

Appendix 2: Northumberland Local Bus Board – Draft Terms of Reference (to be agreed at first meeting of the Bus Board)

1. Aims and Objectives

The aim of the Northumberland Local Bus Board is to allow representatives from across the county to meet with officers and bus operators (where necessary) to discuss and understand forthcoming alterations to the bus network and consider any planning work that is being carried out at both local and regional levels. Discussions may include changes to routes and timetables, punctuality, reliability, highway infrastructure, fares initiatives and public information.

2. Frequency and Conduct of Meetings

The Northumberland Local Bus Board will not be a public meeting. Attendance at Board meetings will be by invitation only and is expected to include:

- the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Local Services
- a representative from each of the four Local Area Committees
- the Head of Economy and Regeneration
- an officer from the Local Services Transport team responsible for contract management and compliance
- a representative from the Northumberland Disability Partnership
- a representative from the Northumberland Association of Local Councils (NALC)
- a representative from Transport Focus/Confederation of Passenger Transport
- representatives of one or more local bus operators where this is deemed necessary to address specific discussion points

The Board is not a decision-making body.

Meetings will be chaired by the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Local Services unless otherwise directed by the Cabinet Member.

The agenda for each meeting will be prepared by an officer from the Strategic Transport team in consultation with the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Local Services. A meeting note will be prepared and circulated to all attendees.

The ordinary frequency of meetings will be four times per year. It is recognised, however, that it may be necessary to arrange meetings at short notice (for example, to respond to Government announcements and associated funding opportunities). Any requests for additional meetings should be approved by the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Local Services.

Task and finish groups may be set up. These will act within the remit specified by the Board and a written report of their activity will be provided to the next meeting of the Board.

3. Procedure for reporting Bus Service Changes

The standard procedure for reporting forthcoming commercial bus service changes will be:

- An officer from the Strategic Transport team will provide a written report to the Board containing, as a minimum, commentary of any proposed changes including revisions to routes, frequencies, hours of operation and the types of vehicles used as well as their date of introduction (in accordance with the required registration process).
- These changes will be circulated to board members by e-mail and if they wish to comment they should do so by reply within seven days. The Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Local Services will arrange for a written response to be sent to bus operators' representatives (where necessary), setting out the Board's comments and requesting a response within seven days.
- Bus operators' representatives will then provide a written response to the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Local Services, which will be circulated by e-mail to the Board for further discussion.

4. Procedure for reporting matters by the Cabinet Member and attendees

The procedure for the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Local Services to raise other matters will be:

- The Authority will provide a written report to bus operators' representatives on the matter unless the urgency of it means it must be raised verbally at the meeting.
- The bus operators' representatives will provide a written or verbal response as appropriate to be discussed by the Board. The Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Local Services will then agree a written response to be sent to the bus operators' representatives setting out the Board's comments and requesting a response to be provided by the next meeting of the Board.
- The bus operators' representatives will then provide a written response to the Board to be discussed at the next available Board meeting.

Should other Board attendees wish to raise a specific matter for discussion, they should make a request to the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Local Services, asking the Cabinet Member to consider raising the matter via the procedure above.

5. Review of Terms of Reference and Membership

The Terms of Reference and membership of the Board will be reviewed on an annual basis and approved by the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Local Services.