



TEES VALLEY COMBINED AUTHORITY CABINET

Friday, 20 March 2026 at 10.00am

Teesside Airport Business Suite, Teesside International Airport, Darlington

These Minutes are in draft form until approved at the next Cabinet meeting and are therefore subject to amendments.

<u>ATTENDEES</u>	
<b>Members</b>	
Mayor Ben Houchen (Chair)	Tees Valley Mayor
Councillor Stephen Harker	Leader, Darlington Borough Council
Councillor Pamela Hargreaves	Leader, Hartlepool Borough Council
Mayor Chris Cooke	Leader, Middlesbrough Council
Councillor Alec Brown	Leader, Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council
Councillor Lisa Evans	Leader, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
Matthew Ord	Chair of the Business Board
<b>Officers</b>	
Tom Bryant	Chief Executive, Tees Valley Combined Authority
Sarah Brackenborough	Director of Operations, Tees Valley Combined Authority
Jo Moore	Interim Director of Finance & Resources, Tees Valley Combined Authority
Craig Peacock	Director of Inward Investment & Marketing, Tees Valley Combined Authority
Jonathan Spruce	Director of Infrastructure, Tees Valley Combined Authority
Sarah Walker	Director of Business Solutions, Tees Valley Combined Authority
Jeanette McGarry	Interim Monitoring Officer, Tees Valley Combined Authority
Dave Winstanley	Executive Director , Darlington Borough Council,
Denise McGuckin	Managing Director, Hartlepool Borough Council
Erik Scollay	Chief Executive, Middlesbrough Council

Brian Archer	Chief Executive, Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council
Mike Greene	Chief Executive, Stockton Borough Council
Alan Weston	Head of Transport & Infrastructure, TVCA
Elaine Fryett	Interim Head of Investment Development, TVCA
Sally Henry	Governance Officer, TVCA
<b>Also in attendance</b>	
Sir Steve Bullock DL	Independent Advisory Board

*These Minutes capture the key points and decisions of the meeting, but they do not attempt to reproduce every word spoken. The full recording can be found [here](#).*

	<p><b><u>CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS</u></b></p> <p>The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed everyone in attendance.</p>
TVCA 75/25	<p><b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b></p> <p>There were no apologies for absence.</p>
TVCA 76/25	<p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b></p> <p>Councillor Hargreaves declared a pecuniary interest in agenda items 5 and item 9 and left the Cabinet room for the entirety of both these items.</p> <p>Mayor Cooke declared a non pecuniary interest in item 5 &amp; 9.</p>
TVCA 77/25	<p><b>MINUTES</b></p> <p><b>RESOLVED</b> that the minutes of the meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2026 were confirmed as an accurate record.</p>
TVCA 78/25	<p><b>TEES VALLEY MAYOR'S UPDATE</b></p> <p>The Mayor advised Cabinet members that he had nothing further to update them on which was not covered elsewhere on the agenda.</p>

	<p>Members were however given an opportunity ask questions.</p> <p>No questions were asked.</p>
<p>TVCA 79/25</p>	<p><b>MAYOR UPDATE ON THE MIDDLESBROUGH &amp; HARTLEPOOL MAYORAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATIONS</b></p> <p>Councillor Hargreaves left the room at this time.</p> <p>Cabinet received a report which provided an update on the current status on the two town centre Development Corporations.</p> <p>Cabinet were advised that the Mayor intends to review the requirement for the MDC and HDC. They were advised that the Middlesbrough Development Corporation budget would be transferred to Hartlepool Development Corporation if it was maintained and Middlesbrough Development Corporation was decided to be disbanded.</p> <p>They were further advised that a DC being disbanded would need to come up with a plan for disposal of the assets and that this will be done in discussion with Middlesbrough Council and/or Hartlepool Council, and that the plan would be reported back to Cabinet. It would be a Cabinet decision on whether any assets are transferred to TVCA.</p> <p>Cabinet were invited to:-</p> <p>A. <b>NOTE</b> the update that the Mayor is conducting a review of Middlesbrough Development Corporation and Hartlepool Development Corporation, specifically an analysis on whether to disband one or either of the Development Corporations and the benefits of different arrangements for regeneration of Hartlepool and Middlesbrough Town Centre compared to the benefits of maintaining the DCs; If a decision was taken to disband one or either of the DCs in question it would include planning powers returning to the constituent authority in question during the close down period and beyond; and that if one of the DCs was to be kept and the other disbanded, the residual finance allocated would be transferred to the retained DC. For example, if MDC was to be disbanded but HDC was maintained, residual funding in the Middlesbrough Development Corporation budget would be</p>

transferred to Hartlepool Development Corporation. This funding is part of the £20m approved by Cabinet on 22 July 2022 to support Middlesbrough and Hartlepool Mayoral Development Corporations, and can be transferred under delegated authority.

- B. **NOTE** that HDC or MDC, if they were to be disbanded, would need to publish a plan for disposal of the assets currently held by the relevant DC, that this will be done in discussion with Middlesbrough Council and/or Hartlepool Council, and that the plan would be reported back to Cabinet. It would be a TVCA Cabinet decision on whether any assets are transferred to TVCA.

The Chair advised members that now is an appropriate time to conduct a review of the Middlesbrough and Hartlepool Development Corporations.

Members were given the opportunity to comment or ask questions. There were no comments or questions.

**RESOLVED** that Cabinet:-

**A. NOTED** the update that the Mayor is conducting a review of Middlesbrough Development Corporation and Hartlepool Development Corporation, specifically an analysis on whether to disband one or either of the Development Corporations and the benefits of different arrangements for regeneration of Hartlepool and Middlesbrough Town Centre compared to the benefits of maintaining the DCs; If a decision was taken to disband one or either of the DCs in question it would include planning powers returning to the constituent authority in question during the close down period and beyond; and that if one of the DCs was to be kept and the other disbanded, the residual finance allocated would be transferred to the retained DC. For example, if MDC was to be disbanded but HDC was maintained, residual funding in the Middlesbrough Development Corporation budget would be transferred to Hartlepool Development Corporation. This funding is part of the £20m approved by Cabinet on 22 July 2022 to support Middlesbrough and Hartlepool Mayoral Development Corporations, and can be transferred under delegated authority.

**B. NOTED** that HDC or MDC, if they were to be disbanded, would need to publish a plan for disposal of the assets currently held by the relevant DC, that this will be done in discussion with

	<p>Middlesbrough Council and/or Hartlepool Council, and that the plan would be reported back to Cabinet. It would be a TVCA Cabinet decision on whether any assets are transferred to TVCA.</p>
<p>TVCA 80/25</p>	<p><b>PUBLIC CODE OF CONDUCT</b></p> <p>Cabinet approved in principle the Public Code of Conduct on 12 December 2025, as part of the Constitution report, subject to review by the Audit &amp; Governance Committee, with a report back to Cabinet to confirm any feedback.</p> <p>Cabinet were asked to consider the comments of the Audit &amp; Governance Committee.</p> <p>Cabinet were invited to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. <b>NOTE</b> that the Audit and Governance Committee met on the 20 February 2026 and were supportive of the Cabinet decision on the 12 December 2025 to approve the Public Code of Conduct in principle, and did not propose any amendments.</li> <li>B. <b>NOTE</b> that the Public Code of Conduct, included at <b>Appendix A</b> to the report will now be included in the Constitution and implemented.</li> </ul> <p>Members were given the opportunity to comment or ask questions. No comments or questions were raised.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED</b> that Cabinet:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. <b>NOTED</b> that the Audit and Governance Committee met on the 20 February 2026 and were supportive of the Cabinet decision on the 12 December 2025 to approve the Public Code of Conduct in principle, and did not propose any amendments.</li> <li>B. <b>NOTED</b> that the Public Code of Conduct, included at <b>Appendix A</b> to the report will now be included in the Constitution and implemented.</li> </ul>
<p>TVCA 81/25</p>	<p><b>ORGANISATIONAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN PROGRESS</b></p> <p>Cabinet received a report from the Chief Executive which provided an update on progress relating to the Tees Valley Combined Authority Organisational</p>

	<p>Improvement Plan and other matters relating to the Best Value Notice, issued on 3 April 2025, and the External Audit Statutory Recommendations Letter, issued on 15 April 2025. The report also outlined the presentational changes made to the organisational improvement action plan.</p> <p>Cabinet were invited to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. <b>Note and provide feedback on:</b> presentational changes to Organisational Improvement Action Plan</li> <li>B. <b>Note</b> Progress on the Organisational Improvement Plan.</li> </ul> <p>The Chief Executive advised that he has provided a self-reflection document to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. The document has also been shared with Cabinet members.</p> <p>Members were given the opportunity to comment or ask questions.</p> <p>Mayor Cooke commented on the timescales included in the Improvement Plan and that Cabinet should have a view on any proposed amendments. This was agreed.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED that Cabinet:-</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. <b>Noted and provide feedback on:</b> presentational changes to Organisational Improvement Action Plan</li> <li>B. <b>Noted</b> Progress on the Organisational Improvement Plan.</li> </ul>
<p>TVCA 81/25</p>	<p><b>INDEPENDENT ADVISORY BOARD REPORT</b></p> <p>Cabinet were provided with a progress update report from the Chair of the Independent Advisory Board .</p> <p>Sir Steve Bullock, member of the Independent Advisory Board, attended Cabinet to present the report.</p> <p>He advised that the Independent Advisory Board’s (IAB) role is to oversee the progress made against the Improvement Plan. It seeks to offer challenge and support.</p>

	<p>In the months the IAB has been working, they have met with officers at TVCA, Local Authorities and Cabinet members.</p> <p>The authors of the Best Value Notice will need assurances that the changes are embedded.</p> <p>He advised that the Board has seen that Cabinet have changed. You are working together and significant changes of approach are evident. You are on a journey and have made progress but there is more to do.</p> <p>Members were given the opportunity to comment or ask questions.</p> <p>The Chair offered his thanks to Sir Steve and the Independent Advisory Board and noted that he is keen to continue with the improvement journey. Cllr Brown noted that there has been a vast improvement and that we are all working together in a far better way.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED that Cabinet:-</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>NOTED</b> :the progress update report from the Chair of the Independent Advisory Board .</li> </ul>
<p>TVCA 82/25</p>	<p><b>FINAL CAPITAL &amp; REVENUE BUDGETS 2026/27, UPDATED MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2026/27-2029/30</b></p> <p><i>Appendix 7 &amp; 8 to this report are not for publication, under the terms of paragraph 3 (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)); of schedule 12a Local Government Act 1972.)</i></p> <p>Cllr Hargreaves left the room at this point.</p> <p>The Chief Executive introduced this item by highlighting that this report is the culmination of significant work over several months. He expressed his thanks to the Interim Director of Finance &amp; Resources, the finance team, Mayor Cooke as portfolio holder and also to the Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee.</p>

<p>The Chair advised members that appendix 7 &amp; 8 to the report are confidential. If they are to be discussed, members of the public would need to leave the room.</p> <p>Cabinet received a report which presented the final revenue budget for the Mayoral General Functions for 2026/27 for approval.</p> <p>The final revenue budget for the Combined Authority for 2026/27 was also presented for approval, together with the Medium Term Financial Plan covering the period to 2029/30.</p> <p>Key assumptions and risks in setting the final budgets for the forthcoming financial year and future years were also highlighted.</p> <p>Cabinet was asked to note the feedback from the public consultation on the draft budget proposals as presented to Cabinet in January 2026.</p> <p>Cabinet was presented with the revised three-year Capital Programme to 2029/30 for approval, together with the Authority's proposed final Capital Budget for 2026/27.</p> <p>The report set out key changes to both the revenue and capital budgets from the draft proposals presented to Cabinet on 30 January 2026.</p> <p>The report also presented the forecast usable revenue and capital reserves as of 31 March 2027 incorporating the financial implications of the proposed final revenue and capital budget impacts.</p> <p>Cabinet were recommended to:-</p> <p><b>Approve</b> the Final Budget for Mayoral Functions for 2026/27  <b>Note</b> the approved Concessionary Fares budget of £14.834m for 2026/27  <b>Approve</b> the final Combined Authority Revenue Budget for 2026/27  <b>Note</b> the consultation responses on the draft budget proposals, including the Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee's comments, set out at <b>Appendix 2</b>  <b>Approve</b> the revised Medium Term Financial Plan 2026/27 to 2029/30  <b>Approve</b> the Final Capital Budget for 2026/27 and revised capital programme to 2029/30</p>
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**Approve** the transfers to/from reserves as set out in Table 19  
**Note** the forecast revenue reserves on 31 March 2027  
**Note** the forecast capital reserves on 31 March 2027  
**Note** the key financial risks for the MTFP period  
**Note** the S73 Officer's S25 Statement at **Appendix 6**  
**Approve** the Flexible use of Capital Receipts Strategy 2026/27, included at **Appendix 4**  
**Approve** the Reserves Policy, included at **Appendix 5**  
**Approve** a contribution of up to £1m for the Hartlepool Development Corporation, from TVCA reserves, to fund its ongoing operation in 2026/27, subject to a business case, and to be funded by a drawdown on the Devolution Fund reserve. Consideration of the business case and appraisal will be delegated in accordance with the TVCA Assurance Framework to the TVCA Chief Executive for decision in consultation with Tees Valley Management Group, the Section 73 Officer and the Monitoring Officer. The business case and appraisal outcome will be shared with Cabinet.

Jo Moore, Interim Director of Finance & Resources, provided Cabinet members with an overview of the report.

Members were given the opportunity to comment or ask questions.

Mayor Cooke advised Cabinet that a number of questions from the public had been received relating to this item and he provided verbal responses.

He also advised that he is working with Jo Moore on the cash flow and income position.

Councillor Harker noted that the report is easier to read and is more understandable and expressed his thanks to the whole finance team. He enquired what the consequences were if all the risks that are included in the report came to fruition. Jo Moore advised that she believes the budget sets out a prudent and pragmatic approach to the risks and reserves.

Councillor Evans thanked the Interim Director of Finance & Resources and noted that the report is improved and clear. She advised she is fully supportive in what is being undertaken regarding driving economic growth. She welcomed the improvement in the reserves position however expressed

concern that £1m of reserves is being allocated to Hartlepool Development Corporation and asked for confirmation that this will be a one-off payment.

She was advised that, if Cabinet approve the budget, the payment to Hartlepool Development Corporation would be subject to a satisfactory business case and that it has been made clear that the expectation is for the Development Corporation to become financially sustainable beyond 2026/27. That is not to say that the Development Corporation couldn't make a future ask of TVCA, but it would be for Cabinet to consider this.

The Interim Director of Finance & Resources advised Cabinet members that the reserves which are held are in her view appropriate to the risks facing the organisation. While holding reserves means that money is not being spent elsewhere, there needs to be sufficient money held in reserves. It is not an exact science however the balance is currently right as we go into the new financial year.

Denise McGuckin noted that TVCA is a majority shareholder in Goosepool 2019 Ltd and, as such, should be sighted on the loan agreements before they are signed.

She was advised that there is a loan agreement for the original loan to Goosepool 2019 Ltd, which is being reviewed. TVCA is also currently finalising the schedule and principle repayments for the STDC loan and a report on both the Goosepool 2019 Ltd and STDC loan agreements will be brought back to a future Cabinet meeting.

There was a query relating to the ERDF Legacy funds and Cabinet were advised that this fund does not sit within the Combined Authority. TVCA will be undertaking a piece of work which considers options for a financial instrument for the Tees Valley. It was agreed that Sarah Walker will work with Councillor Alec Brown as the portfolio holder.

**RESOLVED that Cabinet:-**

- **APPROVED** the Final Budget for Mayoral Functions for 2026/27
- **NOTED** the approved Concessionary Fares budget of £14.834m for 2026/27

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>APPROVED</b> the final Combined Authority Revenue Budget for 2026/27</li> <li>• <b>NOTED</b> the consultation responses on the draft budget proposals, including the Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee's comments, set out at <b>Appendix 2</b></li> <li>• <b>APPROVED</b> the revised Medium Term Financial Plan 2026/27 to 2029/30</li> <li>• <b>APPROVED</b> the Final Capital Budget for 2026/27 and revised capital programme to 2029/30</li> <li>• <b>APPROVED</b> the transfers to/from reserves as set out in Table 19</li> <li>• <b>NOTED</b> the forecast revenue reserves on 31 March 2027</li> <li>• <b>NOTED</b> the forecast capital reserves on 31 March 2027</li> <li>• <b>NOTED</b> the key financial risks for the MTFP period</li> <li>• <b>NOTED</b> the S73 Officer's S25 Statement at <b>Appendix 6</b></li> <li>• <b>APPROVED</b> the Flexible use of Capital Receipts Strategy 2026/27, included at <b>Appendix 4</b></li> <li>• <b>APPROVED</b> the Reserves Policy, included at <b>Appendix 5</b></li> <li>• <b>APPROVED</b> a contribution of up to £1m for the Hartlepool Development Corporation, from TVCA reserves, to fund its ongoing operation in 2026/27, subject to a business case, and to be funded by a drawdown on the Devolution Fund reserve. Consideration of the business case and appraisal will be delegated in accordance with the TVCA Assurance Framework to the TVCA Chief Executive for decision in consultation with Tees Valley Management Group, the Section 73 Officer and the Monitoring Officer. The business case and appraisal outcome will be shared with Cabinet.</li> </ul>
<p>TVCA 83/25</p>	<p><b>QUARTER 3 FORECAST REVENUE AND CAPITAL OUTTURN 2025/26 AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2025/26-2028/29</b></p> <p>Cabinet was presented with a report from the Interim Director of Finance &amp; Resources which provided details of the forecast revenue and capital outturn position for Tees Valley Combined Authority for the year ending 31 March 2026.</p>

The report highlighted key assumptions used in those forecasts, together with any key financial risks, as well as details of the forecast reserves position as at the end of March 2026.

The report also provided forecasts for Capital expenditure by Directorate within the Capital Programme for 2025/26.

Cabinet were invited to:-

- A. Note the Q3 revenue forecast net deficit of £0.594m for the year ending 31 March 2026. Being a favourable change of £6.132m from the reported deficit of £6.727m at Quarter 2;
- B. Note the proposed contribution to reserves of £1.903m
- C. Approve the transfer of £1.225m for the Hydrogen Refuelling Project to an earmarked reserve to enable delivery in future years;
- D. Note the forecast revenue reserves of £41.552m as at the end of March 2026 ;
- E. Note the key financial risks for 2025/26;
- F. Note the Q3 forecast gross capital expenditure of £106.845m for financial year to 31 March 2026 being a reduction of £130.387m from Q2;
- G. Note the Capital Reserves forecast of £139.645m by the end of March 2026.

Members were given the opportunity to comment or ask questions. There were no questions or comments.

**RESOLVED that Cabinet:-**

- A. **NOTED** the Q3 revenue forecast net deficit of £0.594m for the year ending 31 March 2026. Being a favourable change of £6.132m from the reported deficit of £6.727m at Quarter 2;
- B. **NOTED** the proposed contribution to reserves of £1.903m
- C. **APPROVED** the transfer of £1.225m for the Hydrogen Refuelling Project to an earmarked reserve to enable delivery in future years;
- D. **NOTED** the forecast revenue reserves of £41.552m as at the end of March 2026 ;
- E. **NOTED** the key financial risks for 2025/26;

	<p>F. <b>NOTED</b> the Q3 forecast gross capital expenditure of £106.845m for financial year to 31 March 2026 being a reduction of £130.387m from Q2;</p> <p>G. <b>NOTED</b> the Capital Reserves forecast of £139.645m by the end of March 2026.</p>
TVCA 84/25	<p><b>CAPITAL STRATEGY</b></p> <p>Cabinet was presented with a report from the Director of Infrastructure which requested approval of the Capital Strategy 2026/27.</p> <p>Cabinet was invited to approve the Capital Strategy 2026-27.</p> <p>Members were given the opportunity to comment or ask questions.</p> <p>Mayor Cooke enquired what the tolerance is for slippage. He was advised that there is not currently a tolerance, however, the transport programme forms the largest element of the capital programme and as it develops, it will be built in as part of the programme development.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED</b> that <b>Cabinet</b> approved the Capital Strategy 2026-27</p>
TVCA 85/25	<p><b>TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND MINIMUM REVENUE POLICY</b></p> <p>Cabinet was presented with a report from the Interim Director of Finance &amp; Resources which requested approval of the proposed Treasury Management Strategy for 2026/27 to comply with requirements of the Local Government Act 2003 and the Chartered Institute of Public Finance Accountant (CIPFA) Treasury Management Code of Practice.</p> <p>Cabinet were invited to:-</p> <p>A. <b>APPROVE</b> the Treasury Management Strategy 2026/27;</p> <p>B. <b>APPROVE</b> the Minimum Revenue Policy 2026/27.</p> <p>The Chair expressed his thanks to both the Interim Director of Finance &amp; Resources and Mayor Cooke as portfolio holder.</p> <p>Members were given the opportunity to comment or ask questions.</p>

	<p>There were no questions or comments.</p> <p>RESOLVED THAT Cabinet:-</p> <p>A. <u>APPROVED</u> the Treasury Management Strategy 2026/27;</p> <p>B. <u>APPROVED</u> the Minimum Revenue Policy 2026/27.</p>
<p>TVCA 86/25</p>	<p><b>BROWNFIELD HOUSING FUND (PHASE 3)</b></p> <p>Cabinet was presented with a report by the Director of Business Solutions which provided an overview of the Brownfield Housing Fund (BHF) Phase 3.</p> <p>The report also sought Cabinet approval to commit the remaining BHF Phase 3 funding of £5.07m to Princeton Gardens in Stockton (£2.3m) and Gresham in Middlesbrough (£2.77m), subject to successful appraisal of the full Business Case in line with BHF funding conditions and in accordance with the TVCA Assurance Framework.</p> <p>Members were given the opportunity to comment or ask questions.</p> <p>Councillor Evans noted that the site in Stockton has laid dormant for many years so is happy that it is being recommended for funding.</p> <p>The Director of Business Solutions advised Cabinet that there had been a recent announcement on future Brownfield Housing funding. It is imperative that the strategic pipeline of sites is in place as soon as possible. She advised that consideration of viability gaps is fundamental to the discussions being held with Homes England.</p> <p>RESOLVED THAT Cabinet:-</p> <p>A. <u>APPROVED</u> the commitment of the remaining £5.07m Brownfield Housing Fund (Phase 3) from the Tees Valley Combined Authority Investment Plan to Princeton Gardens in Stockton (£2.3m) and Gresham in Middlesbrough (£2.77m), subject to successful appraisal of the full Business Case in line with BHF funding conditions and in accordance with the TVCA Assurance Framework. The recommended commitment of this funding has been subject to full appraisal, due diligence, and approval in</p>

	<p>accordance with the TVCA Assurance Framework and established decision-making processes, ensuring compliance with governance, value for money, and audit requirements.</p>
<p>TVCA 87/25</p>	<p><b>NORTHEAST &amp; YORKSHIRE NET ZERO HUB</b></p> <p>Cabinet was provided with a report from the Director of Business Solutions which requested a decision to continue as accountable body for the North East and Yorkshire Net Zero Hub for an additional twelve months and to consider options for its future delivery at a subsequent meeting. This would extend its current funding window to March 2027 and its delivery window up to September 2027, from March and September 2026 respectively.</p> <p>Cabinet were invited to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. <b>APPROVE</b> that TVCA enters into a further 12-month Funding Agreement with the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) and its partners relating to the North East and Yorkshire Net Zero Hub;</li> <li>B. <b>NOTE</b> that in September 2025 Cabinet approved a scheme of delegation that allows the TVCA Chief Executive in consultation with the Section 73 and Monitoring Officer, to execute agreements and approve budgets relating to the Net Zero Hub.</li> </ul> <p>Members were given the opportunity to comment or ask questions. There were no questions or comments.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED that Cabinet:-</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. <b>APPROVED</b> that TVCA enters into a further 12-month Funding Agreement with the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) and its partners relating to the North East and Yorkshire Net Zero Hub;</li> <li>B. <b>NOTED</b> that in September 2025 Cabinet approved a scheme of delegation that allows the TVCA Chief Executive in consultation with the Section 73 and Monitoring Officer, to execute agreements and approve budgets relating to the Net Zero Hub.</li> </ul>

<p>TVCA 88/25</p>	<p><b>LOCAL TRANSPORT DELIVERY PLAN</b></p> <p>Cabinet was presented with a report by the Director of Infrastructure which outlined the new approach to Transport Funding through consolidating a number of different funding streams received by TVCA into a Mayoral Transport Fund.</p> <p>Cabinet were recommended to:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <b>AGREE</b> that TVCA submits the Detailed Draft Local Transport Delivery Plan to the Department for Transport to meet the March 2026 deadline.</li> <li>b. <b>AGREE</b> to delegate authority to the Director of Infrastructure to take all decisions required to manage the remainder of the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) programme to ensure that the requirements of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Department for Transport and TVCA are met, particularly by accelerating the delivery of TCR schemes to ensure CRSTS funding is fully committed by March 2027, with the remainder of the CRSTS schemes to be delivered as part of the Mayoral Transport Fund allocation.</li> <li>c. <b>AGREE</b> to delegate authority to the Director of Infrastructure to take all decisions required to progress business cases for each project/package/programme within the Local Transport Delivery Plan, including authorisation to spend up to 10% of the total approved Investment Package allocations, for the purposes of carrying out feasibility, design and project development work to support the preparation of project/package/programme Business Cases. Project/package/programme Business cases will be approved in accord with the scheme of delegation set out in the new Single Assurance Framework.</li> <li>d. <b>AGREE</b> to receive a further report which will seek approval for TVCA to submit the Final Local Transport Delivery Plan to the Department for Transport to meet the September 2026 deadline. TVCA officers will work with Local Authority officers, Transport Committee Members, Cabinet Members and DfT to further refine</li> </ol>
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	<p>the projects/packages/programmes set out in the Detailed Draft Local Transport Delivery Plan ahead of this submission.</p> <p>e. <b>AGREE</b> to receive a quarterly update report on progress in delivering the Local Transport Delivery Plan and an annual report outlining proposed revisions and updates to the Local Transport Delivery Plan to reflect progress and proposed changes to projects/packages/programmes.</p> <p>f. <b>AGREE</b> to delegate responsibility to the Director of Infrastructure to take all decisions required to deliver the Tees Valley Bus Service Improvement Plan Investment programme (2026/27 – 2028/29), in line with the funding allocation outlined in the Local Transport Delivery Plan, including continuing to invest in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) enhancing the customer experience,</li> <li>b) improved fares offers by continuing the u22 fares offer and Tees Pass for care leavers ,</li> <li>c) supported bus services, and</li> <li>d) other expenditure.</li> </ul> <p>Approval for the projects/packages within the Tees Valley Bus Service Improvement Plan programme will be reported through the Enhanced Bus Partnership and approved in accord with the scheme of delegation set out in the new Single Assurance Framework.</p> <p>g. <b>AGREE</b> to delegate responsibility to the Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Accountable Cabinet Member and the Enhanced Bus Partnership Members to take any urgent decisions in relation to the use of the Contingency fund (as set out in paragraphs 6.33 &amp; 6.34) within the Tees Valley Bus Service Improvement Plan Investment programme (2026/27 – 2028/29), on an exceptional basis and where the urgency of decision cannot wait until a meeting of Cabinet.</p> <p>h. <b>AGREE</b> the proposed changes to the Tees Valley Bus Service Improvement Plan Investment programme (2025/26) and delegate responsibility to the Director of Infrastructure to take all decisions required to deliver the amendments,</p> <p>i. <b>NOTE</b> the additional Zero Emission Bus Regional Assistance (ZEBRA) funding which has been secured, alongside investment by the bus operators, to support the delivery of the BSIP by further decarbonising the bus fleet in Tees Valley through the introduction of more electric vehicles.</p>
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Members were given the opportunity to comment or ask questions.

Councillor Brown enquired whether Cabinet members would see details of any underspend on any of the schemes and he was advised that there is now more flexibility meaning any underspend would go back into the overall Transport fund for consideration by Cabinet.

Cabinet was advised that work is ongoing to look at how other public and private investment can be leveraged off the back of the devolved funding. They were advised that the zero emission buses have been funded through bids into government and by the operators.

Councillor Evans enquired why the funding for the Active Travel Hubs was reduced. She was advised that it was reduced because our Active Travel capability rating was downgraded.

She also asked whether each individual hub could be looked at on their merits – how they perform and how they are used by the public.

It was acknowledged by the Chief Executive that the active travel hub issue should have been brought to Cabinet earlier, but a commitment was made that officers will work closely with Cabinet as the review is undertaken. The short-term extension will give us some time to look at what the long term future looks like. A long term sustainable position is needed for the Hubs which may involve some hubs moving to fit in with the bigger transport programme. TVCA will work closely with Cabinet to obtain the best solution for all. The Chief Executive agreed to provide evidence of engagement with local authority officers on the Active Travel Hubs proposal.

Cabinet was advised that the Transport Committee have reviewed the bus service priorities and have come up with proposals of how to use the Mayoral Transport Fund allocation over the course of the next 3 years.

Councillor Brown thanked Councillor Harker and the Transport Committee members for their work on this. In turn, Councillor Harker passed his thanks on to all the transport team at TVCA, particularly Emily Campbell.

Councillor Hargreaves noted that she has received several emails from concerned residents from East Cleveland. They have all been responded to and she thanked them for taking the time to contact her.

**RESOLVED** that Cabinet:-

- A. **AGREED** that TVCA submits the Detailed Draft Local Transport Delivery Plan to the Department for Transport to meet the March 2026 deadline.
- B. **AGREED** to delegate authority to the Director of Infrastructure to take all decisions required to manage the remainder of the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) programme to ensure that the requirements of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Department for Transport and TVCA are met, particularly by accelerating the delivery of TCR schemes to ensure CRSTS funding is fully committed by March 2027, with the remainder of the CRSTS schemes to be delivered as part of the Mayoral Transport Fund allocation.
- C. **AGREED** to delegate authority to the Director of Infrastructure to take all decisions required to progress business cases for each project/package/programme within the Local Transport Delivery Plan, including authorisation to spend up to 10% of the total approved Investment Package allocations, for the purposes of carrying out feasibility, design and project development work to support the preparation of project/package/programme Business Cases.
  - a. Project/package/programme Business cases will be approved in accord with the scheme of delegation set out in the new Single Assurance Framework.
- D. **AGREED** to receive a further report which will seek approval for TVCA to submit the Final Local Transport Delivery Plan to the Department for Transport to meet the September 2026 deadline.
  - a. TVCA officers will work with Local Authority officers, Transport Committee Members, Cabinet Members and DfT to further refine the projects/packages/programmes set out in the Detailed Draft Local Transport Delivery Plan ahead of this submission.

	<p>E. <b>AGREED</b> to receive a quarterly update report on progress in delivering the Local Transport Delivery Plan and an annual report outlining proposed revisions and updates to the Local Transport Delivery Plan to reflect progress and proposed changes to projects/packages/programmes.</p> <p>F. <b>AGREED</b> to delegate responsibility to the Director of Infrastructure to take all decisions required to deliver the Tees Valley Bus Service Improvement Plan Investment programme (2026/27 – 2028/29), in line with the funding allocation outlined in the Local Transport Delivery Plan, including continuing to invest in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) enhancing the customer experience, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. b) improved fares offers by continuing the u22 fares offer and Tees Pass for care leavers ,</li> <li>b. c) supported bus services, and</li> <li>c. d) other expenditure.</li> <li>d. Approval for the projects/packages within the Tees Valley Bus Service Improvement Plan programme will be reported through the Enhanced Bus Partnership and approved in accord with the scheme of delegation set out in the new Single Assurance Framework.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>G. <b>AGREED</b> to delegate responsibility to the Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Accountable Cabinet Member and the Enhanced Bus Partnership Members to take any urgent decisions in relation to the use of the Contingency fund (as set out in paragraphs 6.33 &amp; 6.34) within the Tees Valley Bus Service Improvement Plan Investment programme (2026/27 – 2028/29), on an exceptional basis and where the urgency of decision cannot wait until a meeting of Cabinet.</p> <p>H. <b>AGREED</b> the proposed changes to the Tees Valley Bus Service Improvement Plan Investment programme (2025/26) and delegate responsibility to the Director of Infrastructure to take all decisions required to deliver the amendments,</p> <p>I. <b>NOTED</b> the additional Zero Emission Bus Regional Assistance (ZEBRA) funding which has been secured, alongside investment by the bus operators, to support the delivery of the BSIP by further decarbonising the bus fleet in Tees Valley through the introduction of more electric vehicles.</p>
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<p>TVCA 89/25</p>	<p><b>PROCUREMENT &amp; COMMERCIAL STRATEGY</b></p> <p>Cabinet was presented with a report from the Interim Director of Finance &amp; Resources requesting approval of the Procurement &amp; Commercial Strategy.</p> <p>Members were invited to approve the Procurement &amp; Commercial Strategy.</p> <p>Members were given the opportunity to comment or ask questions</p> <p>Councillor Hargreaves noted that, as constituent Local Authorities we should be working together and sharing good practice and principles.</p> <p>Mayor Cooke agreed that sharing good practice would be beneficial as well as sharing supplier experiences. He also noted that TVCA should develop an AI policy.</p> <p>Following questions relating to Social Value, Cabinet was advised that an Action Plan is being developed, alongside a procurement dashboard which will be interactive. A Social Value officer will also be recruited who will look at all contracts.</p> <p>Following questions raised in a recent Mayoral Question Time, the Tees Valley Mayor requested the addition of a clause relating to the Supreme Court judgement on women only spaces be included in the Procurement &amp; Commercial Strategy. This would require anyone contracting with the Combined Authority to ensure they follow the law, relating to this ruling, and any deviation from this would result in breach of contract. This was unanimously agreed by the Cabinet.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED that Cabinet:</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>APPROVED</u> the Procurement &amp; Commercial Strategy</b></p>
	<p><b>DATE AND TIME OF FUTURE MEETINGS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friday, 24<sup>th</sup> April 2026 at 10:00am</li> <li>• Friday 26<sup>th</sup> June 2026 at 10:00am</li> </ul> <p>The Chair thanked all in attendance.</p>

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