus service were a bus that turns up on time (67%), fares that are affordable (47%), a frequent service (43%) and buses to destinations they want to travel to (42%).
- 59% of respondents would be willing to make a journey by bus that they currently make by other means if there was a good bus service.

**Transport Focus** consult almost 50,000 passengers a year to produce the Bus Passenger Survey. This measures passengers' satisfaction with their local bus service for a representative sample of journeys. The latest set of results, disaggregated to a Tees Valley level, were published in March 2020.

Passengers rated their satisfaction of a wide range of aspects including the bus stop, waiting for the bus, on the bus, the outside of the bus, the bus driver as well as their overall satisfaction with that bus journey and value for money.

## Bus Passenger Survey



The Transport Focus research shows that overall satisfaction scores for the bus journey and other aspects in Tees Valley are higher than the national scores across all areas.

However, there are aspects that scored lower, with punctuality and value for money being the two lowest scores.

The most recent **BSIP preparation research**, which provided a relatively even spread of responses across gender and age range, has noted a significant change in attitude. The majority of individual respondents<sup>1</sup> (62%) were somewhat or very dissatisfied with the bus services in Tees Valley, with just 15% of respondents claiming to be satisfied or very satisfied. This is a significant shift from the last Transport Focus survey carried out before the Coronavirus pandemic.

Of those who were not currently bus users, the most common reasons preventing individual respondents from using the bus more/at all were:

- There are no services available in my area when I need to travel (32%)
- I have a car available and prefer to use that (31%)
- Buses do not go where I want to go (29%)
- Cost/Value for Money (26%)

Awareness of the current channels available for information was low, with 61.33% of individual respondents saying they were not aware of the Connect Tees Valley website and 75.68% not aware of the Let's Go Tees Valley website.

<sup>1</sup> Data rounded to nearest whole number for presentation

When looking at possible improvements, a large number of individual respondents said that more reliable (47%) and more direct (45%) services, as well as extra services in the morning or later in the evening (43%) would encourage them to use the bus more.

More frequent evening and weekend services were highlighted as a priority by many individual respondents (43%), closely followed by more reliable buses (43%), real time information tracking (39%) and more punctual buses (37%).

**Overarching Conclusions** – there are consistent themes across all four surveys, which respondents say would facilitate greater use of buses in the Tees Valley. These are:



– **Reliability and punctuality:** buses turning up as expected and on time



– **Frequency:** provision of services on a more regular basis



– **Accessibility:** services where people need to travel



– **Availability:** more extensive evening and weekend services



– **Fares** and or tickets which provide better value for money

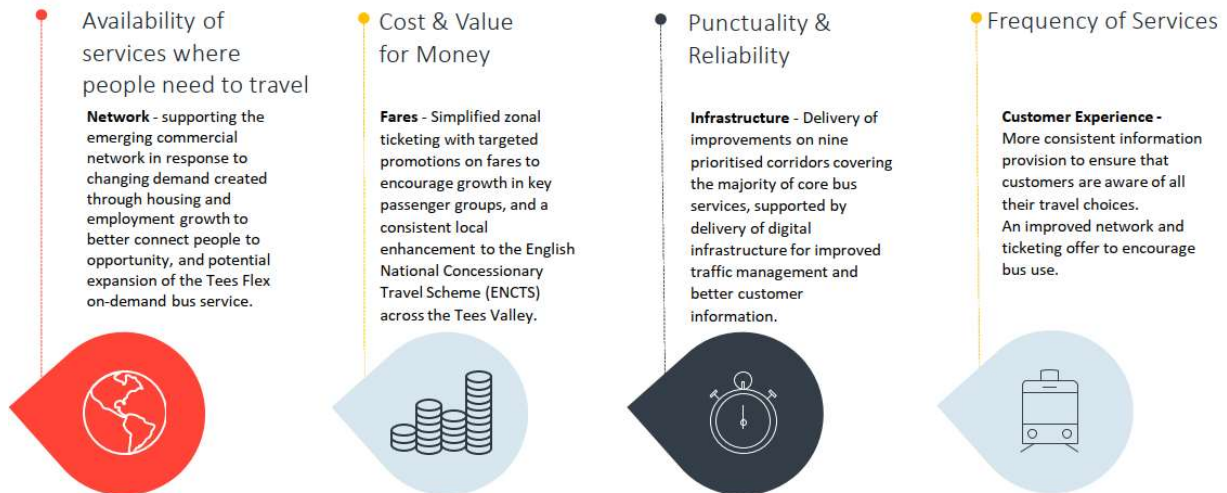
This intelligence has informed the development of the five priorities.

The most recent survey indicates that overall satisfaction with bus services has dropped significantly. However, it must be recognised that this is a single survey and is not a sustained trend. It is felt that the feedback could be driven by the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic. There will therefore be a need for close monitoring of passenger feedback as the priorities in this Plan are implemented.



# Enhanced Partnership Plan

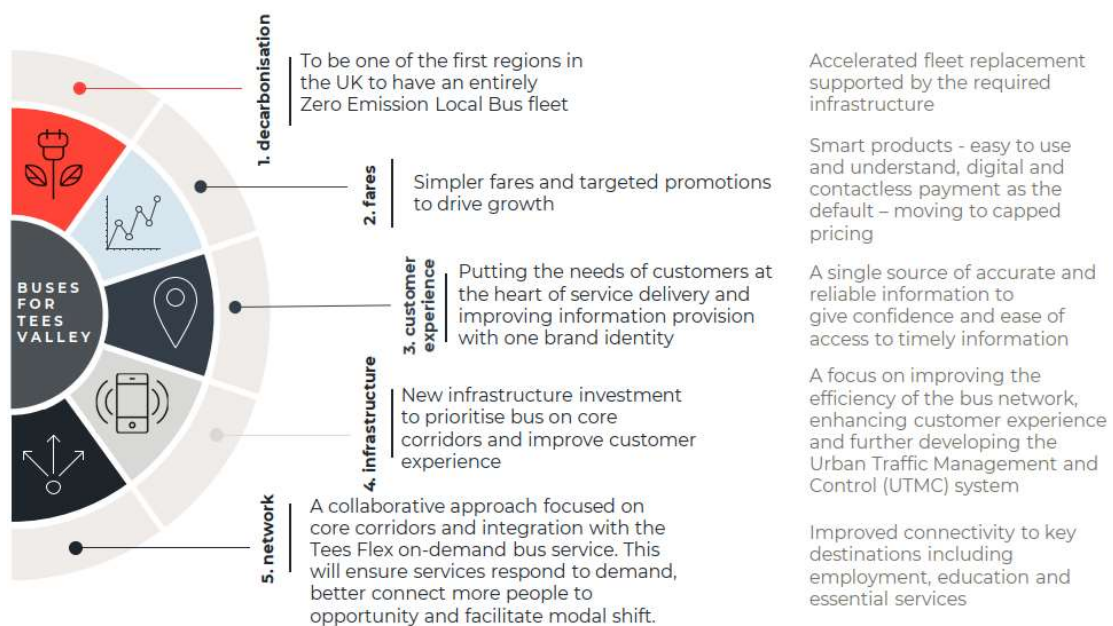
Evidence from a range of sources, including local and national user and non-user surveys, and stakeholder engagement, has identified a number of key barriers, which if overcome, will lead to opportunities to restore and then grow the number of journeys made by bus in the Tees Valley. This is illustrated below and demonstrates how the five priorities will address these barriers:



## Future Ambition – the Five Priorities

The priorities for the Partnership are structured around a five-point action plan summarised below:

### Tees Valley Partnership – 5 Point Plan



A shared commitment to transform Tees Valley bus services and grow passenger numbers



## **Funding Arrangements**

Securing the right level of funding is critical to ensure that:

- everyone, no matter where they live in the Tees Valley, is connected to opportunity; and
- existing business can grow and the Tees Valley is able to continue attracting new businesses and inward investment.

The Enhanced Partnership will draw on multiple funding sources to deliver the desired outcomes of the Enhanced Partnership Scheme, including:

- Bus Service Improvement Plan funding allocation from the Government;
- City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement from the Government;
- developer contributions; and
- other external funding opportunities.

The partnership is acutely aware of the need to ensure that the bus network is both sustainable and stable. This is vitally important so that people and businesses have confidence that their travel needs will be met into the future.

## **PART 2 – EP SCHEME**

### **THE TEES VALLEY ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP SCHEME FOR BUSES IS MADE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 138G(1) OF THE TRANSPORT ACT 2000 BY:**

Tees Valley Combined Authority

#### **Section 1 – EP Scheme Content**

This document fulfils the statutory requirements for an EP Scheme. In accordance with statutory requirements in section 138 of the Transport Act 2000, the EP Scheme document sets out:

**Section 2** - Scope of the EP Scheme and commencement date

**Section 3** - Obligations on the Local Authorities

**Section 4** - Obligations on Bus Operators

**Section 5** – Governance Arrangements

The EP Scheme can only be put in place if an associated EP Plan has been made. Therefore, this document should be considered alongside the associated EP Plan.

The EP Scheme has been jointly developed by the Tees Valley Combined Authority, which is the Local Transport Authority, the Local Highway Authorities (Darlington Borough Council, Hartlepool Borough Council, Middlesbrough Council, Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council and Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council) and those bus operators that provide local bus services in the EP Scheme area. It sets out the obligations and requirements on both the Local Transport Authority, the Local Highway Authorities and operators of local services in order to achieve the priorities in the associated EP Plan.

#### **Section 2 - Scope of the EP Scheme and Commencement Date**

##### **Description of Geographical Coverage**

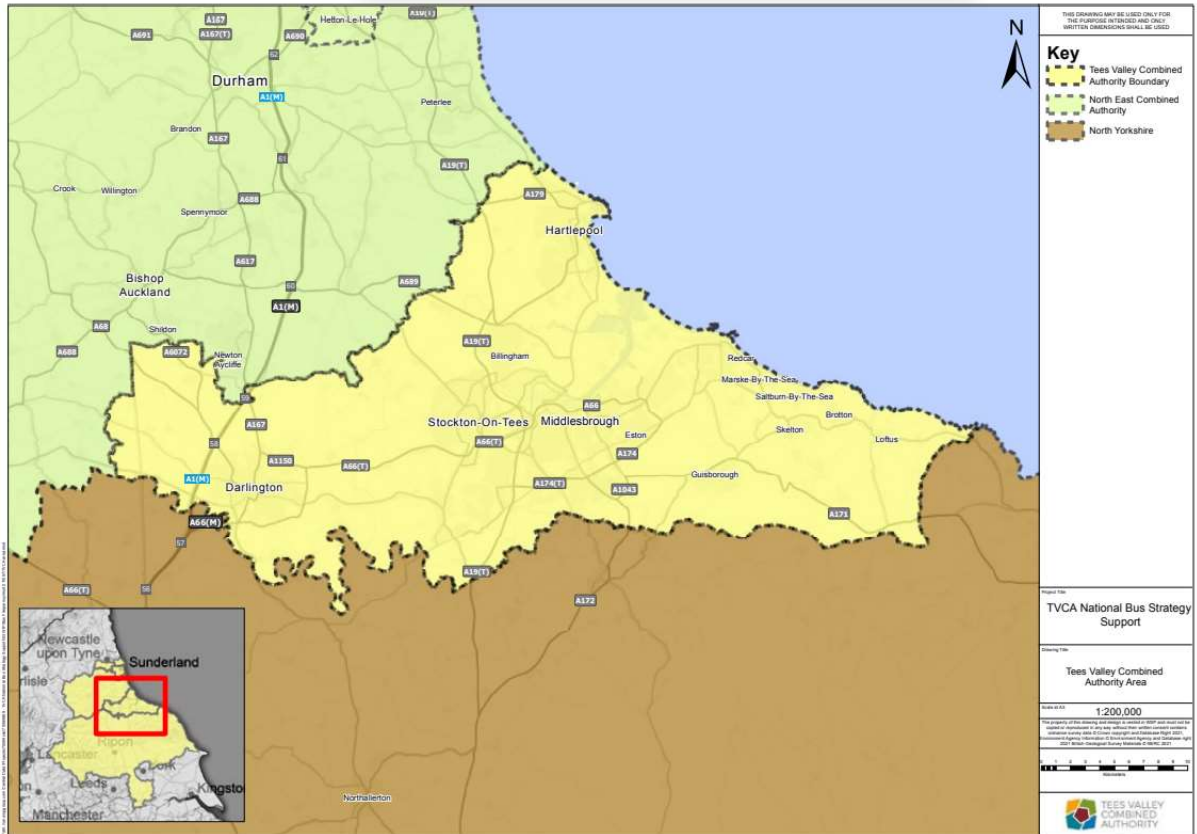
The EP Scheme will support the improvement of all local bus services operating in the entirety of the Tees Valley Combined Authority area, which includes Darlington Borough Council, Hartlepool Borough Council, Middlesbrough Council, Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council and Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council.

There has been engagement with immediate neighbouring authorities during the preparation of the BSIP and EP, which will continue as the interventions are implemented.

##### **Map of EP Plan and EP Scheme Areas**

The map below identifies the geographical area covered by the EP Scheme.

The area is the same as that covered by the EP Plan.



### Commencement Date

The EP Plan and EP Scheme are made on the 1 April 2022. The Plan will have no specific end date but is initially intended to cover the five-year period from 2022/23 to 2026/27.

Progress will be reviewed by Tees Valley Combined Authority on a quarterly basis and publicly accessible reports will be prepared on a routine basis.

### Exempted Services

No registered local bus services are considered to be exempt from the scheme. This situation will be reviewed as additional detail is added to the obligations resulting from measures and facilities, in order to not create any disproportionate impacts.

## Section 3 - Obligations on the Authorities

### Facilities

Tees Valley Combined Authority and the local highway authorities will endeavour to provide the following Facilities, subject to funding availability and other statutory processes that the local highway authorities must adhere to e.g. The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.

**INFRASTRUCTURE: TVCA and the local highway authorities will deliver new infrastructure investment to prioritise bus on core corridors and improve customer experience, including:**

- progressing the short-term delivery of improvements on three prioritised corridors (phase 1);
- developing a further programme of improvements on six identified corridors;
- progressing the delivery of digital infrastructure, including the Urban Traffic Management and Control (UTMC) system and digitally enabled information provision;
- making improvements to customer waiting facilities including disabled access, shelters and information; and
- improving integration with rail, cycling and walking to provide high quality choice across a range of modes and a seamless customer experience.

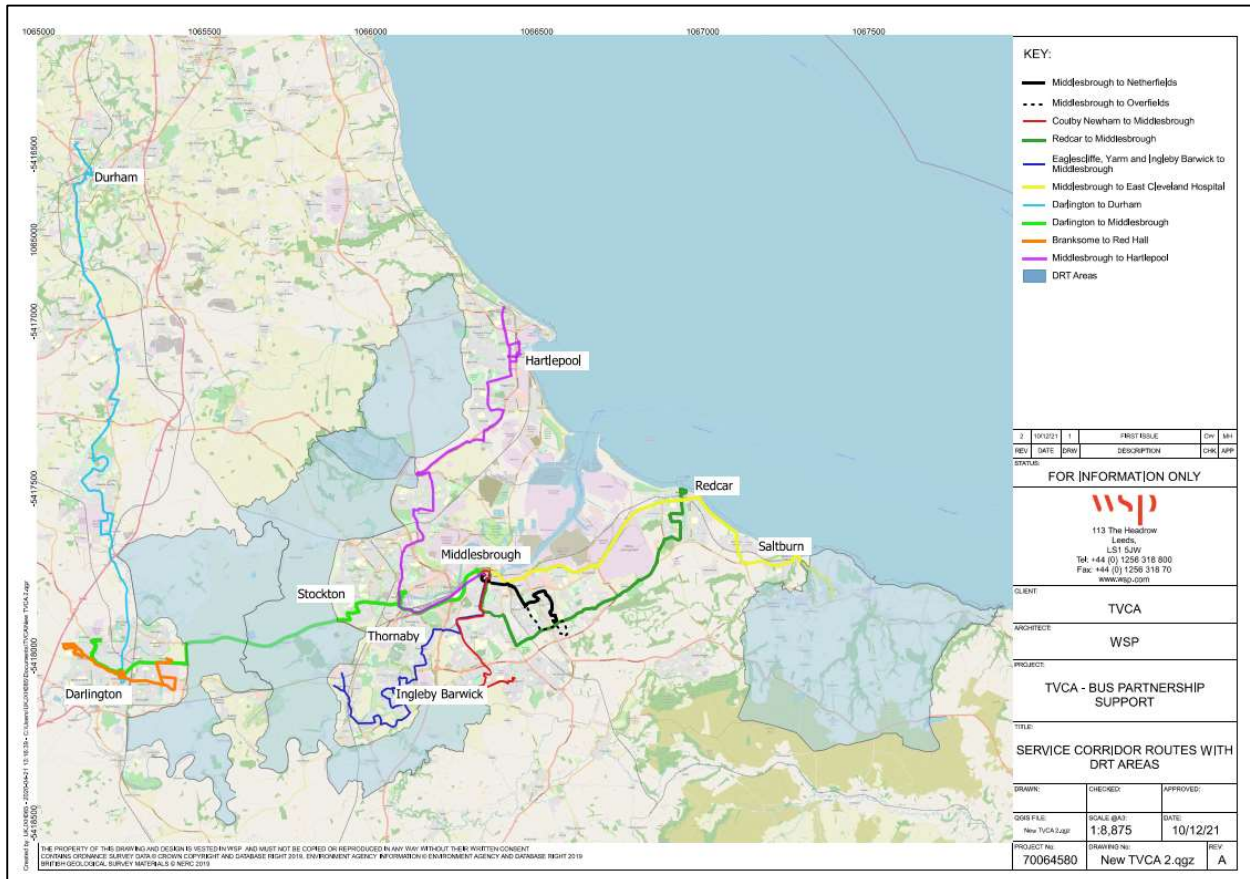
The phased programme of improvements on the nine core corridors will be delivered to:

- enhance the bus offer by reducing the impact of congestion and journey time variability on end-to-end bus journey times to make bus a more desirable mode choice;
- improve the punctuality of bus services to employment, education, essential services, retail and leisure opportunities in the five key urban centres (Darlington, Middlesbrough, Stockton-on-Tees, Redcar & Hartlepool);
- increase the number of public transport interchange facilities across the Tees Valley to improve integration between bus, rail and active travel; and
- improve the bus passenger experience and the level of satisfaction with the bus network.

The nine corridors, which are listed below, have been subject to detailed bus corridor assessments against the programme level objectives:

- Middlesbrough to Netherfields/Overfields;
- Coulby Newham to Middlesbrough;
- Redcar to Middlesbrough;
- Eaglescliffe, Yarm and Ingleby Barwick to Middlesbrough;

- Middlesbrough to East Cleveland Hospital;
- Darlington to Durham;
- Darlington to Middlesbrough (via Stockton);
- Branksome to Red Hall (via Darlington); and
- Middlesbrough to Hartlepool.



The three phase 1 priority corridors that have been selected by TVCA for advancement to option development stage are: Branksome to Red Hall; Middlesbrough to Redcar; and Middlesbrough to Hartlepool. The initial implementation of the first three corridors has been programmed to be delivered through the existing TVCA Transforming Cities Fund allocation. The remaining six corridors make up the bus package in the TVCA City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) bid.

The corridor improvements include a co-ordinated programme of on highway infrastructure improvements, digital upgrades (e.g. UTMC System improvements), bus priority and passenger infrastructure and information upgrades.

Both the fleet decarbonisation and customer experience priorities will initially be focussed on these priority corridors to maximise the impact of the investment and the potential for modal shift.

## **Bus Lanes**

Details of bus lanes and bus priority facilities to be provided and maintained by the local highway authorities will be added as funding availability is confirmed. This will include existing facilities that remain unchanged.

## **Bus Stops**

Details of the bus stops and passenger infrastructure to be provided by the local highway authorities will be added upon completion of the current programme to define a consistent approach to bus stop infrastructure, and as funding availability is confirmed.

## **Adding to or modifying the list of facilities using a bespoke variation**

The powers of bespoke variation will be used to add additional commitments at any point without the need to follow formal variation procedures – although an operator objection mechanism (not necessarily the existing statutory one) will always be required.

## **Measures<sup>2</sup>**

**DECARBONISATION: TVCA will support operators in enabling the Tees Valley to be one of the first regions in the UK to have an entirely zero emission local bus fleet, including:**

- supporting an initial Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas (ZEBRA) Scheme hydrogen bus trial;
- decarbonising the fleet across the nine priority corridors identified in the infrastructure section; and
- developing a longer-term decarbonisation strategy with a structured and costed delivery plan.

**FARES: TVCA will support operators in enabling simpler fares and targeted promotions to drive growth, including:**

- a simplified zonal structure and range of tickets;
- targeted discounts on fares to encourage growth in key passenger groups, including younger travellers and those seeking work;
- off-peak (evening and weekend) fare promotions to encourage modal shift; and
- implementing a consistency across the Tees Valley in the local enhancements to the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS).

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<sup>2</sup> Provided under s.138D(2) of the Transport Act 2000

**CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE: TVCA will work with operators to put the needs of customers at the heart of service delivery and improve information provision with one brand identity, including:**

- developing a single upgraded website, which will host fares, timetable, real-time and mapping information alongside travel planning advice;
- developing an overarching Tees Valley transport brand;
- developing a suite of products, including maps, at-stop timetables and electronic information, underpinned by data processes that will ensure they remain up to date and accurate;
- developing an overarching marketing and communications strategy, which will seek to deliver marketing and promotional activity promoted through various channels, including social media;
- introducing a Tees Valley passenger charter clearly setting out what standards of service customers can expect, which will be underpinned by an equality impact assessment;
- agreeing timetable change dates to limit service disruption for passengers;
- retrofitting audio-visual next stop announcements across all buses in the Tees Valley fleet; and
- measuring satisfaction through regular passenger surveys, and using the results to inform our ongoing work programme.

**NETWORK: TVCA will work collaboratively with operators to deliver a network focused on core corridors and integration with the Tees Flex on-demand bus service, including:**

- establishing a tiered network, including commercial, emerging commercial and the Tees Flex on-demand bus service, which will require ongoing financial support;
- supporting the emerging commercial network in response to changing demand created through housing and employment growth, to better connect people to opportunity (including through the proactive engagement of bus operators in major residential and employment developments); and
- continuation and potential expansion of the Tees Flex on-demand bus service.

To standardise the service offer across the Tees Valley, the concept of a tiered network has been developed based on:

A **Core Commercial Network** of relatively high frequency corridors, linking main hubs and intermediate points along the corridor, including rail stations. These corridors will ideally have a 10-minute headway (by combining and co-ordinating

frequencies if needed), and no less than every 15 minutes during Monday to Saturday daytime (07:00 – 18:00), with evening and Sunday frequencies provided as a reasonable proportion of that service level (at least one third). This level of frequency starts to build a concept of ‘turn up and go’.

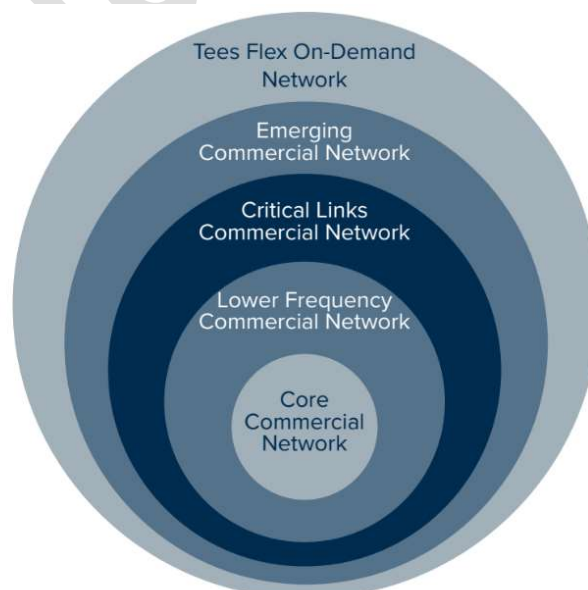
A **Lower Frequency Commercial Network** of corridors between main points where the core frequencies cannot be sustained. These should still be attractive, operating on ‘clockface’ headways of every 20 or 30 minutes to ensure timetables are easy to follow. Where possible, uneven headways should be avoided as they are harder to communicate to passengers.

A **Critical Links Commercial Network** of lower frequency services between main centres where services of every 60 minutes or less are provided to ensure essential services or employment opportunities can be reached. These may be tailored to specific demand times (e.g. shift starts).

An **Emerging Commercial Network** in response to changing travel demand that will require financial support as passengers grow.

A **Tees Flex On-Demand Network** that feeds into the main hub to hub connections at key interchange points. The service operates in areas that were previously commercially unviable and there is therefore a need for ongoing financial support.

The principle of core corridors with key interchange hubs will be used to increase frequencies and accessibility across the network. This can be achieved by consolidating services over common sections and curtailing those which may have a marginal benefit. Whilst this may require some passengers to interchange between services, the higher frequencies and introduction of fully co-ordinated ticketing could make end to end journeys faster overall.





## **Road and Street Works Permitting**

The local highway authorities have implemented permit schemes via Part 3 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 and the Traffic Management Permit Scheme (England) Regulations 2007. The schemes require a works promoter, which will be a utility company, transport authority or highway authority, to apply for a permit to occupy the road.

The permit authority, on considering the application, can request certain conditions are applied to any permit that it grants. This will enable the permit authority to coordinate road works so that disruption and congestion are minimised. The schemes provide the opportunity to carefully consider the impact of roadworks on bus services.

The local highway authorities will work to ensure that the permit schemes are aligned to the priorities in the Enhanced Partnership.

## **Section 4 - Obligations on Local Bus Operators<sup>3</sup>**

### **Vehicle standards [to be agreed before implementation, but examples of standards may include]:**

- Emissions standards, including potential milestones for standards to be met (e.g. Euro IV, moving to X% Euro VI by 202x, or Y% zero emission buses by 202x – Detail to be defined).
- Automatic engine cut off to prevent idling at bus stops longer than necessary to reduce roadside emissions.
- CCTV installed for safety and security. This will provide images inside the vehicle for safety and security and also facing forwards from the vehicle to help identify traffic issues.
- Free Wi-Fi, subject to emerging customer research on actual use and demand.
- Automatic Vehicle Location equipment installed that will feed into the new real time information system.
- USB or alternative small device charging available.
- Audio visual announcements:
  - Next stop audio and visual announcements on both decks.
- Option to pay for tickets through contactless ticketing.

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<sup>3</sup> Under s.138C of the Transport Act 2000

## Network Stability Protocol

In order to achieve greater network stability and improve confidence in the level of information provided, service changes will only be allowed on an agreed series of four service change dates each year. These dates will be agreed according to the forthcoming year's calendar during the final quarter of the preceding year. The dates will be chosen with a view to a relatively even spacing throughout the year and to avoid peak preparatory workloads during the main holiday periods.

Each date will apply across the Tees Valley and services may be amended on any of the dates, subject to a maximum of two changes per service in a rolling twelve-month period.

Changes may also be made on other dates if necessary for seasonal services, commercial, competitive or operational response relating to the commercial network or connections with other public transport services, but the notification requirements (below) must still be adhered to if at all possible.

### Notification Requirements<sup>4</sup>

Weeks Prior to Implementation	Requirement
11	Notification of intended service changes
10	Provide advance copies of registrations for comment (timely suggestions or amendments to be considered subject to commercial or operational necessity)
6	Registration submission deadline

## Ticketing

### Bus operators in the Tees Valley will work with TVCA to implement:

- a simplified zonal structure and range of tickets;
- targeted discounts on fares to encourage growth in key passenger groups, including younger travellers and those seeking work;
- off-peak (evening and weekend) fare promotions to encourage modal shift; and
- a consistency across the Tees Valley in the local enhancements to the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS).

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<sup>4</sup> Outside of the Coronavirus emergency registration process

## Section 5 – Governance Arrangements

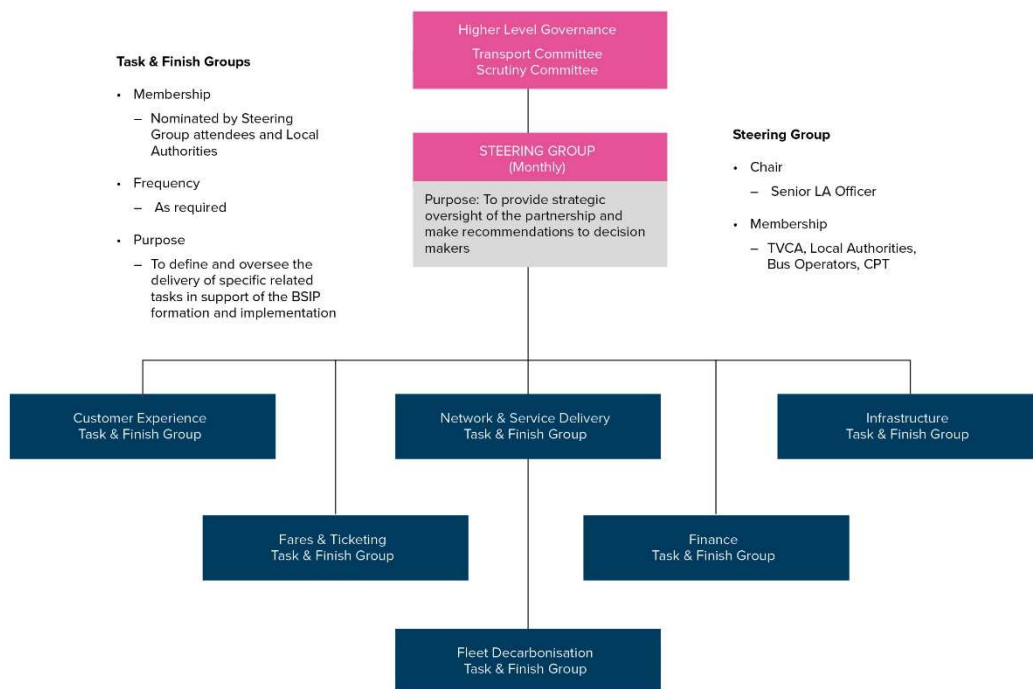
### EP Forum

The formal governance arrangements are defined through a bus partnership steering group (“Forum”) whose membership comprises:

- Tees Valley Combined Authority;
- Major Bus Operators;
- Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT); and
- Local Authorities.

The Forum is supported in its decision making by themed working groups, all of which take forward the more detailed workstreams. There will be oversight of the Enhanced Partnership from the TVCA Cabinet, Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Transport Committee. Future content and arrangements for the variation and revocation of the EP Plan and EP Scheme will be considered by the Forum.

The structure of this governance is illustrated in the diagram below.



### Review of EP Scheme

Once the EP Scheme is made, a review will be initiated by TVCA and presented to the EP Forum every six months following publication of data on progress towards targets, as required by the BSIP. This will ensure any necessary action is taken to deliver the targets set out in the BSIP.

The EP Forum can also decide to review specific elements of the scheme on an ad-hoc basis. EP Forum members should contact TVCA using the following email address [transport@teesvalley-ca.gov.uk] explaining what the issue is and its urgency. TVCA will then decide whether to table at the next scheduled meeting or make arrangements for all or the necessary EP Forum members to gather more quickly.

### **Bespoke Arrangements for Varying or Revoking the Enhanced Partnership Scheme**

Under powers at section 138E of the Transport Act 2000, Enhanced Partnership Scheme Variations will be subject to the bespoke voting mechanism set out in this section.

Changes to or new flexibility provisions added to the EP Scheme under s.138E of the Transport Act 2000 shall only be included in the EP scheme if they satisfy the statutory objection mechanism as set out in The Enhanced Partnership Plans and Schemes (Objections) Regulations 2018.

For other variations, not anticipated by the scheme, the process under section 138(K)(L) and (M) of the Transport Act 2000 will be followed.

#### Proposer of a bespoke variation

Consideration will be given to potential EP Scheme variations highlighted by one of the organisations represented on the EP Forum. The proposer of a variation should demonstrate how this might contribute to achieving the objectives set out in the BSIP, EP Plan and current local transport policies. Such requests should be in writing and submitted to transport@teesvalley-ca.gov.uk. TVCA will forward all requests onto all EP Forum members within 5 working days.

#### Decision-making process and bespoke objection mechanism

On receipt of a request for a variation under this section, TVCA will reconvene the EP Forum, giving at least 14 days' notice for the meeting, to consider the proposed variation. If the proposed variation is agreed by all bus operator(s) affected by the change, TVCA, and any affected Local Authority, then TVCA will make the EP Scheme variation within seven working days and publish the revised EP Scheme on its website. An affected operator is considered to be one where at least one of their currently registered local bus services would use the proposed facility or be impacted by the proposed measure.

EP Forum members who are absent or not expressing a view at the meeting (either in person or in writing<sup>5</sup>) will be deemed to be abstaining from the decision.

TVCA, the Local Authority or an operator of local bus services may put forward specific proposals for introducing bus priority measures on an individual section of defined highway or bus corridor.

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<sup>5</sup> This could also include proxy voting, if the operators concerned provide written confirmation to TVCA.

Those operating local services on that corridor may also put forward a package of improvements to local bus services that they agree to introduce if the bus priority measures are delivered.

If TVCA agrees and the operators of local services on that corridor confirm in writing to TVCA their acceptance of these arrangements, TVCA will vary the scheme using these bespoke arrangements. The obligations on bus operators will come into force 70 days after the agreed package of bus priority measures has been implemented by the LTA.

### **Revocation of an EP Scheme**

If TVCA or another member of the EP Forum believes it is necessary to revoke the EP Scheme, the EP Forum will be reconvened. If the decision is taken to revoke the EP Scheme it will follow the legislative procedures for revocation or use bespoke arrangements as set out earlier in this section.

TVCA would give notice of a proposal to revoke an enhanced partnership plan or scheme in such manner as they consider appropriate for bringing it to the attention of persons in their area or combined area. After giving notice under subsection (4), the authority or authorities will consult:

- a. operators of qualifying local services;
- b. the Competition and Markets Authority; and
- c. such other persons as the authority or authorities think fit.

If, after consulting those persons, TVCA wish to revoke the plan or scheme, they must give notice of their intention to revoke the plan or scheme to persons who were operators of qualifying local services at the qualifying time.

The notice under subsection (6) must:

- a) state the date on which the plan or scheme is to be revoked,
- b) state the authority's or authorities' reasons for revoking the plan or scheme,
- c) state the effect of subsection (8), and
- d) specify the period within which persons who are operators of qualifying local services at the qualifying time may object to the revocation.

TVCA may not revoke the plan or scheme if a sufficient number of the persons who were operators of qualifying local services at the qualifying time object to the revocation of the plan or (as the case may be) the scheme.

If at any point in the future, any area covered by this EP Scheme is included in a bus franchising scheme, the relevant requirements set out in this EP Scheme document will cease to apply to areas covered by the franchising scheme, in line with the arrangements set out in the franchising scheme.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Section 123H(6)-(8) of the Transport Act 2000

## **Data sharing**

There may be personal data gathered as part of any subsequent user surveys completed or commercially confidential data shared between operators and TVCA (or their appointed consultants). There is a specific requirement to demonstrate a robust process for the Partnership to evaluate the impact of the EP Plan and Scheme (and the BSIP) so it is likely this would include user surveys.

Any personal data gathered would be aggregated and anonymised during the analysis process by the lead authority to ensure that no personal data was shared with the Partnership Board, or any third party.

Any commercially confidential data will be protected by a Non-Disclosure or Data Sharing Agreement and when presented will be aggregated, anonymised and indexed to ensure commercial confidentiality is retained. The owner of the data would be consulted to ensure this had been completed to a satisfactory level before it is presented.

Final Draft

**Schedule of facilities**

To be added once funding availability is known

Final Draft

**Schedule of Measures**

To be added once funding availability is known

**END OF DOCUMENT**

Final Draft