

## News from the Department for Transport

03 February 2010

### Over £1½ billion Government funding to revitalise the Metro

A landmark funding package of around £580 million will breathe new life into the Tyne and Wear Metro, Transport Minister Sadiq Khan announced today. This package will pave the way for a reinvigoration of the service, with the renewal of ageing tracks and stations.

The investment will deliver the following benefits to passengers:

- greater accessibility with new lifts and escalators at stations
- more comfort thanks to a complete refurbishment of the train carriages and renewal of ageing tracks and power lines
- improved travel information at stations due to upgrades of public information systems

Work in the first three years will concentrate on the sections from South Gosforth to Newcastle city centre and from Chillingham Road to Tynemouth, plus the refurbishment of the key Interchange at Central station, Newcastle.

Sadiq Khan said: "The Metro is an iconic transport system and the lifeblood of the local community. This historic decision provides the biggest ever investment in the future of the Tyne & Wear Metro since it opened 30 years ago. Passengers can look forward to smoother running trains, upgraded stations and a greater quality of service on existing lines. This decision also underlines the Government's commitment to maintaining the Metro to 2021. This is a major step in securing value for money for taxpayers and improving the service provided to the public.

Minister for the North East Nick Brown said; "Today's announcement safeguards the future of the Tyne and Wear Metro for a generation. The Metro is the envy of other cities and the Government's commitment reflects the importance of the Metro to our region. The Government's package of over £300m of capital investment will be focussed on what passengers want, transforming the Metro and renewing its world class status resulting in a better service, securing hundreds of jobs and delivering value for money to the tax payer."

The Government announced last year that the Metro will receive £14m to improve its ticketing system, which will enable 225 existing ticket machines to be replaced at 60 stations.

Notes to editors

1. The Tyne and Wear Metro system was opened in 1980, and built largely on the former local heavy rail network.
2. Today's announcement means that the Department is approving a funding package for the Tyne and Wear Metro that includes:-
  - £350m investment in renewals (including track, signalling, communications, stations etc) up to 2021
  - £230m in operating subsidy up to 2019
3. The funding approval enables Nexus to enter into a contract with DB Regio (Tyne & Wear) Ltd to operate train services and stations, following a competitive tender exercise.
4. Nexus is the Tyne and Wear Passenger Transport Executive and administers funds on behalf of the Tyne and Wear Integrated Transport Authority.