



Transport Delivery Committee

Date	4 th December 2017
Report title	Metro Operations Business Report
Accountable Director	Phil Hewitt, Metro Programme Director Email: philhewitt@centro.org.uk Tel: 0121 214 7254
Accountable Employee	Sophie Allison, Metro Operations Manager Email: sophieallison@centro.org.uk Tel: 0121 214 7347
Report to be/has been considered by	Councillor Roger Horton – Lead Member Rail and Metro

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Transport Delivery Committee is recommended to note the report:

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To report on matters relating to the performance, operation and delivery of Metro services in the West Midlands.

This report includes:

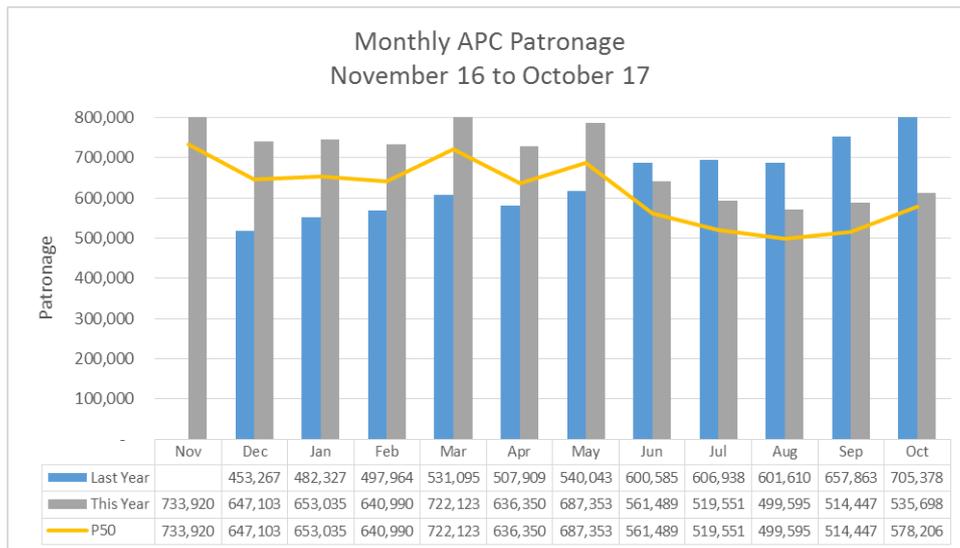
<p>Section A 2.0</p>	<p>Operational Performance</p> <p>2.1 Patronage 2.2 Weekend Patronage Growth 2.3 Punctuality 2.4 Reliability 2.5 Customer Service Representative Coverage</p>
<p>Section B 3.0</p>	<p>Partnership Update</p> <p>3.1 Bradley Lane Park and Ride update 3.2 Metro passenger panel</p>
<p>Section C 4.0</p>	<p>Tram Passenger Survey - Satisfaction Results</p> <p>4.1 Tram Passenger Survey</p>
<p>Section D 5.0</p>	<p>Operational Matters and Passengers Impacts</p> <p>5.1 Re-opening of Bilston Rd 5.2 Christmas Timetable</p>
<p>Section E 6.0</p>	<p>Operator Business Updates</p> <p>6.1 NXMM update</p>
<p>Section F 7.0</p>	<p>Appendices N/A</p>

2.0 Section A – Operational Performance.

2.1 Metro Patronage

2.1A Patronage on Midland Metro continues to grow since the opening of Grand Central tram stop on 30th May 2016. Chart 1 shows the monthly patronage from November 2016 to October 2017. This is derived from the automatic passenger counters covering the tram doors. The average growth year on year is 7%. Prior to the closure of Bilston Road patronage was up on average 32% each month but since the closure of Bilston Road for the track replacement project, patronage is down on average 17% each month. The patronage has been falling gradually since the closure which explains the overall position.

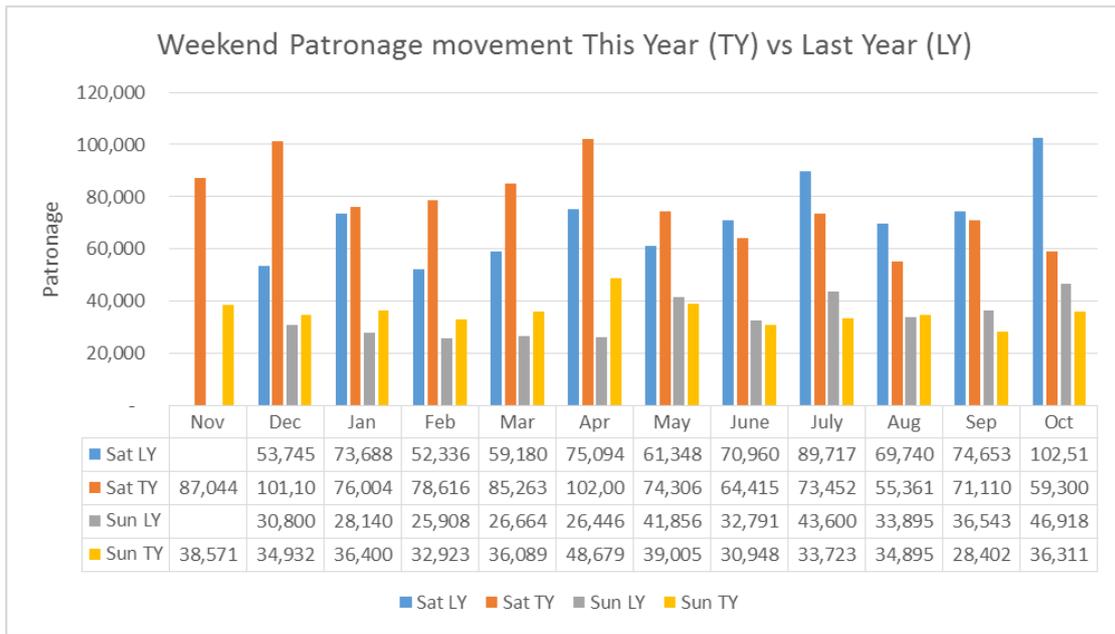
Chart 1



2.2 Weekend Patronage Growth

2.2A Chart 2 shows patronage on Midland Metro at weekends. When comparing the period Dec 2016 to October 2017 with the equivalent period a year prior, patronage on average has shown an increase of 7% on Saturday and 15% on Sunday. However, since the commencement of Bilston Road track replacement project, patronage has declined on both Saturdays and Sundays. When comparing the month of October 2017 with October 2016, the change has been a decrease on Saturday of 42% and on Sunday a decrease of 23%. Journeys at weekends tend to be more for leisure purposes and therefore optional. As such it is likely that disruption to service arising from Bilston Road track replacement project has particularly impacted weekend patronage.

Chart 2

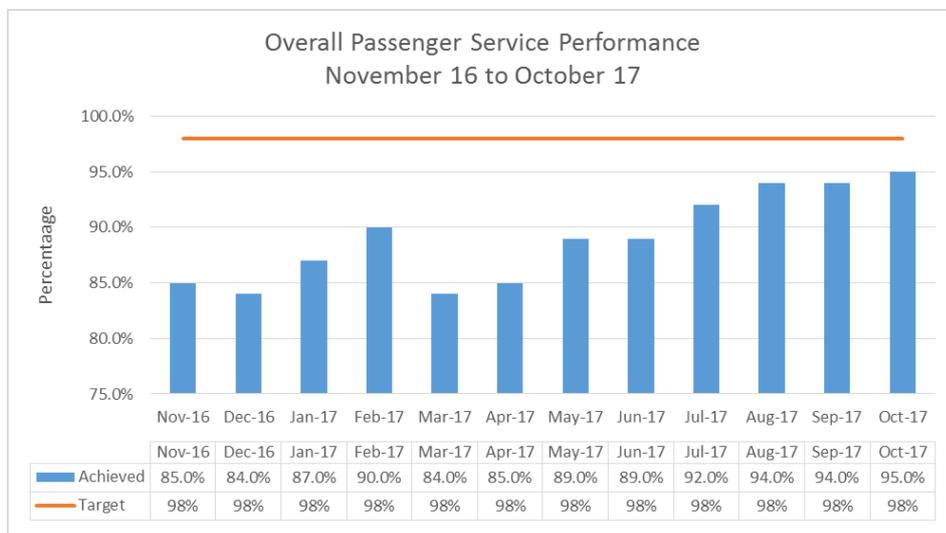


2.3 Punctuality

2.3A This measure details how many journeys have been operated in accordance with the published timetable at the departure and termination points. Chart 3 shows monthly punctuality performance from November 2016 to October 2017. Please note that incidents which affected service and are outside of the operator’s control have not been removed from the figures presented, thus the figures demonstrate the real passenger experience.

2.3B Punctuality has improved since June 2017. This coincides with Bilston Rd closure and highlights how delays arising on the on-street section of the tram system which are often outside of the control of the operator, can impact performance. National Express Midland Metro are working with The City of Wolverhampton Council to ensure the traffic signal timings along Bilston Road are optimised for the re-opening of this section of the route.

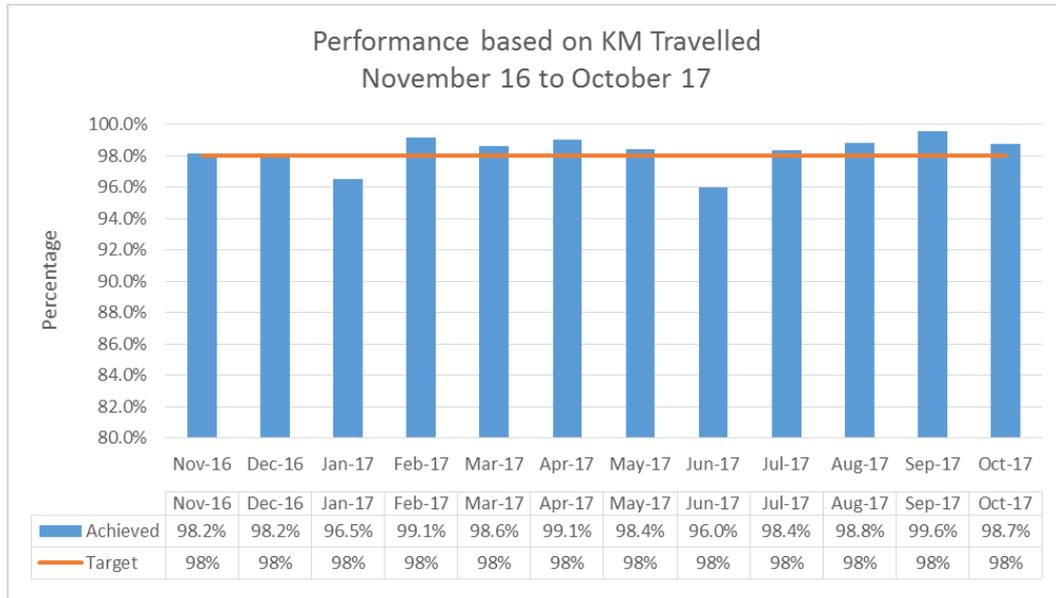
Chart 3



2.4 Reliability

2.4A This measure shows the percentage of kilometres operated against the scheduled timetable. Chart 4 shows performance over the last 12 months. The target is 98% which has been achieved over the last quarter.

Chart 4

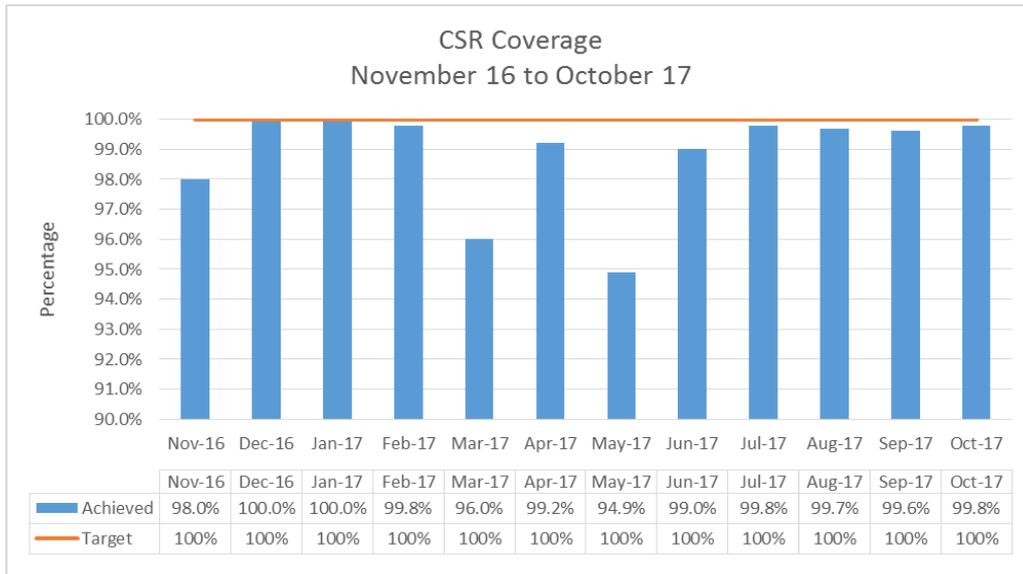


2.5 CSR Coverage

2.5A Chart 5 shows the number of journeys that were completed with a Customer Service Representative (CSR) on board over the last 12 month period. Where journeys have been completed without a CSR, this is largely attributed to staff absence due to sickness.

2.5B Staffing levels are currently at 97% for drivers and 94% for CSRs but recruitment remains buoyant for both staff groups. All candidates are now required to undergo psychometric testing as part of the recruitment process and this is ensuring that the success rate through training is now 100%. Short notice sickness continues to be a problem that is being managed through the NXMM sickness policy with the options of alternative employment being sought if capability becomes a factor.

Chart 5



3.0 Section B – Metro Partnership Update

3.1 Bradley Lane Park and Ride

3.1A Work continues on the Bradley Lane park and ride project which will deliver 196 new parking spaces, serving Bradley Lane tram stop. The tender for a construction contractor was issued on the 1st September 2017 and tenders were returned on the 26th October. These are currently being evaluated and it is intended to award contract in January 2018. The physical works are planned to commence in February 2018 with phase 1 being the mine stabilisation works. The project is due to be completed by Autumn/Winter 2018.

3.2 Metro Passenger Panel

3.2A Metro Passenger Panel last met on 27 September 2017 and items discussed included an operational update, progress on the A41 works and the updated passenger champion survey. The panel has two new members who working with the wider panel members were pleased to be involved in the development of the new passenger champion survey. The passenger panel provided valuable input making suggestions regarding the question set which has been fed back to the working group for the survey. Other feedback from the panel related to the communication plan and implementation of the replacement bus service for the A41 closure. The panel viewed both positively, although it was raised that communication during service disruption is not always timely or informative and that this is an area that can be improved. Plans are in place to address this, as detailed in 4.1A. The next passenger panel is on 7 December 2017.

4.0 Section C – Tram Passenger Survey – Satisfaction Results

4.1A The Autumn 2016 tram passenger survey results reported an overall customer satisfaction level of 92%, up from 81% the previous year. This was biggest rise in passenger satisfaction

when compared with other tram systems in the UK, leading to recognition from the industry with Midland Metro awarded Most Improved System 2017 at the prestigious Global Light Rail Awards in October.

Customer information is a key area for improvement, in particular during periods of unplanned changes to service, with 28% of passengers surveyed reporting that no reason was given in the event that they had experienced a delay to their journey. A development plan has been produced with a focus on developing the team's communication skills and the resources available to deliver real-time information to customers promptly and succinctly. The introduction of dedicated Customer Information Officers is being scoped for introduction during 2018. They will be responsible for managing communications to passengers, this will include the increasingly more important social media channels.

With 14% of passengers suggesting improvements relating to passenger behaviour, customer facing staff are also receiving further development in order to give them confidence in dealing with challenging behaviour and skills that will help them to identify potential conflict and provide resolution to such incidents.

Overall, many positives have been taken from the survey results, including the number of customers experiencing delays reducing by 6% and the number of customers stating that they were 'very dissatisfied' with their journey significantly reducing from 9% to less than 1%.

The service remained consistent in other areas, including punctuality and the length of time waiting for a tram.

5.0 Section D - Operational Matters and Passenger Impacts

5.1 Re-opening of Bilston Rd

5.1A Tram services to Wolverhampton St George's tram stop will resume on the 10th December following the completion of Bilston Road track replacement project delivered by Midland Metro Alliance. The tram tracks on the A41 Bilston Rd, Wolverhampton were originally installed in 1999. They had become heavily worn and nearing the end of their life, leading to high levels of noise and vibration, as well as the break-up of the road surface adjacent to the rails. Work commenced on site to replace the 1.35km of double tram track (2.7km of track in total) on the 11th June 2017. Other works delivered by the project include the replacement of drainage water boxes, stray current collection system and the replacement of signalling loops.

During the period of the works the passenger service has operated from Priestfield to Grand Central tram stop with a replacement 79/79E bus service between The Crescent tram stop and Wolverhampton Bus Station. To support customers, for the first two weeks of the work customer care staff were available at key stops to provide information and guidance about the alternative transport options available to them and the amended timetable. Communication material was produced and distributed in advance of the road closure to prepare customers for the transition to the replacement bus service, including posters,

leaflets, website updates and social media information. A member of Metro staff has been available at Wolverhampton bus station for the duration of the work during service hours, to sell Metro tickets and provide customer care.

Initiatives have been in place to ensure that customers are not disadvantaged financially during the work. This includes the provision for the £1 City Hop fare to be available to customers that would normally travel between Priestfield and St George's for this fare, as well as options for conductors to reduce the customers Metro fare on production of a 79 or 79E bus service ticket in the event that they are unable to buy their Metro ticket in advance.

A communication plan has been prepared and is being implemented in three phases in preparation for full service to be resumed on Sunday 10th December:

1. Informing customers that the Bilston Road will re-open on 2 December
2. Post road opening, pre trams returning to normal service. Testing and commissioning phase
3. Post service resuming

Initiatives include posters at all stops, information leaflets, customer care staff at key stops and relevant announcements on tram and at stops.

A marketing campaign has also been developed to promote the early completion of the works and encourage customers to travel on metro. A promotional mailing, including a £5 discount voucher to use with the Metro Group Ticket (usually £10) will be delivered to approximately 68,000 homes during week commencing 18th December.

There is also a social media and radio campaign planned, which is led by Network West Midlands to promote all transport modes including metro this Christmas.

5.2 Christmas Timetable

5.2A NXMM operating hours throughout the Christmas period and into 2018 will be unchanged, with the exception of:

- Monday 25 December: No tram service will operate
- Tuesday 26 December: An enhanced Sunday service will operate every 10 minutes between 08:00 and 18:00, reducing to every 15 minutes from 18:01 to 23:00
- Monday 1 January 2018: An enhanced Sunday service will be in operation every 10 minutes between 08:00 and 18:00, reducing to every 15 minutes from 18:01 to 23:00

6.0 Section E - Operator Business Update, National Express Midland Metro

6.1 NXMM Update

NXMM were pleased to be the official transport partner for the Birmingham Weekender for the second time. NXMM hosted its own event – Tram-a-lama-ding-dong! With Lorraine

Bowen, Figs in Wigs and Barbara Nice performing to more than 1,000 customers during the weekend, proving to be one of the most talked about events of the weekend on social media.

A number of Rail Group and other stakeholder visits have been held at the depot to publicise the future of Metro, including the National Express Summer of Fun competition winner's event.

NXMM have been working closely with the Birmingham City Council events team, having input in to the safety advisory group (SAG) for the Birmingham Christmas Markets.

Tram 18 has returned back to the depot with the on-board energy storage system (OESS) fitted. Testing and commissioning will be carried out on site by CAF supported by NXMM driver and engineering resources.

The City Hop continues to be a popular ticket with an average of 5240 tickets sold each week in the first six months of the year. During the first month of the Bilston Road closure there was a decline of 24% in the take up of City Hoppers. However, there has been growth during the second half of the year with an increase of 14% of sales to an average of 4470 tickets sold each week for Birmingham. It is anticipated that once the Bilston Road is reopened that the patronage will return and purchase the product in Wolverhampton meaning an increase of circa 14% over the year.

NXMM have a number of achievements with regards to safety and performance during the period, including:

- Global Light Rail Awards - Most Improved System 2017
- Global Light Rail Awards - Highly Commended Award for the NXMM CCTV and Claims Co-ordinator, Tom Rowe
- Maintained the Five Start rating with the British Safety Council and were awarded the Wilkinson Sword of Honour for a second successive year.
- ISO 9001 accreditation with a recommendation for transition to the ISO9001: 2015 standard
- Achieved the Five Star rating with the British Quality Foundation
- Working towards 14001 (environmental) standard for 2018.

7.0 Appendices N/A