

Transport for the North Statement of Accounts 2024/25



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Narrative report

Operational overview and external environment

Our purpose

An effective, efficient transport system is a fundamental part of everyday life. It connects people and places to services and opportunities including jobs, health, education and leisure. It connects businesses and allows the efficient movement of goods and services. TfN works on behalf of the North's 16 million citizens and 1.1 million businesses, complementing the work of our Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs), County Combined Authorities (CCAs) and Local Transport Authorities (LTAs), and supporting the work of the government nationally.

Our Strategic Transport Plan (STP) is a strategy for our region, setting the vision, objectives and the North's long term strategic transport priorities to 2050. The evidence base assembled to support the STP sets out the scale of the opportunity that exists across the North, but also the challenges our communities and businesses face.

To reflect the North's diverse people, places and the scale of the transport challenges we face, the STP is **user centred, outcome focused, placed based**, underpinned by robust **evidence** and promotes the importance of a **systems approach** to the planning and delivery of investment.

Vision and objectives

The STP, adopted by the TfN Board in March 2024, sets out our vision that by 2050 the North of England will have become a thriving, socially inclusive region. Our communities, businesses and places will all benefit from sustainable economic growth, improved health and wellbeing and improved access to opportunities for all. This will be achieved through a transformed, near zero-emission, integrated, safe, affordable and sustainable transport system, which will enhance connectivity, support mode shift and resilience and improve journey times for all users.

Our vision is supported by three strategic ambitions the North wants to achieve:

- Transforming economic performance
- Rapid decarbonisation of our transport system
- Enhancing social inclusion and health.

Our strategic ambitions are underpinned by three core TfN strategies:

- The Northern Powerhouse Independent Economic Review (NPIER), which identifies that the economic prize of realising the potential of North, is a Northern economy that is £118bn per annum larger by 2050
- TfN's Regional Decarbonisation Strategy which sets the importance of achieving near zero carbon emissions of surface transport by 2045
- Connecting Communities, our socially inclusive transport strategy which builds on our ground-breaking work on transport-related social exclusion (TRSE), aiming to remove the risk of TRSE for a million people across the North.

Progress against our strategic ambitions

We published our Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy in March 2024. The strategy consists of a series of headline, core, and supplementary metrics that underpin the STP vision and its three strategic ambitions. When taken in totality, these metrics provide a picture of progress against

the STP – highlighting in the process where actions may need to be adjusted or strengthened year on year. This can be used to inform TfN’s advice to government and national delivery bodies on investment priorities, as well as supporting delivery of Local Growth Plans and Local Transport Plans.

Progress on the headline metrics is monitored in a dashboard; an online, publicly available interactive tool, which presents progress over time towards the associated target for each headline metric. The dashboard allows TfN, our partners and the wider public to monitor the direction of travel for each metric. The following commentary provides an overview of some of the key metrics against each ambition.

Transforming economic progress: closing the productivity gap between the North and the rest of England (less London), would mean a Northern economy that is £118bn per annum larger by 2050

- In 2019, GVA per capita in the North was £23,987 and the gap between the North and the rest of England (excluding London) was 10.3%.
- By 2022, the gap between the North and the rest of England for GVA per head had reduced to 8.3%.
- Over this period, GVA per head increased substantially in some Northern local authority districts such as Manchester and Leeds, driving an overall increase in the North. These increases in productivity are due to several factors across the region such as devolution and local policy, allowing strategic economic planning; increased investment in infrastructure, including transport; and industry growth in higher value sectors such as manufacturing and life sciences.
- While progress has been made, the gap between the North and the rest of England still exists: evidence from the IPPR highlights that the level of investment per capita in the North remains lower than the UK average, and significantly less than in London and the South East.

Decarbonising surface transport: reducing surface transport emissions to (near) zero by 2045.

- Our Decarbonisation Stocktake revealed that the North overperformed against annual emissions reduction targets between 2019 and 2022 due to pandemic-related travel changes. However, emissions rebounded in 2023 to pre-pandemic levels, exceeding the planned trajectory. Despite this, cumulative reductions mean the region remains broadly on track.
- Our Electric Vehicle State of Play report highlights that the North accounts for 14% of public chargers, despite being home to 22% of the UK population.
- Forecasts show the region will need up to 240,000 charge points by 2030 – a 15-fold increase from 2024 to 2030. Investment required to deliver this uplift in EVCI investment ranges from £3.5 to £4.9 billion.

Enhancing social inclusion and health: remove the risk of TRSE for a million people across the North

- The risk of TRSE in the North remains high, particularly in coastal communities, rural towns, and communities on the fringes of the region’s largest cities.
- The North remains overrepresented amongst those areas at the highest risk, with six of the ten most affected authorities based in the North. In these areas - Hartlepool,

Redcar and Cleveland, Blackpool, County Durham, Cumberland and Northumberland – around half of all residents face a high risk of TRSE.

- Residents in the North face a systematically higher TRSE risk than peers elsewhere in England.
- Only 48.5% of our 613 stations have compliant step-free access to all areas of the station, based on the Rail Delivery Group’s data. A member-led task group has provided advice on accelerating actions to the Secretary of State for Transport.

Analysis of the headline and supporting metrics is available on our [monitoring and evaluation dashboard](#).

Measuring our success in 2024/25

Throughout the past year TfN has continued to demonstrate our inherent strengths as an organisation. In our 2024/25 Business Plan we agreed 12 key milestones to track our progress, ensuring a culture of accountability and excellence for our organisation and to our partners. A number of these milestones were either reshaped or deferred following discussions with the TfN Board, to ensure that they were consistent with the priorities of the new government elected on 4 July 2024.

We have monitored our performance against these milestones within our Quarterly Operating Report which is shared with members and stakeholders and is available on our website.

In the last year we:

- shared Phase 1 of the Northern Appraisal Playbook workstream with the TfN Board in March 2025 and submitted a letter to Treasury, setting out the areas of appraisal where more fundamental changes in the Green Book approach are needed
- continued to deliver the TfN Offer with 88 requests (84 completed) in 2024/25, with estimated savings for partners of c£540k
- developed and expanded our TfN Offer, including a full range of bronze level self-service products available to partners on request
- responded to the DfT’s Rail Reform consultation
- completed work on the evidence base and criteria for prioritising investment to improve accessibility at the North’s stations
- Chaired the TransPennine Route Upgrade (TRU) Stakeholder Forum supporting this £11.5bn investment helping to ensure that the views of partners and freight operators are reflected.
- completed the appraisal and reporting of multiple new station options in the Bradford Strategic Outline Business Case
- continued to improve the quality of the rail modelling system underpinning Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) analysis
- produced a rail State of Play, providing for the first time, a single overview of all planned infrastructure, rolling stock, and service changes in the North to 2050, enabling TfN to confidently identify integration risks, and make recommendations via North of England Integration Board and through Place-Based Groups and Task Forces in key cities
- monitored rail service performance and worked with Rail North Partnership to reflect Northern Leader’s priorities in train operator business plans
- procured access to a bus network planning tool, which will support our constituent authorities to access bus analytics data to support delivery of their Bus Service Improvement Plans (BSIPs)

- continued to strengthen relationships with the major Northern port groups, including a Ports Roundtable with key stakeholders
- continued to engage with the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV) and Department for Transport (DfT) on the implementation of recommendations in the Electric Vehicle (EV) State of Play report.
- continued to tailor and deliver the EV Charging Infrastructure Framework to equip local partners and stakeholders with evidence which supports activities across the region
- preliminary work on identifying potential Major Road Network (MRN) schemes is now complete. Four schemes recommended by TfN in the first MRN programme have now received confirmation of funding for construction, with a total of £128M funding confirmed to date
- launched our Carbon Assessment Playbook in January 2025. This tool helps our partners to assess the carbon reduction impact of various transport policies and interventions
- Updated the Transport Related Social Exclusion (TRSE) evidence and data tool for release following the pre-election period
- continued to deliver a series of research exercises with our Northern Transport Voices (NTV) citizens panel
- completed our review of the vulnerability of the North’s MRN and Heavy Rail Network to a number of different climate hazards.

Looking ahead to 2025/26 and beyond

Our Business Plan for 2025/26 was agreed by the TfN Board in March 2025. The plan reflects the contribution we will make to deliver the ambition set out in the STP, working in support of our constituent authorities and national delivery partners. Whilst our STP has a long-term common goal, our vision is underpinned by short, medium and longer-term plans that advance wide-ranging interventions right across the North.

Summary of proposed activity in 2025/26

The investment made in TfN to date has developed a capacity and capability that is technically at the leading edge of strategic transport planning nationally. The 2025/26 Business Plan looks to build on that investment to the benefit of all TfN partners (nationally and regionally). In 2025/26 we will:

- promote our Northern Appraisal Playbook to support our partners in maximising the flexibilities within the current Green Book to better reflect the circumstances and opportunities that exist in the North, including promoting evidence for further changes to the appraisal process
- develop and enhance our TfN Offer, including providing additional support to partners on business case development
- publish an annual update on progress of EVCI as part of our reporting on the STP
- support the work of our partners to decarbonise their local transport system
- give greater priority to meeting the needs of the freight and logistics sector
- continue to work with our partners and the rail sector to develop the State of Play overview

- we will work with Network Rail and the operators in the development of the timetable changes required to realise the full benefit of the infrastructure investment in TRU and we support the operators in their procurement of new rolling stock that also forms part of that package
- through the Rail North Partnership, TfN will work with partners to set out how Northern and TransPennine Trains should develop their services over the next decade
- TfN will continue to provide specialist technical capability and capacity to DfT in support of the work to develop the strategic business case for the long-term programme of works required to deliver NPR
- through the Rail North Agreement, continue to work with DfT on the specification, management and oversight of the Northern and TPT rail contracts
- support the role of the North's elected Mayors and Leaders to hold rail operators to account through the Rail North Committee
- through our Bus Forum continue to work with our partners to facilitate sharing of knowledge, evidence of good practice and where appropriate support a coordinated approach to communication with government on common challenges for the bus sector
- develop the monitoring and evaluation dashboard and use the insight provided through the dashboard to identify blockages and then target the need for change, including where collective action might be needed across the north
- engage with business and academic networks on how the economic potential of the NPIER can be delivered
- seek out views and perspectives from those parts of our communities whose voice in the past has not been as well represented
- continue to and offer our core technical capacity and capability, provided through our TAME function, to benefit TfN's own work, and that of our partners and government

Governance

The Annual Governance Statement, which follows the financial statements, provides an overview of how our governance arrangements operate and reports on how they have been reviewed to ensure that they provide an effective system of internal control.

Business model and performance

TfN is a single-entity organisation, meaning we do not have a group-structure.

Our Business Plan for 2024/25 sets out our objectives and commitments, which are reported on below. That Business Plan can be downloaded here:

[TFN BusinessPlan 2425 Stage 5 V1 \(1\).pdf](#)

Delivering on our objectives

Our people: Team TfN

Central to the success of TfN is our team. We are proud of the talented, bright minds we attract and retain. Through our values-driven culture and shared goals, our diverse and dedicated

employees are quick to adapt to the changing landscape in which we operate. We arm them with the tools and support to do so.

Our comprehensive suite of employment policies continue to be updated and refined in light of legislative changes and experience enabling TfN to continue to build our reputation as a best practice employer. This was recognised in 2024 by being identified as being one of the top 100 medium sized best places to work in the Sunday Times.

At the heart of this is our People Strategy, an all-encompassing plan that ensures we have the right people, at the right time to deliver our organisational goals. This covers nurturing talent and rewarding our teams, as well as listening to their needs and responding where necessary - all of which are underpinned by our values of making a difference; collaborating; doing the right thing; and being driven to succeed.

This commitment to being among the best is demonstrated by our full membership of Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter – an initiative aimed at developing good jobs and more opportunities for people to progress.

We hold ourselves to the same high standards as our peers across the North. As well as being an accredited Living Wage employer, an expectation of which extends to our supply chain, we are also an agile organisation, adopting family friendly working practices that mean our teams can work in different locations and at flexible times. Such agile and remote working practices mean we attract and retain talent from across the whole of the North. In return, we get the best out of people with a diverse range of backgrounds and experiences. Recognising that everyone can shape and improve our organisation is a fundamental principle. The importance of our employee voice is enshrined in our established Employee Forum and effective line management. Linked to this is our recognition of UNISON, with whom we regularly collaborate to support our teams regarding working practices and ensuring we always do the right thing.

Building on our status as a Disability Confident employer, our Diversity & Inclusion sub-group – made up of employees - makes sure we reflect, embrace and celebrate the North's differences, and equip our teams to do so in practical ways.

The STP vision is based on creating opportunities. It is therefore only right that we hold true to this internally. We have transparent career pathways in place to unlock opportunities and give our people chance to grow with us. This complements the robust evaluation, reward, development and pay practices that nurture individuals in their career progression.

Our resourcing plan

As agreed by our Members and funders, to maximise value for money, we continue to minimise our reliance on external consultants' posts, wherever possible. This gives us certainty over resources and the balance of skillsets we can deploy. However, we are mindful of both the length of time needed to fill roles and the funding conditions within which we operate.

Our establishment as detailed in the 2025/26 budget submission was:

| | Permanent posts | Fixed term posts | Total posts |
|--|-----------------|------------------|-------------|
| Operational: | | | |
| Operations | 51 | 4 | 55 |
| Back office | 16 | - | 16 |
| Total operational and back office | 67 | 4 | 71 |
| Hosted: | | | |
| Rail North Partnership | 18 | 3 | 21 |
| NPR Analytical Support | 30 | - | 30 |
| Total hosted | 48 | 3 | 51 |
| Total establishment | 115 | 7 | 122 |

Our values

Developed with our employees, our values and behaviours underpin our culture and ways of working. They, and our core behaviours, are set out below and influence how we operate as individuals and as an organisation, creating an agile and dynamic working environment where employees are trusted, valued and invested in.

- **We make a difference**
- **We do the right thing**
- **We are driven to succeed**
- **We collaborate**

Our core behaviours

- Cultivate innovation** - Creating new and better ways for the organisation to be successful
- Ensure accountability** - Holding self and others accountable to achieve results, even under challenging circumstances
- Collaborate** - Building partnerships and working collaboratively with others to meet shared objectives
- Instil trust** - Gaining the confidence and trust of others through honesty, integrity and authenticity
- Financial acumen** - Interpreting and applying understanding of key financial indicators to make better business decisions.

Health and Safety

Health and Safety continues to be the cornerstone of TfN’s strategy for improving the wellbeing of employees. Our approach fulfils our statutory obligations by providing a framework for securing the wellbeing of our employees and others who could be affected by our actions. The appointment of a ‘competent person’ combined with a contracted support service offering, means that most of the Health and Safety matters, training programmes for employees and contractors, and proactive risk management, can be effectively managed/delivered flexibly to recognised standards in-house.

This approach provides the right level of engagement across a variety of stakeholders, creating knowledge and awareness of health and safety risks, and encouraging behavioural change through assessments and direct interventions including inspections and investigations, but we must continue to evolve our approach to face fresh challenges or to address existing problems in new ways.

Our funding

TfN has no powers to raise money from precepts and levies as most comparator transport authorities do. Instead, almost all of our funding is received in the form of grants from the DfT. This is reflective of the fact that TfN has, in the main, drawn down powers from central government that were previously funded through general taxation.

Each year, the DfT provides a general 'Core' funding grant that enables us to deliver on statutory obligations, to provide good governance and value for money, and fulfil our commitment to evidence-based decision making, whilst also resourcing some development activity. In addition, grant funding is also received in the form of a discrete grant, ring-fenced to specific areas of activity.

Aside from this 'Core' grant and the Rail North grant that is made available to us to discharge our statutory functions, we earn grant support through bidding into the DfT for development resources or passing business case gateway reviews to unlock funding for the delivery projects. In addition, we recover costs from similar entities where we provide good value for money solutions.

Where ring-fenced grants are unused, any unspent funding at the point that activity is completed will be returned to the DfT. Unused 'Core' grant allocations are taken to reserves and used to fund future period activity, reflecting that there are often timing differences between funding being provided and funding being required.

Risk management

We have developed risk management processes through which we identify and address the risks associated with each area of activity. We have adopted a Risk Management Strategy using industry best practice to create a framework within which risks are identified and evaluated prior to mitigation plans being put in place. Project, functional and corporate risks are monitored regularly, risk is a standing item on the Audit and Governance Committee agenda, and the Corporate Risk Register is shared biannually with the TfN Board.

Financial performance 2024/25

Performance against budget

In delivering our activity in 2024/25, we incurred expenditure of £15.26m, which represents a variance of £1.20m against our budget. Our financial performance over the course of the year can be summarised as follows:

| | Actual £m | Budget £m | Variance £m |
|---|--------------|--------------|----------------|
| Operational | | | |
| Rail, Modelling, Legal & Communications | 3.55 | 4.22 | 0.68 |
| Strategy & Roads | 1.92 | 2.23 | 0.32 |
| Business Support | 2.20 | 2.43 | 0.23 |
| Total Operational and Business Support | 7.67 | 8.89 | 1.22 |
| Hosted | | | |
| Rail North Partnership | 1.84 | 1.87 | 0.03 |
| NPR Analytical Support | 5.75 | 5.70 | (0.05) |
| Total Hosted | 7.60 | 7.57 | (0.02) |
| Total Budget | 15.26 | 16.46 | 1.20 |

The variance of £1.22m in operational expenditure is mainly due to lower than anticipated employment costs from vacant posts and a combination of reprioritised and deferred professional services costs following the 2024 General Election.

Operational activity is predominantly funded by TfN core grant received from the DfT, supplemented by contributions from partners, and a small amount of income from contracts for services provided to partner bodies and interest on investing activities. In meeting operational expenditure, we applied both grant received in year, and grant held in reserves from prior years. The underspend in this area therefore reduced the anticipated draw on reserves in the year, leaving a higher reserve balance at the year-end than budgeted.

Hosted activities are predominantly funded through specific ring-fenced grants, which cannot be repurposed for other activities.

Reconciliation between outturn and CIES

The following table shows the differences between the management outturn position and those balances shown on the face of the CIES.

| Income | £m |
|--|-------------------------------|
| Outturn position | (15.26) |
| Adjustments for: | |
| Pensions (IAS19) - interest on plan assets | (0.97) In CIES not in outturn |
| RNP grant taken to earmarked reserves | (0.01) In outturn not in CIES |
| Addition to core reserves | (0.36) In outturn not in CIES |
| CIES balance | (16.60) |

| Expenditure | £m |
|---|-----------------------------|
| Outturn position | 15.26 |
| Adjustments for: | |
| Pensions (IAS19) - service/interest cost | 0.86 In CIES not in outturn |
| Movement on accumulated absence provision | 0.02 In CIES not in outturn |
| CIES balance | 16.13 |

These variances arise due to differences between how we account for certain items under statute, and how we prepare the accounts under international accounting standards. These

differences principally arise around pensions accounting; the treatment of accumulated employee absence costs; and the treatment of grants received.

Balance sheet movements

| | 2023/24 | Movement | 2024/25 |
|----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| | £m | £m | £m |
| Assets | | | |
| Cash & cash equivalents | 7.14 | 1.39 | 8.53 |
| Tangible Asset (ROU) | - | 0.28 | 0.28 |
| Debtors | 0.34 | 0.62 | 0.96 |
| | 7.48 | 2.29 | 9.77 |
| Liabilities | | | |
| Provisions | (0.24) | 0.22 | (0.02) |
| Grants received in advance | (0.41) | (2.82) | (3.23) |
| Leases | - | (0.20) | (0.20) |
| Pension (liability)/asset | (1.21) | 0.06 | (1.14) |
| Creditors | (2.56) | 0.88 | (1.68) |
| | (4.41) | (1.87) | (6.28) |
| Net assets/ (liabilities) | 3.06 | 0.42 | 3.49 |

The balance sheet position at 31 March 2025 shows an increase in net assets from the prior year.

Cash and cash equivalents and grants received in advance have increased as a result of receiving core grant on the last day of the prior year. There was also a reduction in creditors due to settling invoices due for payment prior to the year-end.

These movements also affect the reserve balances held by TfN at the year end.

| | 2023/24 | Movement | 2024/25 |
|-----------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| | £m | £m | £m |
| Unusable reserves | | | |
| Accumulated absence reserve | 0.09 | 0.02 | 0.11 |
| Pension reserve | 1.21 | (0.06) | 1.14 |
| | 1.30 | (0.05) | 1.25 |
| Usable reserves | | | |
| RNP grant earmarked reserve | (0.10) | (0.01) | (0.11) |
| General fund reserve | (4.27) | (0.36) | (4.63) |
| | (4.37) | (0.37) | (4.74) |
| Total reserves | (3.06) | (0.42) | (3.49) |

Unusable reserves, generally held to manage statutory adjustments to general accounting practice, have increased slightly.

Usable reserves are uncommitted funds that can be applied to future expenditure. These have increased reflecting the contribution to reserves in the year.

Financial planning 2025/26

TfN is subject to essentially the same regulatory framework as its local transport authority and combined authority partner bodies. This framework confers upon the organisation an obligation, a balanced-budget requirement, and the need to adopt a reserve strategy.

These requirements, together with our relationship with the DfT, set the parameters within which we will manage our operations in relation to funding.

The 2025/26 business planning process identified our key strategic priorities and identified a common ‘golden thread’ from strategy to delivery. This ‘golden thread’ ensured that when detailed individual departmental plans were being designed and objectives set, there was a common and coordinated approach to delivery across the organisation. These common goals are what underpin the expenditure profile and budget for 2025/26.

These budgets are underpinned by the reserves strategy, which serves as our back-stop mitigation against financial risk.

Value for money

We recognise the absolute requirement to deliver our activities efficiently and effectively. In order to ensure value for money, we have implemented a procurement framework which requires that the procurement of goods or services includes a competitive process that is appropriate to the value and complexity of the services/products and minimises barriers for suppliers to participate in such exercises.

Expenditure and funding

To deliver the activity set out in our Business Plan, we have a total budgeted expenditure for 2025/26 of £16.1m. This includes £8.3m of expenditure supporting core operations and £7.8m of expenditure on hosted activities with the associated funding streams as shown below:

| Budget by activity | | £m | £m | Budget by fund | | £m |
|---|--|------|--------------|--|--|--------------|
| Operational: | | | | Core grant | | 7.21 |
| Rail, Modelling, Legal & Communications | | 4.03 | | Rail North grant/ Local contributions | | 0.40 |
| Strategy & Roads | | 1.93 | | Use of reserves | | 0.74 |
| | | | 5.96 | | | |
| Back office | | | 2.39 | Total operational and back office | | 8.35 |
| Total operational and business support | | | 8.35 | | | |
| Hosted: | | | | Rail North Partnership grant | | 1.37 |
| Rail North Partnership | | 2.07 | | Rail North grant/ Local contributions | | 0.43 |
| NPR Analytical Support | | 5.70 | | Contract income | | 0.27 |
| Total hosted | | | 7.77 | NPR/ DfT Analytical support grant | | 5.70 |
| | | | | Total hosted | | 7.77 |
| Total budget | | | 16.11 | Total budget | | 16.11 |

As a Sub-National Transport Body, we are unable to recover VAT on our purchases of goods and services.

Core duties include operational and support costs. We are subject to the same regulatory environment as local and combined authorities and must discharge our responsibilities as an autonomous body. We must also act in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding that TfN has with DfT.

TfN will remain almost entirely funded by grants from DfT. Aside from a £7.21m Core grant funding allocation, we receive funding that is ring-fenced for the purpose for which it has been allocated and, in the main, can only be drawn down as and when it is required. The updated reserves strategy set out in the 2025/26 Budget report is based upon a year-end General Fund Reserve of £4.5m, created by Core Grant underspends in prior years. It was agreed that £0.7m of this balance be drawn upon in 2025/26 to support the delivery of the business plan activities. This would reduce the reserve levels to £3.7m by the end of 2025/26. For the three subsequent years a financial planning assumption of receiving an increase in core grant from £7.2m to £8.2m a year for a three-year period has been made. This approach maintains the minimum level of £2m as outlined below in our medium-term financial plan.

The opening reserve position of £4.5m was based on forecast outturn - the actual reserve balance was £4.6m at year end due to finalising year end accounting.

Draws upon the General Fund Reserve at this level are unsustainable beyond the medium-term. As inflation increases the amount of the Core Grant that is used to fund employee costs, there will be further pressure to reduce discretionary expenditure.

TfN notes the potential for grants to be increased in future Spending Reviews and as part of that process and through ongoing dialogue with DfT, will continue to press for a revised funding settlement that reflects inflationary pressures and the growing maturity of the organisation's activities and aspirations.

Financial outlook

TfN is almost entirely funded by the DfT. This means that we are particularly sensitive to the government funding cycles and decisions, both in terms of the quantum and the term over which funding is granted.

In February 2025, the core grant for 2025/26 was confirmed to continue at £7.21m (£6.5m with a further £0.71m to support the development of wider STB and LTA capacity and capability). We are continuing constructive dialogue with DfT on how we can enhance our funding and secure greater certainty of future funding to aid our business planning.

TfN receives grant funding from the DfT; this enables us to continue to deliver our functions as a 'going concern'. We are party to a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the DfT which, amongst other things, provides us with sufficient comfort that we can plan on a going concern basis. Furthermore, the MoU commits the Department to an orderly wind-down of our financial affairs should the government make a future decision to either withdraw or reduce our funding allocations.

Our medium-term financial plan

All local government bodies – including Transport for the North – are required to operate to a locally defined reserves strategy that ensures the organisation always holds a prudent level of reserves. A prudent reserve strategy is particularly important to us as an organisation as we have few other levers to mitigate financial risk. We cannot access credit for short-term cash

flow management or long-term investment, nor can we levy or precept upon a local tax base to underwrite our operations.

As noted above, elements of our funding are ring fenced and can only be drawn down as required. This means our reserve strategy must be managed in conjunction with the use of the annual core grant allocations, as core grant is the only discretionary resource we hold that can fund any and all expenditure.

We have planned ahead based upon a 2024/25 year-end total reserve balance of £4.5m that, due to finalising year end accounting became £4.6m at year end.

Based on the new operating model, which places more emphasis on investing in retaining TfN's technical capacity and capability, a subsequent reduction in commissioned activity and the challenge of unindexed grant allocation with a cost base subject to inflationary pressure, our strategy retains the requirement for a minimum reserve of £2m. If longer term funding arrangements align to the cost base associated with the new operating model, TfN would be able to reassess its reserves strategy including the required minimum.

Statement of Responsibility for the Accounts

TfN's responsibilities

TfN is required to:

- make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to secure that one of its officers has responsibility for the administration of those affairs. In TfN that officer is the Section 151 Officer
- manage its affairs to secure economic, efficient and effective use of resources and safeguard its assets
- approve the Statement of Accounts.

The Section 151 Officer's responsibilities

The Section 151 Officer is responsible for the preparation of the Statement of Accounts for TfN in accordance with proper practices as set out in the *CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom* (the Code). In preparing this Statement of Accounts, the Section 151 Officer has:

- selected suitable accounting policies and then applied them consistently
- made judgements and estimates that were reasonable and prudent
- complied with the Code.

The Section 151 Officer has also:

- kept proper accounting records which were up to date
- taken reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Certificate of the Section 151 Officer

I certify that the Statement of Accounts gives a true and fair view of the financial position of the organisation at the accounting date and of the income and expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2025.



Lisa Pitt
S151/Interim Financial Controller
25 March 2026

Chair's Certificate

I certify that the Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025 was approved at the meeting of the Board on 16 March 2026.



Louise Gittins
Chair of Transport for the North Board
25 March 2026

Movement in reserves statement

The Movement in Reserves Statement shows the movement from the start of the year to the end on the different reserves held by TfN, analysed into 'usable reserves' that can be used to resource expenditure alongside income received in year and other 'unusable reserves'. The Statement shows how the movements in year of TfN's reserves are broken down between gains and losses incurred in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices and the statutory adjustments required to return to the amounts chargeable to income for the year. The Net Increase/Decrease line shows the statutory General Fund Balance movements in the year following those adjustments.

2024/25

| | General Fund Balance | Earmarked General Fund Reserves | Total General Fund Balance | Capital Grants Unapplied Account | Total Usable Reserves | Unusable Reserves | Total Reserves |
|---|----------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 |
| Balance at 1 April 2024 | (4,269) | (97) | (4,366) | - | (4,366) | 1,302 | (3,064) |
| Movement in reserves during 2024/25 | | | | | | | |
| (Surplus) or deficit on the provision of services | (467) | - | (467) | - | (467) | - | (467) |
| Other Comprehensive Income / Expenditure | - | - | - | - | - | 45 | 45 |
| Total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure | (467) | - | (467) | - | (467) | 45 | (422) |
| Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations (see note 9) | 93 | - | 93 | - | 93 | (93) | - |
| Net (Increase) or Decrease before Transfer to Earmarked Reserves | (373) | - | (373) | - | (373) | (48) | (422) |
| Transfer (to)/from Earmarked Reserves (see note 10) | 9 | (9) | - | - | - | - | - |
| (Increase) or Decrease in 2024/25 | (364) | (9) | (373) | - | (373) | (48) | (422) |
| Balance at 31 March 2025 | (4,633) | (106) | (4,739) | - | (4,739) | 1,254 | (3,485) |

2023/24

| | General Fund Balance | Earmarked General Fund Reserves | Total General Fund Balance | Capital Grants Unapplied Account | Total Usable Reserves | Unusable Reserves | Total Reserves |
|---|----------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 |
| Balance at 1 April 2023 | (3,808) | (97) | (3,905) | - | (3,905) | 2,395 | (1,510) |
| Movement in reserves during 2023/24 | | | | | | | |
| services | (363) | - | (363) | - | (363) | - | (363) |
| Other Comprehensive Income / Expenditure | - | - | - | - | - | (1,191) | (1,191) |
| Total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure | (363) | - | (363) | - | (363) | (1,191) | (1,554) |
| Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations (see note 9) | (98) | - | (98) | - | (98) | 98 | - |
| Net (Increase) or Decrease before Transfer to Earmarked Reserves | (461) | - | (461) | - | (461) | (1,093) | (1,554) |
| Transfer (to)/from Earmarked Reserves (see note 10) | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| (Increase) or Decrease in 2023/24 | (461) | - | (461) | - | (461) | (1,093) | (1,554) |
| Balance at 31 March 2024 | (4,269) | (97) | (4,366) | - | (4,366) | 1,302 | (3,064) |

Balance sheet

The Balance Sheet shows the value as at the Balance Sheet date of the assets and liabilities recognised by TfN. The net assets (assets less liabilities) are matched by the reserves held by TfN.

Reserves are reported in two categories. The first category of reserves are usable reserves, i.e. those reserves that the authority may use to provide services, subject to the need to maintain a prudent level of reserves and any statutory limitations on their use. The second category of reserves is those that the authority cannot use to provide services. This category of reserves includes reserves that hold unrealised gains and losses (for example the revaluation reserve), where amounts would only become available to provide services if the assets are sold; and reserves that hold timing differences shown in the Movement in Reserves Statement line, adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations.

| 31 March 2024 | | | 31 March 2025 |
|----------------|-----------|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| £000 | Notes | | £000 |
| | 14 | Tangible Assets | 283 |
| - | 15 | Intangible Assets | 0 |
| - | | Long Term Assets | 283 |
| 340 | 16 | Short-Term Debtors | 956 |
| 7,138 | 17 | Cash and Cash Equivalents | 8,527 |
| 7,479 | | Current Assets | 9,483 |
| (2,560) | 18 | Short-Term Creditors | (1,683) |
| (240) | 19 | Provisions | (21) |
| (408) | 8 | Grants Receipts in Advance - Revenue | (3,233) |
| (3,208) | | Current Liabilities | (4,937) |
| | 20 | Lease Liability | (200) |
| (1,207) | 29 | Pension Liability | (1,143) |
| (1,207) | | Long term Liabilities | (1,344) |
| 3,064 | | Net Assets/(Liabilities) | 3,485 |
| (4,366) | 21 | Usable Reserves | (4,739) |
| 1,302 | 21 | Unusable Reserves | 1,254 |
| (3,064) | | Total Reserves | (3,485) |

Cash flow statement

The Cash Flow Statement shows the changes in cash and cash equivalents of TfN during the reporting period. The statement shows how TfN generates and uses cash and cash equivalents by classifying cash flows as operating, investing and financing activities. Cash flows from operating activities cover the inflows and outflows from TfN’s regular business activities, and do not include investing activities (such as the purchase of assets) or financing activity (such as borrowing and cash management activities). Investing activities represent the extent to which cash outflows have been made for resources which are intended to contribute to the authority’s future service delivery, such as tangible property assets. As TfN does not have powers to access credit – such as loans and overdrafts – it does not have cash flows relating to financing activities.

| 2023/24 | | 2024/25 |
|----------------|---|----------------|
| £000 | | £000 |
| (363) | Net (surplus) or deficit on the provision of services | (467) |
| 1,353 | Adjustment to surplus or deficit on the provision of services for non-cash movements | (905) |
| 361 | Adjustment for items included in the net surplus or deficit on the provision of services that are investing or financing activities | 346 |
| 1,351 | Net cash flows from operating activities | (1,025) |
| (345) | Net cash flows from investing activities | (364) |
| 1,006 | Net (increase) or decrease in cash and cash equivalents | (1,389) |
| 8,144 | Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period | 7,138 |
| 7,138 | Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period | 8,527 |

Disclosure Notes

Note 1 - Expenditure and funding analysis

The Expenditure and Funding Analysis (EFA) Statement shows how annual expenditure is used and funded from resources (principally grants) by TfN in comparison with those resources consumed or earned by the organisation in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practices (“GAAP”).

It also shows how this expenditure is allocated for decision making purposes between the TfN management and reporting areas. Income and expenditure accounted for under generally accepted accounting practices is presented more fully in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES).

| 2023/24 | | | | 2024/25 | | |
|--|--------------------------|---|---|--|--------------------------|---|
| Net Expenditure Chargeable to the General Fund Balance | Adjustments (see note 2) | Net Expenditure in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement | | Net Expenditure Chargeable to the General Fund Balance | Adjustments (see note 2) | Net Expenditure in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement |
| £000 | £000 | £000 | | £000 | £000 | £000 |
| - | - | - | NPR/ DfT Analytical Support | - | - | - |
| 0 | (6) | (6) | Rail North Partnership | (9) | (30) | (40) |
| 7,109 | (5) | 7,105 | Operational Areas | 7,190 | (118) | 7,072 |
| 7,109 | (11) | 7,098 | Net Cost of Services | 7,181 | (148) | 7,033 |
| (7,570) | 109 | (7,461) | Other Income and Expenditure | (7,554) | 55 | (7,499) |
| (461) | 98 | (363) | Surplus or Deficit on Provision of Services | (373) | (93) | (467) |
| (3,905) | | | Opening Combined General Fund Balance | (4,366) | | |
| (461) | | | Plus/less Surplus or Deficit on the General Fund Balance for the Year (Statutory basis) | (373) | | |
| (4,366) | | | Closing Combined General Fund Balance | (4,739) | | |

Note 2 - Note to the expenditure and funding analysis

2024/25

| | Net Pensions Statutory Adjustments | Other Statutory Adjustments | Total Adjustments |
|---|--|-----------------------------------|----------------------|
| | £000 | £000 | £000 |
| NPR/ DfT Analytical Support | - | - | - |
| Rail North Partnership | (35) | 5 | (30) |
| Operational Areas | (129) | 11 | (118) |
| Net Cost of Services | (164) | 16 | (148) |
| Other Income and Expenditure | 55 | - | 55 |
| Difference between the Statutory Charge and the Surplus or Deficit in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement | (109) | 16 | (93) |

2023/24

| | Net Pensions Statutory Adjustments | Other Statutory Adjustments | Total Adjustments |
|---|--|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| | £000 | £000 | £000 |
| NPR/ DfT Analytical Support | - | - | - |
| Rail North Partnership | (4) | (3) | (7) |
| Operational Areas | (15) | 11 | (4) |
| Net Cost of Services | (19) | 8 | (11) |
| Other Income and Expenditure | 109 | - | 109 |
| Difference between the Statutory Charge and the Surplus or Deficit in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement | 90 | 8 | 98 |

Net Pensions Statutory Adjustments - Net change for the removal of pension contributions and the addition of IAS 19 Employee Benefits pension related expenditure and income.

- For services this represents the removal of the employer pension contributions made by the authority as allowed by statute and the replacement with current service costs and past service costs.

- For Other Income and Expenditure – the net interest on the defined benefit liability is charged to the CIES.

Other Statutory Adjustments – reversal of accumulated absence accruals from CIES to the accumulated absence account.

Note 3 - Accounting policies

General principles

The statement of accounts summarises TfN's transactions for the 2024/25 financial year and its position at the year-end of 31 March 2025. TfN is required to prepare an annual statement of accounts by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, which determine the timing of when the statements must be produced. Draft statements must be published before 1st July 2025. The Regulations also require that the accounts be prepared in accordance with proper accounting practices. These practices under Section 21 of the 2003 Act primarily comprise the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2023/24, supported by International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) and statutory guidance issued under Section 12 of the 2003 Act. The accounting convention adopted in the statement of accounts is principally historical cost, modified by the revaluation of certain categories of non-current assets and financial instruments.

Going concern basis

TfN accounts for its operations on a going concern basis. This assumes that TfN will continue in operation for the foreseeable future.

TfN is party to a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Department for Transport that gives it the required comfort that it will continue to receive the necessary funding to discharge its statutory obligations into the future. Furthermore, the MoU commits the Department to an orderly winddown of TfN's affairs should future decisions be made by Government that either end or reduce TfN's funding.

Qualitative characteristics

The usefulness of financial statements is enhanced if they are comparable between similar organisations and between financial years. The Code of Practice promotes comparability by designating the form and content of the financial statements.

Accruals of income and expenditure

Activity is accounted for in the year that it takes place, not simply when cash payments are made or received. In particular:

- Revenue from contracts with service recipients, whether for services or the provision of goods, is recognised when (or as) the goods or services are transferred to the service recipient in accordance with the performance obligations in the contract.
- Supplies are recorded as expenditure when they are consumed – where there is a gap between the date supplies are received and their consumption, they are carried as inventories on the Balance Sheet.
- Expenses in relation to services received (including services provided by employees) are recorded as expenditure when the services are received rather than when payments are made.

- Interest receivable on investments is accounted for as income based on the effective interest rate for the relevant financial instrument rather than the cash flows fixed or determined by the contract.
- Where revenue and expenditure have been recognised but cash has not been received or paid, a debtor or creditor for the relevant amount is recorded in the Balance Sheet. Where debts may not be settled, the balance of debtors is written down and a charge made to revenue in financing and investment income and expenditure for the income that might not be collected.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash is represented by cash in hand and deposits with financial institutions repayable without penalty on notice of not more than 24 hours. Cash equivalents are highly liquid investments that mature in 3 months or less from the date of acquisition and that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash with insignificant risk of change in value.

Prior period adjustments, changes in accounting policies and estimates and errors

Prior period adjustments may arise because of a change in accounting policies or to correct a material error. Changes in accounting estimates are accounted for prospectively, i.e. in the current and future years affected by the change and do not give rise to a prior period adjustment.

Changes in accounting policies are only made when required by proper accounting practices or the change provides more reliable or relevant information about the effect of transactions, other events and conditions on the authority's financial position or financial performance. Where a change is made, it is applied retrospectively (unless stated otherwise) by adjusting opening balances and comparative amounts for the prior period as if the new policy had always been applied.

Material errors discovered in prior period figures are corrected retrospectively by amending opening balances and comparative amounts for the prior period.

First-time adoption of IFRS 16 'Leases'

TfN has applied IFRS 16 retrospectively to all leases, but has elected to recognise the cumulative effect against opening reserves at 1 April 2024. Comparatives have therefore not been restated and are as previously reported under IAS 17.

TfN has applied this approach subject to the transition provisions set out below:

- For all contracts that existed prior to 1 April 2024, TfN has not applied IFRS 16 to reassess whether each contract is, or contains, a lease.
- The right-of-use assets have not been assessed for impairment at 1 April 2024 but have been reduced by the amount of any onerous lease provisions at that date.
- Initial direct costs have been excluded from the measurement of the right-of-use assets.

The amounts recognised for leases at 1 April 2024 have been measured as follows:

Operating leases under IAS 17, except 'low value' and 'short-term' leases

The lease liability is measured at the present value of the remaining lease payments at 1 April 2024, discounted at the incremental borrowing rate at that date.

The incremental borrowing rate of 4.85% has been determined with reference to the Public Works Loan Board rates, as this is considered a suitable proxy for TfN.

The right-of-use asset is measured at the amount of the lease liability recognised in accordance with the measurement set out above, adjusted for accrued or prepaid operating lease payments at 1 April 2024.

'Low-value' and 'short-term' leases

When the value of the underlying asset (if new) at 1 April 2024 is low-value, TfN has continued to recognise the lease payments associated with those leases on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

Where the lease term ends before 31 March 2025, TfN has continued to recognise the lease payments associated with those leases on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

Finance leases under IAS 17

TfN does not have any finance leases under IAS 17 at 1 April 2024.

Impact of transition

The incremental borrowing rate applied to lease liabilities recognised at 1 April 2024 is 4.85%.

TfN's future operating lease commitments disclosed under IAS 17 at 31 March 2024 were £511k. Of this amount, £131k related to ICT equipment leases which have been treated as 'low-value' leases and are therefore not included in the lease liability at 1 April 2024.

The remaining £380k of future operating lease commitments disclosed under IAS 17 at 31 March 2024 related to the property lease. When discounted at the incremental borrowing rate of 4.85%, this equates to £344k. This equates to the value of the lease liability recognised under IFRS 16 at 1 April 2024.

Leases under IAS 17

The following accounting policies were applied to leases in the year-ended 31 March 2024:

Leases

Leases were classified as finance leases where the terms of the lease transferred substantially all the risks and rewards incidental to ownership of the property, plant or equipment from the lessor to the lessee. All other leases were classified as operating leases.

Where a lease covered both land and buildings, the land and buildings elements were considered separately for classification.

Arrangements that did not have the legal status of a lease but conveyed a right to use an asset in return for payment were accounted for under this policy where fulfilment of the arrangement is dependent on the use of specific assets.

Operating leases

Rentals paid under operating leases were charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as an expense to the services benefitting from use of the leased property, plant or equipment. Charges were made on a straight-line basis over the life of the lease, even if this did not match the pattern of payments (e.g. there is a rent-free period at the commencement of the lease).

Leases under IFRS 16

During the year, TfN adopted IFRS 16 'Leases' for the first time. IFRS 16 replaces IAS 17 'Leases'. TfN previously split leases between 'finance leases' that transferred substantially all the risks and rewards incidental to ownership of the asset to the group, and 'operating leases'.

The main change on application of IFRS 16 is the accounting for 'operating leases' where rentals payable (as adjusted for lease incentives) were previously expensed under IAS 17 on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

Under IFRS 16 a right-of-use asset and a lease liability are recognised for all leases except 'low-value' and 'short' term leases where lease payments are recognised on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

The measurement of leases on transition at 1 April 2024 has been detailed in the 'First-time adoption of IFRS 16 'Leases' note. The following accounting policies are applied on an ongoing basis after this date.

On commencement of a contract (or part of a contract) which gives TfN the right to use an asset for a period of time in exchange for consideration, TfN recognises a right-of-use asset and a lease liability unless the lease qualifies as a 'short-term' lease or a 'low-value' lease.

Right-of-use assets

A right-of-use asset is recognised at the commencement date of a lease. The right-of-use asset is measured at cost, which comprises the initial amount of the lease liability, adjusted for, as applicable, lease payments made at or before the commencement date net of any lease incentives received, any initial direct costs incurred, and, except where included in the cost of inventories, an estimate of costs expected to be incurred for dismantling and removing the underlying asset, and restoring the site or asset.

Right-of-use assets are subsequently measured at cost less accumulated depreciation and are depreciated on a straight-line basis over the shorter of the lease term and remaining estimated useful life of the asset.

The depreciation methods applied are as follows:

- Leased property – On a straight-line basis over the lease term of 4.5 years

Where the entity expects to obtain ownership of the leased asset at the end of the lease term, the depreciation is over its estimated useful life. Right-of use assets are subject to impairment under IAS 36 and are adjusted for any remeasurement of lease liabilities.

An estimate of costs to be incurred in restoring the leased asset to the condition required under the terms and conditions of the lease is recognised as part of the cost of the right-of-use asset when TfN incurs the obligation for these costs. The costs are incurred at the start of the lease or over the lease term. The provision is measured at the best estimate of the expenditure required to settle the obligation.

Lease liabilities

A lease liability is recognised at the commencement date of a lease. The lease liability is initially measured at the present value of the lease payments to be made over the term of the lease, discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease or, if that rate cannot be readily determined, the incremental borrowing rate.

The lease term is the non-cancellable period of the lease plus extension periods that TfN is reasonably certain to exercise and termination periods that TfN is reasonably certain not to exercise. The lease term includes any rent-free periods.

Lease payments comprise fixed payments less any lease incentives receivable, variable lease payments that depend on an index or a rate, amounts expected to be paid under residual value guarantees, exercise price of a purchase option when the exercise of the option is reasonably certain to occur, and any anticipated termination penalties.

The lease liability is subsequently increased for a constant periodic rate of interest on the remaining balance of the lease liability and reduced for lease payments. Interest on the lease liability is recognised in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. Variable lease payments not included in the measurement of the lease liability as they are not dependent on an index or rate, are recognised in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in the period in which the event or condition that triggers those payments occurs.

The carrying amount of the lease liability is remeasured if there is a change in the following: future lease payments arising from a change in an index or a rate used; residual guarantee; lease term; or certainty of a purchase option and termination penalties. When a lease liability is remeasured, an adjustment is made to the corresponding right-of use asset, or to the comprehensive income and expenditure statement if the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset is fully written down.

'Short-term' and 'low-value' leases

Where the lease term is twelve months or less and the lease does not contain an option to purchase the leased asset, lease payments are recognised as an expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

Leases where the underlying asset is 'low-value', lease payments are recognised as an expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

Events after the reporting period

Events after the reporting period are those events, both favourable and unfavourable, that occur between the end of the reporting period, and the date the Statement of Accounts is authorised for issue.

Two types of events can be identified:

1. Those that provide evidence of conditions that existed at the end of the reporting period – the Statement of Accounts are adjusted to reflect such events.
2. Those that are indicative of conditions that arose after the reporting period – the financial statements are not adjusted to reflect such events, but where a category of events would have a material effect disclosure is made in the notes of the nature of the events and their estimated financial effect.

Events taking place after the date of authorisation for issue are not reflected in the financial statements.

Financial instruments

Financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are recognised on the Balance Sheet when the authority becomes a party to the contractual provisions of a financial instrument and are initially measured at cost and are carried at their amortised cost.

Financial assets

Financial assets are classified based on a classification and measurement approach that reflects the business model for holding the financial assets and their cash flow characteristics. TfN holds financial assets measured at amortised cost. TfN's business model is to hold financial assets to collect contractual cash flows. Financial assets are therefore classified as amortised cost.

Government grants and contributions

Whether paid on account, by instalments, or in arrears, government grants and third-party contributions and donations are recognised as due to TfN when there is reasonable assurance that:

- TfN will comply with the conditions attached to the payments
- The grants or contributions will be received.

Amounts recognised as due to TfN are not credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement until conditions attached to the grant or contribution have been satisfied. Conditions are stipulations that specify that the future economic benefits or service potential embodied in the asset in the form of the grant or contribution are required to be consumed by the recipient as specified, or future economic benefits or service potential must be returned to the transferor. Monies advanced as grants and contributions for which conditions have not been satisfied are carried in the Balance Sheet as liabilities. When conditions are satisfied, the grant or contribution is credited to the relevant service line (attributable revenue grants and contributions) or Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income (non-ring-fenced revenue grants and all capital grants) in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

When capital grants are credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, they are reversed out of the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement. Where the grant has yet to be used to finance capital expenditure, it is posted to the Capital Grants Unapplied reserve. When it has been applied, it is posted to the Capital Adjustment Account. Amounts in the Capital Grants Unapplied reserve are transferred to the Capital Adjustment Account once they have been applied to fund capital expenditure.

Overheads and support services

Costs of overheads and support services are charged to service segments in accordance with the authority's arrangements for accountability and financial performance.

Principally, programme areas in receipt of permissive discrete grant will be recharged for the incremental costs of support teams on a calculated basis as agreed by the Section 151 Officer.

Provisions

Provisions are made where an event has taken place that gives TfN a legal or constructive obligation that probably requires settlement by a transfer of economic benefits or service potential, and a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation. For instance, the authority may be involved in a court case that could eventually result in the making of a settlement or the payment of compensation.

Provisions are charged as an expense to the appropriate service line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement when the authority has an obligation and are measured at the best estimate at the Balance Sheet date of the expenditure required to settle the obligation, considering relevant risks and uncertainties.

When payments are eventually made, they are charged to the provision carried in the Balance Sheet. Estimated settlements are reviewed at the end of each financial year – where it becomes less than probable that a transfer of economic benefits will now be required (or a lower settlement than anticipated is made), the provision is reversed and credited back to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Where some or all of the payment required to settle a provision is expected to be recovered from another party (e.g. from an insurance claim), this is only recognised as income for the relevant service if it is virtually certain that reimbursement will be received if the authority settles the obligation.

Reserves

Specific amounts are set aside as reserves for future policy purposes or to cover contingencies. Reserves are created by appropriating amounts out of the General Fund. When the expenditure to be financed from a reserve is incurred, it is charged to the appropriate service in that year to score against the (Surplus) / Deficit on the Provision of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Certain reserves are kept to manage the accounting processes for non-current assets and retirement benefits, and do not represent usable resources for TfN.

Revenue expenditure funded from capital under statute

Expenditure incurred during the year that may be capitalised under statutory provisions but that does not result in the creation of a non-current asset has been charged as expenditure to the relevant service in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in the year.

Where TfN has determined to meet the cost of this expenditure from existing capital resources a transfer in the Movement in Reserves Statement from the General Fund Balance to the Capital Adjustment Account then reverses out the amounts charged so that there is no impact on the usable reserves of TfN.

Value added tax (VAT)

TfN neither provides services for consideration nor can recover the VAT incurred on expenditure. Costs are shown gross of VAT within the relevant service lines on the face of the CIES.

Intangible assets

Expenditure on non-monetary assets that do not have physical substance but are controlled by TfN because of past events (e.g. software development) is capitalised when it is expected that future economic benefits or service potential will flow from the intangible asset to TfN.

Internally generated assets are capitalised where it is demonstrable that the project is technically feasible and is intended to be completed (with adequate resources being available) and TfN will be able to generate future economic benefits or deliver service potential by being able to sell or use the asset.

TfN determines a project to be technically feasible when it has passed an outline business case government approval gateway, or another appropriate review point undertaken by suitably qualified professionals.

Expenditure is capitalised where it can be measured reliably as attributable to the asset and restricted to that incurred during the development phase (research expenditure cannot be capitalised).

Expenditure on the development of websites is not capitalised if the website is solely or primarily intended to promote or advertise TfN's goods or services.

Intangible assets are measured initially at cost. Amounts are only revalued where the fair value of the assets held by TfN can be determined by reference to an active market. In practice, no intangible asset held by the authority meets this criterion, and they are therefore carried at amortised cost. Where an intangible asset has an indefinite useful life, it shall not be amortised. Instead, it will be reviewed annually for impairment.

An asset is tested for impairment whenever there is an indication that the asset might be impaired – any losses recognised are posted to the relevant service line(s) in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Any gain or loss arising on the disposal or abandonment of an intangible asset is posted to the Other Operating Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Where expenditure on intangible assets qualifies as capital expenditure for statutory purposes, amortisation, impairment losses and disposal gains and losses are not permitted to have an impact on the General Fund Balance. The gains and losses are therefore reversed out of the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement and posted to the Capital Adjustment Account and (for any sale proceeds greater than £10,000) the Capital Receipts Reserve.

Employee benefits

Benefits payable during employment

Short term employee benefits are those due to be settled within 12 months of the year-end. They include such benefits as wages and salaries, paid annual leave and paid sick leave, bonuses and non-monetary benefits for current employees and are recognised as an expense for services in the year in which employees render service to TfN.

An accrual is made for the cost of holiday entitlements (or any form of leave, e.g. time off in lieu) earned by employees but not taken before the year-end that employees can carry forward into the next financial year. The accrual is made at the wage and salary rates applicable in the following accounting year, being the period in which the employee takes the benefit. The accrual is charged to surplus or deficit on the provision of services but then reversed out through the Movement in Reserves Statement to the accumulated absences account so that holiday entitlements are charged to revenue in the financial year in which the holiday absence occurs.

Termination benefits

Termination benefits are amounts payable because of a decision by TfN to terminate an officer's employment before the normal retirement date or an officer's decision to accept voluntary redundancy in exchange for those benefits. They are charged on an accruals basis to the appropriate service segment in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement at the earlier of when TfN can no longer withdraw the offer of those benefits or when TfN recognises costs for a restructuring.

Where termination benefits involve the enhancement of pensions, statutory provisions require the General Fund balance to be charged with the amount payable by TfN to the pension fund or pensioner in the year, not the amount calculated according to the relevant accounting standards. In the Movement in Reserves Statement, appropriations are required to and from the Pensions Reserve to remove the notional debits and credits for pension enhancement termination benefits and replace them with debits for the cash paid to the pension fund and pensioners and any such amounts payable but unpaid at the year-end.

Post-employment benefits

Employees of TfN are enrolled in the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). TfN pays an employer's contribution into the Greater Manchester Pension Fund, which is a fully funded defined benefit scheme administered by Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council.

The liabilities of the Greater Manchester Pension Fund attributable to TfN are included in the Balance Sheet on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method, i.e. an assessment of the future payments that will be made in relation to retirement benefits earned to date by employees, based on assumptions about mortality rates, employee turnover rates and projections of projected earnings for current employees.

Liabilities are discounted to their value at current prices, using a discount rate advised by the actuary as specified in the defined benefit pension scheme note.

The assets of the Greater Manchester Pension Fund attributable to the authority are included in the Balance Sheet at their fair value:

1. quoted securities – current bid price
2. unquoted securities – professional estimate
3. unitised securities – current bid price
4. property – market value.

The change in the net pensions liability is analysed into the following components:

- Service cost comprising:
 - o current service cost – the increase in liabilities resulting from years of service earned this year – allocated in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement to the services for which the employees worked
 - o past service cost – the increase in liabilities resulting from a scheme amendment or curtailment whose effect relates to years of service earned in earlier years – debited to the surplus or deficit on the provision of services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement

- o net interest on the net defined benefit liability (asset), i.e. net interest expense for the authority – the change during the period in the net defined benefit liability (asset) that arises from the passage of time charged to the financing and investment income and expenditure line of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement – this is calculated by applying the discount rate used to measure the defined benefit obligation at the beginning of the period to the net defined benefit liability (asset) at the beginning of the period – taking into account any changes in the net defined benefit liability (asset) during the period as a result of contribution and benefit payments.
- Remeasurements comprising:
 - o the return on plan assets – excluding amounts included in net interest on the net defined benefit liability (asset) – charged to the pensions reserve as other comprehensive income and expenditure – actuarial gains and losses – changes in the net pensions liability that arise because events have not coincided with assumptions made at the last actuarial valuation or because the actuaries have updated their assumptions – charged to the pensions reserve as other comprehensive income and expenditure.
 - o contributions paid to the TfN pension fund – cash paid as employer’s contributions to the pension fund in settlement of liabilities; not accounted for as an expense.

In relation to retirement benefits, statutory provisions require the General Fund balance to be charged with the amount payable by the authority to the pension fund or directly to pensioners in the year, not the amount calculated according to the relevant accounting standards. In the Movement in Reserves Statement, this means that there are transfers to and from the pensions reserve to remove the notional debits and credits for retirement benefits and replace them with debits for the cash paid to the pension fund and pensioners and any such amounts payable but unpaid at the year-end. The negative balance that arises on the pensions reserve thereby measures the beneficial impact to the General Fund of being required to account for retirement benefits based on cash flows rather than as benefits are earned by employees.

Discretionary benefits

The authority also has restricted powers to make discretionary awards of retirement benefits in the event of early retirements. Any liabilities estimated to arise because of an award to any member of staff (including teachers) are accrued in the year of the decision to make the award and accounted for using the same policies as are applied to the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Accounting Standards issued but not yet adopted

The following standards have been issued but have not been adopted by the 2024/25 Code:

- a) Classification of Liabilities as Current or Non-current (Amendments to IAS 1) issued in January 2020.
- b) Lease Liability in a Sale and Leaseback (Amendments to IFRS 16) issued in September 2022.
- c) Non-current Liabilities with Covenants (Amendments to IAS 1) issued in October 2022.

- d) International Tax Reform: Pillar Two Model Rules (Amendments to IAS 12) issued in May 2023.
- e) Supplier Finance Arrangements (Amendments to IAS 7 and IFRS 7) issued in May 2023.

The above would not have a significant impact on the financial statements.

Note 4 - Critical judgements in applying accounting policies

In applying the Accounting Policies, the authority has had to make certain judgements about complex transactions or those involving uncertainty about future events. The critical judgements made in the Statement of Accounts are as follows:

- As the majority of TfN funding comes from grants awarded by the Department for Transport, a key judgement is whether the grants include conditions or restrictions which impact on the recognition of these grants through the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. These are detailed in Note 8 – Grant Income.

Note 5 - Assumptions made about the future and other major sources of estimation uncertainty

The Statement of Accounts contains estimated figures that are based on assumptions made by TfN about the future, or that are otherwise uncertain. Estimates are made considering historical experience, current trends and other relevant factors. However, because balances cannot be determined with certainty, actual results could be materially different from the assumptions and estimates.

Pension liability

Estimation of the net liability to pay pensions depends on several complex judgements relating to the discount rate used, the rate at which salaries are expected to increase, changes in retirement ages, mortality rates and expected returns on pension fund assets. TfN engaged Hymans Robertson LLP as consulting actuaries to provide expert advice as to the assumptions to apply.

The effect on the net pension liability of changes in individual assumptions can be measured. For instance, a 0.1% decrease in the Real Discount Rate would increase the defined benefit obligation by £410k. However, the assumptions interact in complex ways; details of the sensitivities are set out in Note 29.

Note 6 - Material items of income and expense

There were no unusual or unexpected items of income and expenditure in the year.

Note 7 - Events after the reporting period

The Statement of Accounts was authorised for issue by the Section 151 Officer on 30 June 2025. Events taking place after this date are not reflected in the financial statements or notes. Where events taking place before this date provided information about conditions existing at 31 March, the figures in the financial statements and notes have been adjusted in all material respects to reflect the impact of this information.

Note 8 - Grant income

TfN is almost entirely funded from grants and contributions. Those values can be recognised in the CIES either on the non-specific income line, or on the services lines. The distinction between the two treatments principally reflects conditions or restrictions on those grants, and whether the grants are for capital or revenue expenditure.

Grants that are restricted to discrete activity are shown on the service lines.

| 2023/24 | 2024/25 |
|--|----------------|
| £000 | £000 |
| (4,600) NPR Transport Development Fund | (5,740) |
| (962) Rail North Partnership Grant | (1,212) |
| (71) In-year funding | - |
| - External Audit - Redmond Review support grant | (15) |
| (83) Rail North Local Contributions | (92) |
| (648) Rail North Rail Grant (via Local Contributions) | (722) |
| (6,364) Total Grant Income Credited to Services | (7,782) |
| (452) Contract Income - Rail Services | (297) |
| (6,816) Total Income Credited to Services in CIES | (8,079) |

Grants with conditions that may require unused allocations to be returned are shown as grants received in advance as a current liability. Grant received to fund NPR analytical support must be returned to the Department for Transport if not required.

| 2023/24 | 2024/25 |
|---|----------------|
| £000 | £000 |
| - Rail Project Funding | (16) |
| - External Audit - Redmond Review support grant 25/26 | (15) |
| (408) NPR Transport Development Fund | (448) |
| - Core grant | (2,754) |
| (408) Total | (3,233) |

Grants without restrictions, and capital grants that have either been applied to expenditure or are yet to be applied to expenditure are recognised on the non-specific grant income line. The following note details all grants recognised in this manner:

| 2023/24 | 2024/25 |
|----------------------|----------------|
| £000 | £000 |
| (7,210) Core Grant | (7,210) |
| (7,210) Total | (7,210) |

Note 9 - Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations

This note details the adjustments that are made to the total comprehensive income and expenditure recognised by TfN in the year in accordance with proper accounting practice to arrive at the resources that are specified by statutory provisions as being available to TfN to

meet future capital and revenue expenditure. The following sets out a description of the reserves that the adjustments are made against.

General fund balance

The General Fund is the statutory fund into which all the receipts of an authority are required to be paid and out of which all liabilities of the authority are to be met, except to the extent that statutory rules might provide otherwise. These rules can also specify the financial year in which liabilities and payments should impact on the General Fund Balance, which is not necessarily in accordance with proper accounting practice. The General Fund Balance therefore summarises the resources that TfN is statutorily empowered to spend on its services or on capital investment (or the deficit of resources that TfN is required to recover) at the end of the financial year.

Capital grants unapplied

The Capital Grants Unapplied Account (Reserve) holds the grants and contributions received towards capital projects for which TfN has met the conditions that would otherwise require repayment of the monies, but which have yet to be applied to meet expenditure. The balance is restricted by grant terms as to the capital expenditure against which it can be applied and/or the financial year in which this can take place. TfN no longer holds any capital grant.

2024/25

| | General Fund Balance | Capital Grants Unapplied | Movement in Unusable Reserves |
|--|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| | £000 | £000 | £000 |
| Adjustments to the Revenue Resources | | | |
| Amounts by which income and expenditure included in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement are different from revenue for the year calculated in accordance with statutory requirements: | | | |
| Pension cost (transferred to (or from) the Pensions Reserve) | 109 | - | (109) |
| Holiday pay (transferred to the Accumulated Absences Reserve) | (16) | - | 16 |
| Reversal of entries included in the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in relation to capital expenditure (these items are charged to Capital Adjustment Account) | - | - | - |
| Total Adjustments to Revenue Resources | 93 | - | (93) |
| Adjustments between Revenue and Capital Resources | | | |
| Capital expenditure financed from Capital Grants Unapplied | - | - | - |
| Total Adjustments between Revenue and Capital Resources | - | - | - |
| Total Adjustments | 93 | - | (93) |

2023/24

| | General Fund Balance £000 | Capital Grants Unapplied £000 | Movement in Unusable Reserves £000 |
|--|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| Adjustments to the Revenue Resources | | | |
| Amounts by which income and expenditure included in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement are different from revenue for the year calculated in accordance with statutory requirements: | | | |
| Pension cost (transferred to (or from) the Pensions Reserve) | (90) | - | 90 |
| Holiday pay (transferred to the Accumulated Absences Reserve) | (8) | - | 8 |
| Reversal of entries included in the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in relation to capital expenditure (these items are charged to Capital Adjustment Account) | - | - | - |
| Total Adjustments to Revenue Resources | (98) | - | 98 |
| Adjustments between Revenue and Capital Resources | | | |
| Capital expenditure financed from Capital Grants Unapplied | - | - | - |
| Total Adjustments between Revenue and Capital Resources | - | - | - |
| Total Adjustments | (98) | - | 98 |

Note 10 – Movement in earmarked reserves

This note sets out the amounts set aside from the General Fund in earmarked reserves to provide financing for future expenditure plans and the amounts posted back from earmarked reserves to meet General Fund expenditure.

| | Balance at 31 March 2023 £000 | Transfers (in)/out £000 | Balance at 31 March 2024 £000 | Transfers (in)/out £000 | Balance at 31 March 2025 £000 |
|--|--|-------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|--|
| Earmarked general fund reserves: | | | | | |
| Earmarked Devolved Powers Reserve | - | - | - | - | - |
| Earmarked RNP Grant Reserve | (97) | - | (97) | (9) | (106) |
| Total earmarked general fund reserves | (97) | - | (97) | (9) | (106) |

Note 11 - Financing and investment income and expenditure

This note shows the incidental income generated by holding cash on deposit until it is required to resource expenditure, and also the interest costs associated with pension liabilities.

| 2023/24 £000 | 2024/25 £000 |
|---|-----------------|
| 929 Interest payable on the net defined benefit liability | 1,036 |
| (1,181) Interest receivable and similar income | (1,312) |
| (252) Total | (276) |

Note 12 - Taxation and non-specific grant income

TfN does not have legal powers to raise precepts on the northern tax base and is almost entirely funded from grant resource. Some of this grant resource is discrete to programmes of activity

and comes with restrictions on its use. Other grant, such as TfN’s Core grant, is awarded without restrictions and is accounted for as ‘non-specific’ grant.

This note shows the value of non-specific grants and those capital grants not shown on the service lines of the comprehensive income and expenditure statement that have been recognised in year.

| 2023/24 | 2024/25 |
|------------------------|----------------|
| £000 | £000 |
| (7,210) TfN Core Grant | (7,210) |
| (7,210) Total | (7,210) |

Note 13 - Expenditure and income analysed by nature

This note analyses TfN’s income and expenditure by standardised descriptors. The note highlights that TfN is almost entirely funded from governmental grant and contributions, whilst the costs associated with professional service contracts and programme delivery is shown in ‘other service expenses.’

| 2023/24 | 2024/25 |
|--|--------------|
| £000 | £000 |
| Nature of Expenditure or Income | |
| (452) Fees, charges and other service income | (297) |
| (1,181) Interest and investment income | (1,312) |
| (13,574) Government grants and contributions | (14,992) |
| 7,657 Employee benefits expenses | 8,329 |
| 6,258 Other service expenses | 6,687 |
| Depreciation, amortisation and impairment | 82 |
| 929 Interest payments | 1,036 |
| (363) (Surplus) or Deficit for Year | (467) |

Other service expenses include all professional service costs, accommodation and business infrastructure costs relating to all activities delivered by TfN.

Note 14 – Tangible Assets

| 31 March 2024 | | | 31 March 2025 | |
|--------------------|-------|---|--------------------|------------|
| Operational Assets | Total | | Operational Assets | Total |
| £000 | £000 | | £000 | £000 |
| | | Balance at start of year: | | |
| | | Gross carrying amounts | - | - |
| | | Accumulated depreciation | - | - |
| - | - | Net carrying amount as previously reported | - | - |
| - | - | Aggregate adjustments on application of IFRS 16 | 364 | 364 |
| - | - | Net carrying amount at start of year as restated | 364 | 364 |
| - | - | Depreciation for the period | (82) | (82) |
| - | - | Net carrying amount at end of year | 283 | 283 |
| | | Comprising: | | |
| | | - Gross carrying amounts | 364 | 364 |
| | | - Accumulated depreciation | (82) | (82) |
| - | - | Total | 283 | 283 |

All of TfN's tangible assets are right-of-use assets.

Note 15 - Intangible assets

TfN accounts for its software and software development as intangible assets.

The intangible assets include both purchased licenses and the costs of internally generated software development. Where assets are operational, they are amortised in line with TfN's accounting policies, with charges commencing in the year after which they become operational.

| 31 March 2024 | | | 31 March 2025 | |
|-------------------------------|-------|---|--------------------|-------|
| Operational Assets (restated) | Total | | Operational Assets | Total |
| £000 | £000 | | £000 | £000 |
| | | Balance at start of year: | | |
| 932 | 932 | Gross carrying amounts | 932 | 932 |
| (932) | (932) | Accumulated amortisation | (932) | (932) |
| - | - | Net carrying amount at start of year | - | - |
| | | Comprising: | | |
| 932 | 932 | - Gross carrying amounts | 932 | 932 |
| (932) | (932) | - Accumulated amortisation and impairment | (932) | (932) |
| - | - | Total | - | - |

All software is given a finite useful life, based on assessments of the period that the software is expected to be of use to the authority. The useful lives assigned to the major software suites used by the authority are:

| Useful Life (Years) | Internally Generated Assets | Other Assets |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|
| ERP | 3 | 0 |

The note also recognises the development and implementation of TfN’s enterprise resource planning (ERP) system. The ERP system is in use and is shown under the ‘operational assets’ column. The asset was initially valued at £1.01m however underwent an impairment adjustment in 2022 post-production of the draft accounts, which at the time, was below the materiality threshold. The values above have now been restated to reflect this impairment. The ERP system asset has been fully amortised.

Note 16 - Debtors

This note shows the value of money owed to TfN and the value of prepayments recognised. Sums due from TfN Partners reflects contributions due from Rail North authorities.

Total debtors include financial assets of £0.68m (2024: £0.16m), which are carried at amortised cost. There is no significant difference between the carrying value and the fair value of these financial assets. There is no significant credit risk in relation to TfN’s financial assets.

| 31 March 2024 | 31 March 2025 |
|--------------------------|---------------|
| £000 | £000 |
| 180 Prepayments | 280 |
| 125 TfN Partners | 658 |
| 35 Other | 18 |
| 340 Total Debtors | 956 |

Note 17 – Cash & cash equivalents

At any time, we will hold cash in the bank or on deposit. This reflects TfN’s reserve strategy to mitigate financial shock, and inevitable timing differences between grants being received and cash being paid to suppliers and employees. The balance of cash and cash equivalents is made up of the following elements:

| 31 March 2024 | 31 March 2025 |
|--|--|
| £000 | £000 |
| 3,138 | 4,527 |
| Cash and Bank Balances | Cash and Bank Balances |
| 4,000 | 4,000 |
| Short Term Investments | Short Term Investments |
| 7,138 | 8,527 |
| Total Cash and Cash Equivalents | Total Cash and Cash Equivalents |

Note 18 - Creditors

This note shows the value of obligations to employees and suppliers.

| 31 March 2024 | 31 March 2025 |
|---|----------------------------------|
| £000 | £000 |
| (404) | (108) |
| Employees | Employees |
| (34) | (18) |
| HMRC | HMRC |
| (4) | (11) |
| Greater Manchester Pension Fund | Greater Manchester Pension Fund |
| (161) | (150) |
| Forvis Mazars | Forvis Mazars |
| | TfN Partners: |
| (221) | (3) |
| Transport for Greater Manchester | Transport for Greater Manchester |
| (27) | (2) |
| Manchester City Council | Manchester City Council |
| - Manchester City Council - lease liability | (74) |
| (1,709) | (1,317) |
| Trade Suppliers | Trade Suppliers |
| (2,560) | (1,683) |
| Total Creditors | Total Creditors |

Obligations to employees include the accounting value associated with the accumulated absence provision – the financial value of untaken leave as at the financial year-end.

On 18th September 2023 TfN moved its Manchester office location to Manchester Town Hall under a lease with Manchester City Council. Amounts owed to TfN partners (Transport for Greater Manchester) relate to internet service support (now terminated).

The table above includes financial liabilities of £1.68m (2024: £2.56m) which are carried at amortised cost. There is no significant difference between the carrying value and fair value of these financial liabilities. There is no significant market or liquidity risk in relation to these financial liabilities which are all due to mature within 1 year.

Note 19 - Provisions

Provisions reflect the amount set aside for probable, but uncertain, economic obligations.

Upon adoption of IFRS 16, a provision in respect of lease dilapidations has been recognised for the expected cost of TfN’s obligation to restore its leased office at the end of the lease term. The amount has been calculated as the present value of the expected cost.

| 31 March 2024 | | 31 March 2025 |
|----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| £000 | Total Provisions | £000 |
| (240) | Opening Balance | (240) |
| - | Released in the year | 240 |
| - | Additions in the year | (20) |
| - | Unwinding of provision | (1) |
| (240) | Closing Balance | (21) |

Note 20 – Lease Liabilities

Lease liabilities on the balance sheet are as follows:

| 31 March 2024 | | 31 March 2025 |
|----------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|
| £000 | | £000 |
| - | Current Liabilities | (74) |
| - | Non-current liabilities | (200) |
| - | Total Lease Liability | (274) |

The movements in lease liabilities during the year are as follows:

| | 31 March 2025 |
|---|----------------------|
| | £000 |
| At 31 March 2024 as previously reported | - |
| Adjustments on application of IFRS 16 | (344) |
| At 1 April 2024 as restated | (344) |
| Lease payments made | 84 |
| Lease interest | (14) |
| At 31 March 2025 | (274) |

Lease interest was charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. The total cash outflow in respect of leases was equal to the lease payments made.

The maturity of the gross contractual undiscounted cash flows due on TfN’s lease liabilities is set out below.

| | 31 March 2025 |
|---|----------------------|
| Maturity analysis - contractual undiscounted cashflows | £000 |
| 1 year or less | 85 |
| Between 1 and 2 years | 85 |
| Between 2 and 5 years | 127 |
| Over 5 years | - |
| Total | 297 |

TfN leases its Manchester office location at Manchester Town Hall from Manchester City Council. At 31 March 2025 the lease has a remaining term of 3.5 years.

TfN leases ICT equipment, which has been considered as a 'low-value' lease.

Note 21 - Reserves

TfN holds both usable and unusable reserves. Usable reserves can be used to fund TfN activities, and some of these may be earmarked to support specific types of activity. Unusable are those reserves that do not contain resource that could be applied to meet TfN's funding requirements. These are largely accounting reserves where the effects of timing differences and statutory overrides of accounting rules are recognised.

Usable reserves

The following reserves can be used to fund TfN activities. The General Fund can be used to fund any activity, but the other reserves are to be used only for specific activities.

| 2023/24 £000 | 2024/25 £000 |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| - Earmarked Devolved Powers Reserve | - |
| (97) Earmarked RNP Reserve | (106) |
| (4,269) General Fund | (4,633) |
| (4,366) Total | (4,739) |

Unusable reserves

The following reserves are unusable for reasons explained below.

| 2023/24 £000 | 2024/25 £000 |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1,207 Pension Reserve | 1,143 |
| 95 Accumulated Absence Account | 111 |
| 1,302 Total | 1,254 |

Capital Adjustment Account

The capital adjustment account absorbs the timing differences arising from the different arrangements for accounting for the consumption of non-current assets and for financing the acquisition, construction or additions to those assets under statutory provisions. The account is debited with the cost of acquisition, construction or subsequent costs as impairment losses and amortisations are charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. The account is credited with the amounts set aside by the authority as finance for the costs of acquisition, construction and subsequent expenditure.

There were no such transactions in the current or prior year.

Pension reserve

The pensions reserve absorbs the timing differences arising from the different arrangements for accounting for post-employment benefits and for funding benefits in accordance with

statutory provisions. The authority accounts for post-employment benefits in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as the benefits are earned by employees accruing years of service, updating the liabilities recognised to reflect inflation, changing assumptions and investment returns on any resources set aside to meet the costs. However, statutory arrangements require benefits earned to be financed as the authority makes employer’s contributions to pension funds or eventually pays any pensions for which it is directly responsible. The balance on the pensions reserve therefore shows a substantial shortfall in the benefits earned by past and current employees and the resources the authority has set aside to meet them. The statutory arrangements will ensure that funding will have been set aside by the time the benefits come to be paid.

| 2023/24 £000 | 2024/25 £000 |
|--|-----------------|
| 2,308 Balance at 1 April | 1,207 |
| (1,191) Remeasurements of the net defined benefit (liability)/asset Reversal of items relating to retirement benefits debited or credited to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement | 45 1,007 |
| 1,086 Employer’s pensions contributions and direct payments to (996) pensioners payable in the year | (1,116) |
| 1,207 Balance at 31 March | 1,143 |

Accumulated absences account

The accumulated absences account absorbs the differences that would otherwise arise on the General Fund balance from accruing for compensated absences earned but not taken in the year, e.g. annual leave entitlement carried forward at 31 March. Statutory arrangements require that the impact on the General Fund balance is neutralised by transfers to or from the account.

| 2023/24 £000 | 2024/25 £000 |
|--|-----------------|
| 87 Balance 1 April | 95 |
| (87) Settlement or cancellation of accrual made at the end of the preceding year | (95) |
| 95 Amounts accrued at the end of the current year | 111 |
| 8 Amount by which officer remuneration charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement on an accruals basis is different from remuneration chargeable in year in accordance with statutory requirements | 16 |
| 95 Balance 31 March | 111 |

Note 22 - Cash flow from operating activities

The cash flow from the net surplus/deficit on operating activities includes some items that are not cash based. These items require an adjustment to be made as detailed below which covers the operating surplus or deficit to a cash basis.

| 2023/24 £000 | 2024/25 £000 |
|---|-----------------|
| 1,847 (Increase)/decrease in creditors | (1,948) |
| - Non-cash movement relating to adoption of IFRS 16 leases | 82 |
| (404) Increase/(decrease) in debtors | 633 |
| (90) Movement in pension liability | 109 |
| - Other non-cash movements charged to the surplus or deficit on provision of services | 219 |
| 1,353 Total | (905) |

Note 23 - Cash flow from investing activities

| 2023/24 £000 | 2024/25 £000 |
|---|-----------------|
| (345) Other receipts from investing activities | (364) |
| (345) Net cash flows from investing activities | (364) |

This receipt relates to interest received on our cash balances.

Note 24 - Members’ allowances

The authority pays an allowance to the Independent Members of its Audit and Governance Committee.

| 2023/24 £ | 2024/25 £ |
|--|--------------|
| 3,030 Independent Audit & Governance Committee Members | 3,999 |

Note 25 - Officers’ remuneration

Under statutory provisions TfN is required to disclose the remuneration of senior officers. Senior officers include the Head of Paid Service – TfN’s principal paid officer – and those officers who report to that post or hold statutory office. TfN also discloses the pay of its chairman as an individual in a position of significant influence.

The remuneration paid to the authority’s senior employees was as follows:

| 2024/25 | Employer Pension Contribution | Taxable Allowances | Professional Memberships | Redundancy Payments |
|--|-------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Role | (£) | (£) | (£) | (£) |
| Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service) | | | | |
| <i>Martin Tugwell</i> | 164,561 | 28,634 | - | - |
| Chairman (pro-rata) | | | | |
| <i>Patrick McLoughlin</i> | 60,000 | - | - | - |
| - Chairman full-time equivalent | 225,000 | | | |
| Rail & Roads Director | 25,182 | 4,382 | - | - |
| - Departed 31/05/24 | | | | |
| Strategy, Analysis and Communications Director | 143,984 | 25,053 | - | - |
| Rail North Partnership Director | 133,560 | 23,239 | - | - |
| Chief Financial Officer (Section 151) | 133,560 | 23,127 | 460 | - |
| Head of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer) | 69,764 | 12,183 | - | - |
| - Departed 31/12/24 | | | | |
| Head of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer) | 17,609 | 3,064 | 397 | - |
| - Joined 01/01/25 | | | | |

| 2023/24 | Salary | Employer Pension Contribution | Taxable Allowances | Professional Memberships | Redundancy Payments |
|--|---------|-------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Role | (£) | (£) | (£) | (£) | (£) |
| Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service) | | | | | |
| <i>Martin Tugwell</i> | 160,547 | 27,935 | - | - | - |
| Chairman (pro-rata) | | | | | |
| <i>Patrick McLoughlin</i> | 60,000 | - | - | - | - |
| - Chairman full-time equivalent | 225,000 | | | | |
| Rail & Roads Director | 147,396 | 25,647 | - | - | - |
| - Joined 06/02/23 | | | | | |
| Strategy, Analysis and Communications Director | 116,811 | 20,325 | - | - | - |
| - Joined 06/02/23 | | | | | |
| Rail North Partnership Director | 130,302 | 22,673 | - | - | - |
| Chief Financial Officer (Section 151) | 124,472 | 21,482 | - | 450 | - |
| Head of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer) | 93,360 | 16,245 | - | 337 | - |

TfN is also required to disclose the number of officers whose remuneration is more than £50,000. Remuneration is inclusive of salaries and other taxable benefits, but not employer pension contributions. This disclosure is made in bands of £5k and does not include those senior officers detailed above:

| 2023/24 | | 2024/25 |
|---------|---------------------|---------|
| 11 | £50,000 - £54,999 | 9 |
| 7 | £55,000 - £59,999 | 8 |
| 8 | £60,000 - £64,999 | 5 |
| 10 | £65,000 - £69,999 | 11 |
| - | £70,000 - £74,999 | 2 |
| 3 | £75,000 - £79,999 | 3 |
| 8 | £80,000 - £84,999 | 2 |
| - | £85,000 - £89,999 | 8 |
| 3 | £90,000 - £94,999 | - |
| - | £95,000 - £99,999 | 2 |
| - | £100,000 - £104,999 | 2 |
| - | £105,000 - £109,999 | - |
| 1 | £110,000 - £114,999 | 1 |
| 51 | | 53 |

There were no exit packages (for all officers including the senior employees detailed above) in 2023/24 or 2024/25 and therefore no costs were charged to the CIES.

Note 26 - External audit costs

The fees payable to external auditors in 2024/25 with regard to external audit services carried out by the appointed auditor were £125k (2024: £108k). The net charge in the accounts however, was £138k, due to an additional amount of £13k charged in the year relating to 2022/23.

Note 27 - Related parties

TfN’s Board is made up of elected members from its Constituent Authorities and representatives from Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), or their successors, from all areas of the North, along with co-opted non-voting representatives from Highways England, Network Rail and HS2 Ltd and a representative of the Secretary of State for Transport acting as an observer.

As a result of this governance structure TfN enters into a variety of financial transactions with partner organisations with whom we share common control.

This note seeks to highlight areas where transactions could have potentially been entered other than at arms-length.

Members

TfN’s elected members have direct control over TfN’s financial and operating policies. Members’ interests outside of TfN are recorded in the register of gifts and hospitality maintained by the Monitoring Officer. These interests include positions held by members in other public bodies and private interests.

Material financial relationships between TfN and those bodies are detailed below.

Officers

Officers may be able to influence financial or operational practices. There were no transactions in 2024/25 with bodies in which officers had a pecuniary interest and were able to exercise such an influence.

Funding

The UK Government exerts significant influence through legislation and grant funding. TfN is almost entirely funded from the DfT. The Secretary of State for Transport is represented on the TfN Board leading to common control. During the financial year, grants to a value of £16.96m (2024: £9.96m) were received from the Department, which combined with the balance of grants received in the prior year made £17.36m of grant available. Of this, £14.16m (2024: £9.94m) was recognised as income in the year, the remaining £3.20m (2024: £0.09m) of unused grant is held as grant received in advance for use in the following financial year.

TfN is the recipient of local funding contributions for its Rail North activities. These contributions are made by the Rail North authorities and amounted to £0.29m (2024: £0.73m) in the year. The northern Rail North authorities are represented on the Transport for the North Board, whilst all authorities sit on the Rail North Committee.

TfN is also party to several contracts where it delivers prescribed services for partners. This includes project management work for North Yorkshire County Council, services funded by Network Rail related to the Trans-Pennine Route Upgrade project, plus work carried out for Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council. In 2024/25 income was recognised to the value of £0.25m (2024: £0.45m).

Expenditure

Over the course of the year TfN was party to several arrangements where partner bodies supplied goods or services to the organisation.

Manchester City Council (MCC) is the local authority and Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) is the regional transport executive within and controlled by Greater Manchester Combined Authority, a TfN Constituent Authority, the mayor of which is a TfN Board member. During the year TfGM has provided communications technology to the organisation on a contractual basis, but this has now ended. TfN's Manchester based office space was leased from TfGM up to September 2023 at which point TfN moved to Manchester City Council ("MCC") offices. In total, TfN incurred expenditure of £0.26m (2024: £0.08m) with MCC (including the IFRS16 liability of £0.07m) and recognised a small surplus of £0.05m (2024 expenditure: £0.12m) with TfGM, the latter mainly relating to final accounting associated with our previous office space.

Note 28 - Capital Expenditure and Capital Financing

TfN did not incur any capital expenditure in the year.

Note 29 - Defined benefit pension scheme

As part of the terms and conditions of employment of its officers, TfN makes contributions towards the cost of post-employment benefits. Although these benefits will not actually be payable until employees retire, TfN has a commitment to make the payments (for those benefits) and to disclose them at the time that employees earn their future entitlement.

The Greater Manchester Pension Fund is operated under the regulatory framework for the Local Government Pension Scheme, and the governance of the scheme is the responsibility of Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council as the administering body. Policy is determined in accordance with the Pensions Fund Regulations.

The principal risks to the authority of the scheme are the longevity assumptions, statutory changes to the scheme, structural changes to the scheme (i.e. largescale withdrawals from the scheme), changes to inflation, bond yields and the performance of the equity investments held by the scheme. These are mitigated to a certain extent by the statutory requirements to charge to the General Fund the amounts required by statute as described in the accounting policies note.

General fund transactions

| Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement | |
|---|----------------|
| Cost of Services | |
| 2023/24 | 2024/25 |
| £000 | £000 |
| Service cost comprising: | |
| 977 Current service cost | 952 |
| - Past service cost | - |
| 109 Net interest expense | 36 |
| - Effect of asset ceiling | 19 |
| 1,086 Total charged to Surplus or Deficit on Provision of Services | 1,007 |
| Other post employment benefits charged to the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement | |
| 2023/24 | 2024/25 |
| £000 | £000 |
| Re-measurement of the net defined benefit liability comprising: | |
| (469) Return on plan assets (excluding the amount included in the net interest expense) | 157 |
| 613 Other Experience | (186) |
| (119) Actuarial gains and losses arising on changes in demographic assumptions | (35) |
| (1,604) Actuarial gains and losses arising on changes in financial assumptions | (4,810) |
| - Actuarial gains and losses arising on changes in other assumptions | - |
| 388 Changes in the effect of the asset ceiling | 4,919 |
| (1,191) Total charged to Other Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement | 45 |
| (105) Total charged to the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement | 1,052 |
| Movement in Reserves Statement | |
| 2023/24 | 2024/25 |
| £000 | £000 |
| (1,086) Reversal of net charges made to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services | (1,007) |
| Actual amount charged against the General Fund balance for pensions in the year | |
| 996 Employers' contributions payable to the scheme | 1,116 |

Pensions assets and liabilities recognised in the balance sheet

The amount included in the Balance Sheet arising from the authority's obligation in respect of its defined benefit plans is as follows:

| 2023/24 | 2024/25 |
|--|----------------|
| £000 | £000 |
| (20,036) Present value of the defined obligation | (17,308) |
| 19,217 Fair value of plan assets | 21,491 |
| (388) Asset ceiling adjustment | (5,326) |
| (1,207) Net Asset / (liability) | (1,143) |

Reconciliation of the movements in the fair value of scheme (plan) assets

| 2023/24 | 2024/25 |
|---|---------------|
| £000 | £000 |
| 16,624 Opening fair value of scheme assets | 19,217 |
| - Revaluation of opening fair value of scheme assets | - |
| 16,624 Revised opening fair value of scheme assets | 19,217 |
| 820 Interest income | 966 |
| Re-measurement gain/(loss): | |
| 469 Return on plan assets (excluding the amount included in the net interest expense) | (157) |
| - Other Experience | - |
| 996 Contributions from employer | 1,116 |
| 481 Contributions from employees into the scheme | 532 |
| (173) Net benefits paid out | (183) |
| 19,217 Reconciliation of the movements in the fair value of the scheme (plan) assets | 21,491 |

Reconciliation of present value of the scheme liabilities (defined benefit obligation)

| 2023/24 | 2024/25 |
|--|-----------------|
| £000 | £000 |
| (18,932) Opening balance at 1 April | (20,036) |
| (977) Current service cost | (952) |
| (929) Interest cost | (1,002) |
| (481) Contributions from scheme participants | (532) |
| Re-measurement gains and losses: | |
| 119 Actuarial gains and losses arising on changes in demographic assumptions | 35 |
| 1,604 Actuarial gains and losses arising on changes in financial assumptions | 4,810 |
| - Actuarial gains and losses arising on changes in other assumptions | - |
| (613) Other Experience | 186 |
| - Past service cost | - |
| 173 Net benefits paid out | 183 |
| (20,036) Reconciliation of the present value of scheme liabilities (defined benefit obligation) | (17,308) |

Discretionary post-retirement benefits

Discretionary post-retirement benefits on early retirement are an unfunded defined benefit arrangement, under which liabilities are recognised when awards are made. There are no plan assets built up to meet these pension liabilities.

Transactions relating to post-employment benefits

We recognise the cost of retirement benefits in the reported cost of services when they are earned by employees, rather than when the benefits are eventually paid as pensions.

However, the charge we are required to make is based on the cash payable in the year, so the real cost of post-employment/retirement benefits is reversed out of the general fund via the movement in reserves statement. The following transactions have been made in the comprehensive income and expenditure statement and the general fund balance via the Movement in Reserves Statement during the year.

Local Government Pension Scheme assets comprised

| 2023/24 | | | 2024/25 | | | |
|----------------|------------------|---------------|--|----------------|------------------|---------------|
| Quoted £000 | Unquoted £000 | Total £000 | | Quoted £000 | Unquoted £000 | Total £000 |
| 424 | - | 424 | Cash & cash equivalents | 655 | - | 655 |
| | | | Equity Securities | | | |
| 1,230 | - | 1,230 | Consumer | 1,421 | - | 1,421 |
| 1,119 | - | 1,119 | Manufacturing | 1,040 | - | 1,040 |
| 1,109 | - | 1,109 | Energy & utilities | 1,273 | - | 1,273 |
| 1,700 | - | 1,700 | Financial institutions | 2,000 | - | 2,000 |
| 997 | - | 997 | Health and care | 999 | - | 999 |
| 1,097 | - | 1,097 | Information technology | 1,127 | - | 1,127 |
| 191 | - | 191 | Other | 289 | - | 289 |
| 7,443 | - | 7,443 | Subtotal Equity Securities | 8,148 | - | 8,148 |
| | | | Debt Securities | | | |
| 667 | - | 667 | Corporate bonds (investment grade) | 697 | - | 697 |
| - | - | - | - Corporate bonds (non-investment grade) | - | - | - |
| 524 | - | 524 | UK Government | 949 | - | 949 |
| 584 | - | 584 | Other | 874 | - | 874 |
| 1,775 | - | 1,775 | Subtotal Debt Securities | 2,521 | - | 2,521 |
| | | | Private Equity | | | |
| - | 1,309 | 1,309 | All | - | 1,353 | 1,353 |
| - | 1,309 | 1,309 | Subtotal Private Equity | - | 1,353 | 1,353 |
| | | | Real Estate | | | |
| - | 847 | 847 | UK property | - | 1,121 | 1,121 |
| - | 847 | 847 | Subtotal Real Estate | - | 1,121 | 1,121 |
| | | | Investment Funds & Unit Trusts | | | |
| 908 | - | 908 | Equities | 388 | - | 388 |
| 1,827 | - | 1,827 | Bonds | 2,160 | - | 2,160 |
| - | - | - | - Hedge Funds | - | - | - |
| - | - | - | - Commodities | - | - | - |
| - | 1,636 | 1,636 | Infrastructure | - | 1,802 | 1,802 |
| 478 | 2,578 | 3,056 | Other | 566 | 2,790 | 3,356 |
| 3,213 | 4,214 | 7,427 | Subtotal Investment Funds & Unit Trusts | 3,114 | 4,592 | 7,706 |
| | | | Derivatives | | | |
| (6) | - | (6) | Other | (13) | - | (13) |
| (6) | - | (6) | Subtotal Derivatives | (13) | - | (13) |
| 12,848 | 6,369 | 19,217 | Total Assets | 14,425 | 7,066 | 21,491 |

Basis for estimating assets and liabilities

Liabilities have been assessed on an actuarial basis using the projected unit credit method, an estimate of the pensions that will be payable in future years dependent on assumptions about mortality rates, salary levels, etc.

Both the Local Government Pension Scheme and discretionary benefits liabilities have been estimated by Hymans Robertson LLP, an independent firm of actuaries, estimates for the fund being based on the latest full valuation of the scheme as at 31 March 2022.

Financial

| Period Ended | 31 March 2024 | 31 March 2025 |
|-----------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| | %p.a. | %p.a. |
| Pension Increase Rate (CPI) | 2.75% | 2.70% |
| Salary Increase Rate | 3.55% | 3.50% |
| Discount Rate | 4.85% | 5.85% |

Mortality

| | Female | Male |
|--------------------|------------|------------|
| Current Pensioners | 24.0 years | 21.9 years |
| Future Pensioners* | 25.5 years | 22.7 years |

*Figures assume members aged 45 as at the last formal valuation date.

Historic mortality

Life expectancies for the prior period end are based on the Fund’s VitaCurves. The allowance for future improvements is shown below:

Historic Mortality

| Current Pensioners | Future Pensioners |
|---|---|
| CMI 2022 model, with a 25% weighting of 2022 data, a 0% weighting of 2021 (and 2020) data, standard smoothing (Sk7), initial adjustment of 0.25% and a long term rate of improvement of 1.5% p.a. | CMI 2022 model, with a 25% weighting of 2022 data, a 0% weighting of 2021 (and 2020) data, standard smoothing (Sk7), initial adjustment of 0.25% and a long term rate of improvement of 1.5% p.a. |

Please note that the mortality assumptions used to value the obligations in the employer’s closing position are different to those used to value the obligations in the employer’s opening position.

Commutation

An allowance is included for future retirements to elect to take 50% of the maximum additional tax-free cash up to HMRC limits.

Sensitivity analysis

The principal demographic assumption is the longevity assumption (i.e. member life expectancy). For sensitivity purposes, we estimate that a one-year increase in life expectancy would approximately increase the Employer’s Defined Benefit Obligation by around 3-5%. In practice the actual cost of a one-year increase in life expectancy will depend on the structure of the revised assumption (i.e. if improvements to survival rates predominantly apply at younger or older ages). To quantify the impact of a change in the financial assumptions used, we have calculated and compared the value of the scheme obligations at the accounting date on varying bases. The approach taken is consistent with that adopted to derive the accounting figures provided in this report, based on the profile (average member ages, retirement ages etc) of the Employer as at the date of the most recent valuation.

The sensitivities regarding the principal assumptions used to measure the scheme are set out below

| Change in assumptions at 31 March 2024 | Approx % increase to defined benefit obligation | Approx monetary amount (£000's) |
|--|---|---------------------------------|
| 0.1% decrease in Real Discount Rate | 2% | 410 |
| 1 year increase in member life expectancy | 4% | 692 |
| 0.1% increase in the Salary Increase Rate | 0% | 19 |
| 0.1% increase in the Pension Increase Rate | 2% | 403 |

The Court of Appeal has recently issued its judgment in the Virgin Media case (Virgin Media Ltd v NTL Pension Trustees II Ltd & Ors) which could affect any scheme which was contracted-out of the State Second Pension on a final salary basis in the period between 6 April 1997 and 5 April 2016. The case centred on a change to benefits made in 1999 to the way in which deferred members' pensions were revalued in relation to inflation. The impact of the ruling on LGPS liabilities is not known and no adjustments to reflect the impact of the ruling have been made to the financial statements for the year. Management will continue to monitor the developments and consider the impact on the LGPS liabilities.

Note 30 – ‘Short-term’ and ‘low-value’ leases

During the year-ended 31 March 2025, a lease expense of £0.05m was charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in respect of ‘low-value’ leases.

The minimum lease payments at 31 March 2025 for ‘low-value’ leases are:

| 31 March 2024 £000 | 31 March 2025 £000 |
|---|-----------------------|
| 51 Not later than one year | 51 |
| 80 Later than one year and not later than 5 years | 29 |
| 131 Total | 80 |

Annual Governance Statement 2024/25

Introduction

This statement provides an overview of how our governance arrangements operate and reports on how they have been reviewed to ensure that they provide an effective system of internal control.

We were established on 1 April 2018 by the Sub-National Transport Body (Transport for the North) Regulations 2018 (“the 2018 Regulations”). Since our inception we have produced Annual Governance statements and our Constitution, policies, procedures, and systems continue to be developed. As a Sub-National Transport Body, our core functions are to prepare a Transport Strategy for the area and to provide statutory advice to the Secretary of State regarding the exercise of transport functions in the area. Other devolved powers are included in the Regulations. We are funded in this work by the Department for Transport.

Signed



Louise Gittins
 Chair of the Transport for the North Board
 25 March 2026

Signed



Martin Tugwell
 Chief Executive Officer
 25 March 2026

1.0 Scope of responsibility

This Annual Governance Statement demonstrates how Transport for the North (“TfN”) has reviewed the effectiveness of its internal systems of control and how it has complied with its adopted Code of Governance in carrying out its functions. It is published in accordance with the requirements of regulation 6(1) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015

TfN is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently, and effectively. TfN also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency, and effectiveness.

In discharging this overall responsibility, TfN is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs, facilitating the effective exercise of its functions, which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

TfN has approved and adopted a Code of Corporate Governance, which is consistent with the principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework, Delivering Good Governance in Local Government. The Code of Corporate Governance is included in TfN’s Constitution and is on TfN’s website at:

<http://www.transportfornorth.com>.

2.0 The Purpose of the governance framework

The governance framework comprises the systems, processes, culture, and values, by which TfN is directed and controlled and the processes through which it accounts to and engages with

the community. It enables TfN to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives will lead to the delivery of its goal of transformational economic growth in the North of England, facilitated by improved transport infrastructure.

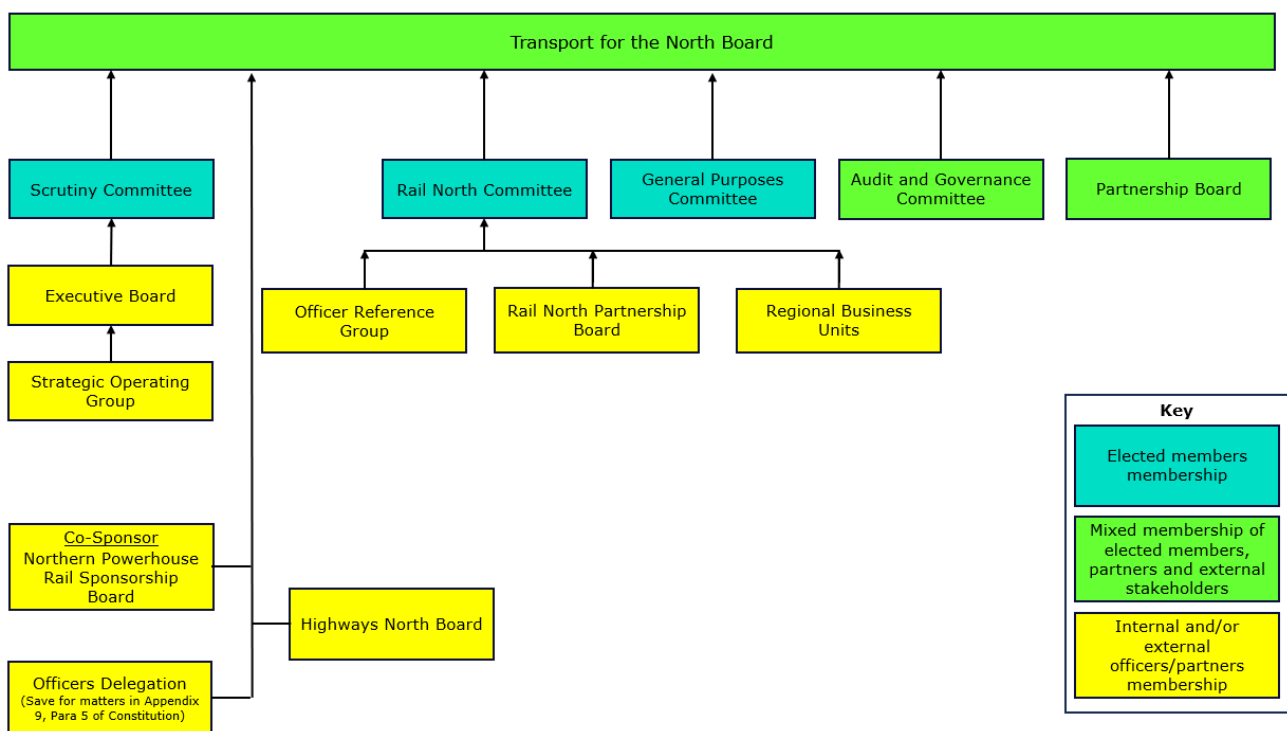
The system of internal control is a significant part of the governance framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives and can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness.

The system of internal control consists of a number of processes, policies and procedures that have been put in place to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of TfN’s aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood and resultant impact of those risks materialising, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

The governance framework was in place at TfN for the 2024/25 financial year and up to the date of approval of the Statement of Accounts.

3.0 Identification of Key Governance Arrangements

TfN’s Governance Structure including partnership arrangements



Transport for the North Board (“TfN Board”)

The TfN Board has been made up of the representatives of 19 Constituent Authorities in the North who are the voting members of the Board. From early 2025 this number changed to 14 due to the establishment of new Combined Authorities within the territory of TfN. There are also 4 representatives from the Rail North Authorities, who are co-opted members of TfN Board and are entitled to vote on matters relating to rail services. The Independent Chair is a non-voting co-opted member. TfN Board has also appointed, as non-voting co-opted members, business representatives nominated by the Mayoral Combined Authorities or County Combined Authorities from their Business Boards, and representatives of National Highways, Network Rail and HS2. The appointment of representatives from the Business Boards ensures that, at TfN

Board level, there is the continuation of valuable business representation that was previously provided by the Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs).

TfN’s governance arrangements are set out in its Constitution and have been kept under review to reflect changes in Constituent Authority membership. Changes to the Constitution (except for minor amendments which can be made under officer delegated authority), approval of the Budget and Business Plan and adoption of the Strategic Transport Plan (“STP”) are reserved to the TfN Board. Other decisions are delegated to Committees, the Chief Executive, and other senior officers.

Rail North Committee

The Rail North Committee has 18 members, comprising representatives from each of the 14 Constituent Authorities and each of the 4 former Rail North Authorities. The former grouping system has been abolished and now each authority has its own seat, with the voting shares as set out in the Constitution. It considers and advises the TfN Board on all matters relating to rail service contracts in the North. There has been a devolution of rail responsibilities in the North of England and through these arrangements TfN (and its constituent authorities) oversee the specification and management of the Northern and TransPennine Express rail contracts (including delivery performance).

These arrangements are set out in the Rail North Partnership Agreement (“the Partnership Agreement”) and the parties to this agreement are TfN and the Secretary of State for Transport. The arrangements under the Partnership Agreement have continued subsequent to the Northern and TransPennine Express contracts (separately) being taken over by the Operator of Last Resort.

The Constitution sets out the voting rights in relation to rail related matters for Constituent Authorities and the Rail North Authorities.

Scrutiny Committee

TfN has a Scrutiny Committee made up of elected members appointed by the Constituent Authorities whose role is to scrutinise proposals prior to consideration by the TfN Board and to make recommendations in relation to transport in the area. TfN has a policy of “Scrutiny First” under which the Scrutiny Committee has an opportunity to comment on and advise on issues for decision by the TfN Board before they are made rather than scrutinising decisions which have already been taken.

The Scrutiny Committee has decided not to set up specific scrutiny panels but to continue to operate as a full committee.

Audit and Governance Committee

TfN has an Audit and Governance Committee consisting of six Elected Members drawn from the 14 Constituent Authorities and 4 Independent Members, the latter of whom have been recruited through an open public recruitment process based on relevant skills and appointed by the TfN Board on the basis of a recommendation made by the General Purposes Committee.

The Committee’s role is to provide assurance to the Board on governance, risk management and the internal control framework and the Chair of the Committee makes an annual report to the TfN Board.

General Purposes Committee

The General Purposes Committee was established in February 2022. Its membership comprises one member from each of the 14 Constituent Authorities, and a single representative from those business representatives who form part of TfN’s Board. Its role is to determine matters which are not specifically reserved to the Board or delegated to any other Committee or officer

of TfN. It sets and reviews the annual objectives for the Chair of the TfN Board and the Chief Executive Officer.

Appointments Sub-Committee of the General Purposes Committee

The Terms of Reference of the General Purposes Committee provide for the formation of a sub-committee, when necessary, to deal with the selection of a preferred candidate for recommendation to the TfN Board, to the role of any Statutory Officer, or Chair of the TfN Partnership Board/TfN Board including considering applications, forming a longlist and a shortlist, and conducting interviews.

Partnership Board

The 2018 Regulations provided for the appointment of a Partnership Board to be consulted on and advise on matters relating to transport in the area. The membership of the Partnership Board includes those who are already members of the TfN Board, together with representatives from Disability UK, the Committee on Climate Change, Transport Focus, the Northern Chambers of Commerce, the Directors of Public Health, three regional TUC representatives and a Department for Transport observer.

The Partnership Board’s purpose is to contribute to TfN’s effective exercise of its powers, and the development and delivery of its strategy and programmes through transparency and inclusivity. The Partnership Board has an Independent Chair who is also the Independent Chair of the TfN Board. The Partnership Board meets when required and, in 2024/2025, has met on two occasions.

Rail North Partnership Agreement

The Rail North Partnership Agreement is the contractual arrangement between TfN and the Department for Transport in relation to the Northern and TransPennine Express contracts. The Agreement is the basis on which the two parties work to specify, implement, and monitor the two contracts.

Rail North Partnership Board

Within the parameters of the Rail North Partnership Agreement, there is a Rail North Partnership Board which consists of senior officials from the Department of Transport and TfN (including partner representatives as agreed by the Rail North Committee).

The Rail North Partnership executive team is hosted by TfN and services the Rail North Partnership Board. The governance arrangements for this team are set out in the Partnership Agreement. The Rail North Partnership Board can include employees of the Secretary of State, Department of Transport, TfN or from Constituent Authorities.

Regional Business Units

Under the terms of the Rail North Agreement, there is the ability to establish a number of Regional Business Units. Two or more Constituent Authorities may together form a Regional Business Unit in relation to the geographical area covered by the Constituent Authorities.

Two Regional Business Units have been established, namely the North-East Regional Management Unit and the North-West Regional Business Unit.

Their terms of reference are set out in the TfN Constitution, and these indicate the operational parameters of the Regional Business Units.

Executive Board

The Executive Board comprises senior officers from the Constituent Authorities. It is chaired by a representative from the Constituent Authorities and supported by the TfN executive. It promotes dialogue on key issues across TfN’s portfolio, including finance, risk, and business

planning, as well as advising on proposals being developed for consideration by the TfN Board. It meets on a regular basis and in 2024 /2025 met seven times. The terms of reference are set out in the Constitution.

Strategic Oversight Group

The group provides strategic oversight and guidance on TfN’s activities that support the delivery of TfN’s STP and its supporting evidence and strategies. The group receives input from various delivery groups, and challenge to ensure there is a joined-up approach to delivery. The group ensures that partners are engaged, consulted, and informed throughout the development of these work streams. The group usually meets two weeks prior to Executive Board.

Officer Reference Group

This group meets monthly and there is officer representation from Constituent Authorities and Rail North Authorities. This group advises the TfN executive in relation to matters considered by the Rail North Committee.

Highways North Board

TfN has a wide range of interests in the work being brought forward by National Highways, across the TfN area, and engages regularly with them and partners. The Highways North Board is intended to serve as a forum for these discussions to take place.

Under the terms set out in the Constitution the core membership of the group is composed of officer representatives from TfN, Department for Transport and National Highways. The Highways North Board’s Terms of Reference are set out in the Constitution. With no meetings having been arranged for 2024 /2025 the TfN executive is working with our constituent authorities and the other partners with a view to reinvigorating this Board.

Northern Powerhouse Rail Sponsor Board

Northern Powerhouse Rail is a major programme of investment to improve rail connectivity between main centres of the North through a combination of new routes and significant upgrades to existing rail routes. Development work on Northern Powerhouse Rail was jointly led by TfN and the Department for Transport over a number of years operating as co-clients. On 1 April 2022, the Department for Transport became the sole client of Northern Powerhouse Rail.

In June 2023, the new governance arrangements associated with Northern Powerhouse Rail were approved by the TfN Board and the Rail Minister. TfN entered into a Northern Powerhouse Rail Memorandum of Understanding with the Department for Transport.

The Memorandum of Understanding formalises TfN’s role in the Northern Powerhouse Rail programme in relation to the Integrated Rail Plan for the North and Midlands published in 2021.

The Northern Powerhouse Rail Sponsor Board (“Sponsor Board”) meets quarterly and is comprised of three named representatives from both TfN and Department for Transport, supported by Network Rail and HS2 Limited with other supporting attendees. The Sponsor Board is accountable for ensuring that the work is governed effectively and delivers the objectives that have been identified.

The Sponsor Board’s direct responsibility is oversight of the core Northern Powerhouse Rail network as defined in the Integrated Rail Plan, essentially between Liverpool and York via Manchester and Leeds. Delivery of Northern Powerhouse Rail is reliant on other programmes in particular HS2, Transpennine Route Upgrade and the East Coast Main Line Enhancements Programme. The programmes are referred to as “Dependencies” in the agreement. The remit of the Sponsor Board provides TfN with the opportunity to raise issues or concerns that arise from these “Dependencies”.

Meetings

TfN conducts its business for Board and Committee meetings in line with its constitutional and legislative requirements.

To conduct its business in accordance with the Constitution, meetings are held in person.

When appropriate or necessary, meetings are held virtually as Consultation Calls using the Chief Executive Officer’s delegated powers.

All in-person TfN meetings and consultation calls are either streamed live to the public and/or provided as recordings via the TfN website.

4.0 The Corporate Governance Framework

TfN has adopted a Code of Corporate Governance that incorporates Core Principles that align with CIPFA guidance. These are captured below and supported by evidence that demonstrates compliance.

A. Focusing on the purpose of TfN and the outcomes for the community and creating and implementing a vision for the area.

The STP vision is:

By 2050 the North of England will have become a thriving, socially inclusive region. Our communities, businesses and places will all benefit from sustainable economic growth, improved health and wellbeing, and access to opportunities for all. This will be achieved through a transformed zero emission, integrated, safe and sustainable transport system which will enhance connectivity, resilience, and journey times for all users.

Our STP was approved and adopted by the TfN Board on 20 March 2024. The plan sets out the strategic outcomes for the region and the role that investment in the North’s transport system has to play in delivering those outcomes. The STP includes specific ‘right share’ metrics against which progress will be monitored. The plan sets out a vision for improved connectivity across the wider region and is an ambitious, transformational, pan northern strategy that seeks to secure long-term sustainable economic growth in the north.

Following approval and adoption of the STP, our focus is the implementation and delivery of the plan and its objectives. This includes the Northern Appraisal Playbook, which will consider how to best utilise the flexibilities in the current appraisal framework, as well as advice for government on changes needed to the Green Book and appraisal system.

The STP is used by the TfN Board to prepare its statutory advice to government on pan-regional investment priorities for the North.

TfN produces annual monitoring reports setting out its targets and achievement against them to inform business planning priorities. It is proposed that TfN will use its annual report for 2025 to report on progress against the STP, drawing on the monitoring and evaluation framework provided with the STP.

A medium-term financial strategy is prepared and scrutinised by elected members to ensure it supports the ambition of the TfN Board.

A Business Plan that reflects member priorities supported by a fully funded budget is approved by the TfN Board, with input from the Constituent Authorities.

Annual accounts are produced within three months of the year end and an audit opinion on these and on the value for money position is provided by external auditors.

A risk has been identified and is being managed on the Corporate Risk Register in relation to the material variations from the funding /cost planning assumptions that underpin medium term funding levels. Mitigation actions include regular engagement with government officials through the sponsorship meetings, input into the multi-year spending review, an updated prioritised business plan, financial contingency planning and financial reporting on performance.

A Quarterly Operating Report (QOR) is produced to ensure that elected members, partners and stakeholders are aware of progress in relation to agreed priorities for work (as set out in the annual Business Plan). The QOR is presented to the TfN Board as part of the regular update by the Chief Executive Officer.

Other strategies and policy documents are developed by TfN officers collaborating with our partners and after approval by members, are normally available on the website. These strategies and documents are consistent with the STP and support the delivery of its ambitions.

The Executive Board and other officer reference groups are the means by which officers from the Constituent Authorities have the opportunity to help formulate TfN's strategies, policies, and proposals at an early stage.

B. Members and officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles.

Elected Members and TfN officers work closely together with clear agendas at meetings of the Board and Committees. Agenda setting arrangements are in place with regular meetings between Elected Members and TfN officers.

There is a clearly defined planning cycle for future meetings and there is a forward plan in place.

Officers attend all committee and board meetings to support the Elected Members and provide any advice needed.

Relationships between TfN officers and Elected Members are clearly defined and there is a member/officer protocol which is contained in the Constitution.

Schemes of delegation are in place to enable Committees, the Chief Executive Officer, Monitoring Officer, and Directors to work together effectively and make decisions in a transparent way.

Statutory officers with the appropriate skills and resources have been appointed and ensure appropriate advice is given on necessary financial and procedural matters.

We have clear Constitutional documents and a committee structure covering all aspects of TfN's activities. The Partnership Board brings together Elected members, business leaders from the private sector and other appropriate representative groups, to advise on strategic decisions.

The Chief Executive Officer and Deputy Chief Executive meet regularly with the Chair and two Vice-Chairs of the Board to discuss future business and current activities.

The Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee meets with the Chief Executive Officer twice yearly.

The Constitution sets out how TfN operates including standing orders, codes of conduct for officers and financial regulations.

The Constitution is reviewed annually, and internal audit also carry out investigations into selected areas of the organisation as part of an annual programme of work. Senior

Officers monitor changes to legislation and codes of practice to recommend updates to the Constitution and other documents to keep them up to date. A Scrutiny Committee comprising Elected Members from all the Constituent Authorities, has, within its terms of reference in the constitution, the ability to review any decision made by TfN.

We operate on a 'scrutiny first' basis so that Scrutiny Committee can examine and influence proposed decisions before they are taken.

TfN is committed to promoting Diversity and Inclusion across all areas of its business, which includes people leading the organisation and people working in it. A Diversity Action group, comprising officer representatives who report into Senior Management Team, which in turn reports to Operating Business Board (OBT), is in place to help promote understanding across the organisation and legal compliance.

A risk has been identified and managed on the Corporate Risk Register – namely that TfN may not work effectively as a partnership in relation to delivery of the STP vision ambitions and strategic transport investment priorities.

The risk mitigations have been effective and TfN has continued to enable Members to be clear on priorities for the North; for example, during 2024/25, in relation to Avanti service performance, and Northern Trains' performance.

C. Promoting values for TfN and demonstrating the values of good governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour.

TfN Members who are Elected Members of either a Combined or Local Authority are expected to adhere to the adopted Code of Conduct of their Local Authority while performing their duties in respect of TfN. Other co-opted members are expected to adhere to the Cabinet Office's Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies.

There have been no complaints received about any members or co-opted members.

We have adopted a Code of Conduct for Officers and a Protocol on Member /Officer Relations, to which all officers are expected to adhere. Serious breaches of these Codes by officers would be investigated under the organisation's disciplinary code. However, no breaches of code or protocol have been reported.

Our induction process for new TfN officers outlines the behaviours and values that are expected from them. The annual appraisal system adopted for TfN officers incorporates the behaviours and values as part of the review process.

We have a zero-tolerance approach to fraud and corruption and have adopted strong Anti-Fraud and Corruption and Whistleblowing Policies. The Whistleblowing Policy was reviewed in a previous Annual Governance Statement. No fraud or corruption has been uncovered in the past year and no complaints falling within the remit of the Whistleblowing Policy have been made or received.

The Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy is due to be reviewed in 2025. The outcome of the review will be included in a future Annual Governance Statement.

Elected Members are required to make a declaration of their disclosable pecuniary interests and to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests in the business of the meeting at the start of all TfN Board and Committee meetings, and to take no part in such business, and leave the meeting. The minutes of all meetings record any declarations of interest declared.

We have adopted a Code of Practice in relation to Gifts and Hospitality.

A register of Gifts and Hospitality is maintained by the Monitoring Officer. Guidance in relation to gifts and hospitality is included in the induction for new employees and ad hoc advice is available and provided, as necessary.

We have a Monitoring Officer who works with Elected Members and officers to ensure that we comply with our legal duties and all legal requirements.

The Monitoring Officer has statutory reporting responsibilities in relation to any unlawful decisions or maladministration and has not made any reports in relation to this matter.

The Section 151 Officer has responsibility for ensuring proper arrangements for financial management and has statutory reporting duties in respect of unlawful expenditure and financially imprudent decision making. The Section 151 officer has not made any reports.

All new TfN officers are subject to a robust induction process, and new elected members are offered an induction to familiarise themselves on our policy and procedures.

The three statutory officers - Section 151 Officer, Monitoring Officer, and Head of Paid Service - are members of TfN's OBT that meets monthly and in addition have regular fortnightly meetings to air relevant and/or emerging matters.

The legal and other implications associated with agenda items are included in all Board/Committee reports. There is no evidence, for example, in the form of complaints or challenges that the legal advice provided has been non-compliant.

D. Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and managing risks

Risk Management is incorporated within the activities of TfN.

TfN's risk management strategy was reviewed by SMT and endorsed by OBT in September 2024. The strategy is embedded throughout TfN, and no changes have been made during this review cycle.

We have a Risk Manager who is responsible for implementing our risk management strategy.

The Audit and Governance Committee is responsible for independently monitoring and assessing the adequacy and effectiveness of the risk management framework.

Risk management reviews and updates are performed regularly across all business activities and subsequently reported to internal management, Audit and Governance Committee, and the TfN Board.

A risk deep dive process has been implemented at Audit and Governance Committee meetings since November 2022.

The following deep dives have been undertaken for 2024/2025:

- Corporate risk 876 – TfN Cyber Security
- TfN Offer risks – functional and corporate

Any risks relevant to matters under consideration are outlined in reports to the TfN Board and Committees.

In 2024/2025, Internal Audit undertook an independent review/assurance in the following areas:

- NPR co-sponsorship arrangements
- NPR Tame Delivery Framework
- The TfN Offer; and
- Project Management Framework

We have put in place a strong system of financial governance to manage and control our financial affairs to protect the organisation and mitigate the risk of fraud. The Section 151 Officer has overall responsibility for ensuring the effectiveness of internal controls. The Section 151 Officer reports regularly to the Audit and Governance Committee and TfN Board.

We have adopted rigorous procurement approval procedures which ensure that all procurements comply with TfN’s Contract Procurement Rules. The Standing Orders, Financial Rules and Contract Procurement Rules are contained in the Constitution which is a requirement of local government legislation.

The IT and Information Manager is responsible for ensuring data is collected, stored, and used appropriately. This post and that of the Data Protection Officer reports indirectly to the Section 151 Officer who is also the Senior Information and Risk Officer (SIRO).

E. Developing the capacity and capability of members and officers to be effective

We seek to ensure all members and officers have the necessary skills and training to fulfil their roles. Members receive an induction programme when they are appointed, and this is supplemented by specialised training courses where appropriate. Officers are appointed using competency-based role profiles and selections processes and their performance against these competencies is regularly monitored and reviewed. A detailed learning and development plan ensures that training needs are met at both an individual and an organisational level.

Audit and Governance members undertook a review of self-assessment of good practice survey in line with CIPFA best practice.

The results of the 2023/2024 survey showed a medium to high level of effectiveness with a number of improvements being highlighted. These improvements are being addressed and included an Induction Pack for all Audit and Governance members and an Effectiveness Action Plan.

This survey is now undertaken on an annual basis and was conducted in March 2025 with the results reported in the 2025 /2026 Annual Governance Statement.

Mental Health first aiders have been appointed from members of staff to help and advise any member of staff suffering from mental health issues.

Corporate Induction Guidance includes a thorough initial corporate induction programme for all new officers, with additional information, guidance, and training for all new line managers.

All new employees are subject to a formal six-month probationary process where performance is assessed alongside the provision of initial learning and development support and guidance.

Key Performance objectives are captured in the online appraisal tool ‘PERFORM’ and training is delivered via the core curriculum of training.

Members of the Senior Management Team have undertaken leadership training, with this programme also having been rolled out to our more junior and aspiring leaders.

We hold regular wellbeing sessions for all employees addressing mental and physical health.

F. Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability

TfN Board and committee agendas and minutes are publicly available on our website.

TfN Board and committee meetings are open to the public. Meetings of the TfN Board and Rail North Committee are live streamed to enable broader access to them.

The membership of the Partnership Board is broader to ensure that it is representative of wider interests, including in relation to the environment and the interests of the travelling public.

Our officers meet with parliamentarians, members and officers of other authorities, representatives of the Welsh and Scottish devolved governments, representatives of business organisations and transport providers (including freight and logistics), and other stakeholders, including attending All Party Parliamentary Groups (APPG) meetings, roundtable events, and targeted engagements with partners across the North and the rest of the UK.

We host podcasts and webinars from time to time, which include TfN officers, members and other relevant stakeholders. We also have a stakeholder newsletter, which is issued from time to time to provide updates on our work and engagement activities. This complements the information we make available on our website and social media channels.

We host the Northern Evidence Hub, a repository for research reports which ensures that local, regional, and national leaders can base decisions on the best possible evidence about the economy and potential future growth areas.

In January 2023, we established our citizens' panel called "Northern Transport Voices" as a means of ensuring that our work is informed by the widest possible views from our communities. Membership of the panel has recently expanded to nearly 2,000 members and will continue to support our evidence base and implementation of our key work streams.

Where necessary, we undertake public consultations on our work.

G. Having regard to the promotion of sustainable economic growth, and the social and environmental impacts of its proposals.

The STP was approved and adopted by the TfN Board Meeting on 20 March 2024. At its heart are three strategic ambitions that set out how the vision for the North is manifested in terms of economic, environmental, and social outcomes. This is based on evidence provided from our programme of technical research and other reputable sources.

This includes cutting edge elements of the Analytical Framework, ensuring the forecast economic and social impacts of the NPR networks selected by the Department for Transport for examination are clearly and strongly articulated.

The findings of the initial Northern Powerhouse Independent Economic Review (NPIER) published in 2016, established a transformational vision for the North's economy by 2050. To underpin the new STP, this work was refreshed and updated in 2023 to provide a more comprehensive picture of the North's economic opportunities.

Under the guidance of TfN's internal Employee Carbon Group, TfN has continued to successfully apply the procurement requirements in relation to carbon reduction, piloted during 2023. Additional guidance on how to implement these requirements has been included in TfN's new Contract Management Procedures, including a repository for carbon data that will be used to update TfN internal carbon footprint in 2026/27 (after a full year of data will have been collected). In addition, the group has also updated the TfN travel expenses policy to include a consideration of carbon impacts alongside financial implications of travel decisions.

In January 2023, we received an allocation of additional Department for Transport funding (for 2023/24 and 24/25) to use TfN capability to build a Common Analytical Framework (CAF) and to develop and publish a national online data tool, evidencing requirements for Electric Vehicle Charging infrastructure (EVCI). The CAF provides Sub National Transport Bodies, Mayoral Combined Authorities, County Combined Authorities and Local Transport Authorities with the opportunity to use established transport models and forecasting systems to generate evidence for Local Transport Plans and transport strategies. The EVCI tool is also made available – through the TfN Offer - for use by local authorities across the North.

The Analytical Framework reflects TfN’s commitment to evidence-based decision making and provides a consistent evidence base to support the decision-making process on the prioritisation of future interventions.

Reports to the TfN Board and committees contain an assessment of the implications of the report in terms of sustainability, environmental impact, and equality impact. In 2024 / 2025, we have appointed a number of Equality champions across TfN’s executive, and they have received external training on the Public Sector Equality Duty and Equality Impact Assessments.

In September 2023, the TfN Offer was launched to all local authorities and TfN’s evidence base can be used to support local partners in developing their Local Transport Plans and business cases. Since its launch in September 2023, to end of January 2025, the TfN Offer has fulfilled 120 requests in total. Through our ongoing monitoring and evaluation processes, we are able to estimate that TfN has realised savings for partners of at least c£540k by undertaking technical/analytical work through the TfN Offer. Moreover, it is conservatively estimated that the tools and capabilities produced by TfN have an equivalent development cost of c£5m.

H. Having regard for the impact of current decisions and actions on future generations

Consultation with our partners and appraisal and assessment, using our research and evidence base, Analytical Framework and Future Travel Scenarios is undertaken during the development of policies, the preparation of responses to consultations and in the drafting of advice to government, to consider, all views and the potential future consequences of current decisions.

We utilise our Northern Transport Voices citizens’ panel to ensure that the views of a diverse group of Northern residents are considered, including the young, when building our evidence and developing our policies.

We have a Scrutiny Committee made up of elected representatives from the Constituent Authorities. It adopts a “Scrutiny First” model, so all major decisions are subject to scrutiny before they are presented to the TfN Board, enabling the committee to influence TfN’s Board’s decisions before they are made.

5.0 Annual Review of the Effectiveness of the Governance Framework

The effectiveness of key elements of the governance framework is assessed throughout the year by the Chief Executive Officer and directors meeting as OBT, by SMT, by internal audit and by the Audit and Governance Committee. Significant risks are included in the QOR. The Risk Manager meets with service areas on a monthly and quarterly basis to review risks. Performance in relation to corporate risks is a standing item on the agenda of the Audit and Governance Committee and is reported twice a year to the TfN Board.

TfN has implemented a “three lines of defence” assurance framework which forms part of the risk management strategy. This framework is now embedded and applied across TfN.

The role of the Internal Auditor is to provide an independent assessment of the system of internal control. They undertake a cyclical review of the main financial and operational systems on a rolling three-year Audit Plan which is based on an analysis of where there is most risk.

The reviews which have been undertaken in 2024 /2025 have been given a substantial assurance rating.

6.0 Significant Governance Arrangements

This section considers any significant matters that have arisen during the year. This is by exception only.

Project Management Framework

We implemented new arrangements for project management in 2023/4 and in 2024/5 embedded these into our way of working. Guidance, templates, and procedures have been revised and new documents produced as needed to provide greater consistency across TfN executive that is proportionate for the size of organisation and nature of work. From April 2024 onwards, it is compulsory to apply this refreshed framework in setting up new projects/workstreams. This was widely communicated across the organisation to ensure relevant officers were briefed as needed. An internal audit review has been carried out in 2025 and has provided substantial assurance.

Project Management e-learning training will be rolled out to all staff by Spring 2025.

Management System Implementation

In 2024/2025, the TfN Executive undertook a Corporate Governance review to ensure the governance arrangements support our current and anticipated future challenges. Specific actions are captured in the improvement plan below.

Following the 24/25 review, a workstream was established to fully document TfN’s Management System, which covers policies, procedures, processes and guidance across all TfN functions. The following components make up the TfN Management System: Openness and transparency, Boards & Committees, Legal and Regulations, Human Resources, Skills & Facilities, Health and Safety, Information Technology, Finance, Procurement & Risk, Information Governance, Monitoring and Reporting. This has allowed us to identify areas for continuous improvement and clarify responsibilities and accountabilities amongst the TfN Executive to enable more effective and efficient management of operations.

7.0 Governance Improvement Plan for 2025/2026

Although no significant issues have been identified as a result of this year’s evaluation, we are committed to continually strengthening and improving our governance arrangements and, during 2025/2026, will particularly focus on the following key activities some of which may extend into 2026/2027.

| Area | Action to be taken |
|-------------------------|---|
| “Diversity of Thinking” | The TfN Board has highlighted the importance of having diversity of thinking, not just at the heart of the board meeting but as a core part of the way TfN goes about its work. |

| | |
|---|---|
| | At the Board meeting held on 20 March 2024 the measures currently in place to promote diversity of thinking were reviewed (including the use of Equality Impact Assessments as part of the Board report template). Several opportunities were identified to enhance diversity of thought, and these are set out in an updated approach to Communications and Engagement presented to the Board in March 2025. |
| Information Governance | Building on work over the last year to update and refine our information policies, we have established an Information Governance Framework to bring all relevant policies, processes, and systems together. This has identified areas for further strengthening and clarification of accountabilities and responsibilities, for which we have an agreed action plan in place to address. |
| Constitutional Review | A review has been undertaken which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • allows the consequence of the reduction in Constituent Authorities as a result of devolution agreements on the formation of the TfN Board, Rail North Committee and General Purposes Committee to be considered • amends the Contract Procurement Rules to comply with the new Procurement Act 2023 • Introduces the right for the appointment of substitute members in the Audit and Governance Committee. |
| Encouraging attendance of elected members at Audit and Governance Committee | We have engaged with Constituent Authorities to further encourage Committee members to make time for meetings. Continuing the work, we are undertaking to recruit new members and substitute members. |
| Equality Impact Assessments | Building on work over the last year to update and refine our Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs), we are ensuring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where applicable, EqIAs are undertaken and captured in all TfN Board reports • TfN’s equality champions deliver against their agreed remit • We implement a process for monitoring, tracking, updating, and logging the assessments. |

8.0 Conclusion

At TfN, we are committed to the principles of good governance as identified in Delivering Good Governance in the Local Government Framework 2016.

The governance arrangements and evidence described above have been applied throughout the year and up to the date of the Annual Accounts providing an effective, fit for purpose framework for governance, identifying governance issues and taking mitigating action. Transport for the North will continue to keep governance arrangements under review to ensure they remain effective.

Glossary

ACCOUNTING PERIOD

The period of time covered by the accounts, normally a period of twelve months commencing on 1 April. The end of the accounting period is the Balance Sheet date.

ACCRUALS

Sums included in the final accounts to recognise revenue and capital income and expenditure earned or incurred in the financial year, but for which actual payment had not been received or made as at 31 March.

ACTUARIAL GAINS AND LOSSES

For a defined benefit pension scheme, the changes in actuarial surpluses or deficits that arise because

- Events have not coincided with the actuarial assumptions made for the last valuation (experience gains and losses) or
- The actuarial assumptions have changed

ASSET

An item having value to the authority in monetary terms. Assets are categorised as either current or non-current

- A current asset will be consumed or cease to have material value within the next financial year (e.g. cash and stock)
- A non-current asset provides benefits to the Authority and to the services it provides for a period of more than one year and may be tangible e.g. a community centre, or intangible, e.g. computer software licences.

AUDIT OF ACCOUNTS

An independent examination of the Authority's financial affairs.

BALANCE SHEET

A statement of the recorded assets, liabilities and other balances at the end of the accounting period.

BORROWING

Using cash provided by another party to pay for expenditure, on the basis of an agreement to repay the cash at a future point, usually incurring additional interest charges over and above the original amount.

BUDGET

The forecast of net revenue and capital expenditure over the accounting period.

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

Expenditure on the acquisition of a fixed asset, which will be used in providing services beyond the current accounting period, or expenditure which adds to and not merely maintains the value of an existing fixed asset.

CAPITAL FINANCING

Funds raised to pay for capital expenditure. There are various methods of financing capital expenditure including borrowing, leasing, direct revenue financing, usable capital receipts, capital grants, capital contributions, revenue reserves and earmarked reserves.

CAPITAL PROGRAMME

The capital schemes the Authority intends to carry out over a specific period of time.

CIPFA

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy

COMPREHENSIVE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT

The account of the Authority that reports the net cost for the year of the functions for which it is responsible and demonstrates how that cost has been financed from precepts, grants and other income.

CONSISTENCY

The concept that the accounting treatment of like items within an accounting period and from one period to the next are the same.

CONTINGENT ASSET

A contingent asset is a possible asset arising from past events whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the Authority's accounts.

CONTINGENT LIABILITY

A contingent liability is either:

- A possible obligation arising from past events whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the Authority's control or
- A present obligation arising from past events where it is not probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required, or the amount of the obligation cannot be measured with sufficient reliability.

CREDITOR

Amount owed by the Authority for work done, goods received, or services rendered within the accounting period, but for which payment has not been made by the end of that accounting period.

CURRENT SERVICE COST (PENSIONS)

The increase in the present value of a defined benefits pension scheme's liabilities, expected to arise from employee service in the current period.

DEBTOR

Amount owed to the Authority for works done, goods received, or services rendered within the accounting period, but for which payment has not been received by the end of that accounting period.

DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION SCHEME

Pension schemes in which the benefits received by the participants are independent of the contributions paid and are not directly related to the investments of the scheme.

AMORTISATION

The measure of the cost of wearing out, consumption or other reduction in the useful economic life of the Authority's fixed assets during the accounting period, whether from use, the passage of time or obsolescence through technical or other changes.

DISCRETIONARY BENEFITS (PENSIONS)

Retirement benefits, which the employer has no legal, contractual or constructive obligation to award and are awarded under the Authority's discretionary powers such as the Local Government (Discretionary Payments) Regulations 1996.

EQUITY

The Authority's value of total assets less total liabilities.

EVENTS AFTER THE BALANCE SHEET DATE

Events after the Balance Sheet date are those events, favourable or unfavourable, that occur between the Balance Sheet date and the date when the Statement of Accounts is authorised for issue.

EXPECTED RETURN ON PENSION ASSETS

For a funded defined benefit scheme, this is the average rate of return, including both income and changes in fair value but net of scheme expenses, which is expected over the remaining life of the related obligation on the actual assets held by the scheme.

FAIR VALUE

The fair value of an asset is the price at which it could be exchanged in an arm's length transaction.

FINANCE LEASE

A lease that transfers substantially all of the risks and rewards of ownership of a fixed asset to the lessee.

GOING CONCERN

The concept that the Statement of Accounts is prepared on the assumption that the Authority will continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future.

GOVERNMENT GRANTS

Grants made by the government towards either revenue or capital expenditure in return for past or future compliance with certain conditions relating to the activities of the Authority. These grants may be specific to a particular scheme or may support the revenue spend of the Authority in general.

IMPAIRMENT

A reduction in the value of a fixed asset to below its recoverable amount, the higher of the asset's fair value less costs to sell and its value in use.

INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS

Fixed assets belonging to the Authority that cannot be transferred or sold, on which expenditure is only recoverable by the continued use of the asset created. Examples are highways, footpaths and bridges.

INTANGIBLE ASSETS

An intangible (non-physical) item may be defined as an asset when access to the future economic benefits it represents is controlled by the reporting entity. This Authority's intangible assets comprise computer software licences.

INTEREST COST (PENSIONS)

For a defined benefit scheme, the expected increase during the period of the present value of the scheme liabilities because the benefits are one period closer to settlement.

INVESTMENTS (PENSION FUND)

The investments of the Pension Fund will be accounted for in the statements of that fund. However, authorities are also required to disclose, as part of the disclosure requirements relating to retirement benefits, the attributable share of the pension scheme assets associated with their underlying obligations.

LIABILITY

A liability is where the Authority owes payment to an individual or another organisation.

- A current liability is an amount which will become payable or could be called in within the next accounting period, e.g. creditors or cash overdrawn
- A deferred liability is an amount which by arrangement is payable beyond the next year at some point in the future or to be paid off by an annual sum over a period of time.

LIQUID RESOURCES

Current asset investments that are readily disposable by the Authority without disrupting its business and are either:

- Readily convertible to known amounts of cash at or close to the carrying amount or
- Traded in an active market.

LONG-TERM CONTRACT

A contract entered into for the design, manufacture or construction of a single substantial asset or the provision of a service (or a combination of assets or services which together constitute a single project), where the time taken to substantially complete the contract is such that the contract activity falls into more than one accounting period.

MATERIALITY

The concept that the Statement of Accounts should include all amounts which, if omitted, or mis-stated, could be expected to lead to a distortion of the financial statements and ultimately mislead a user of the accounts.

NET BOOK VALUE

The amount at which fixed assets are included in the Balance Sheet, i.e. their historical costs or current value less the cumulative amounts provided for amortisation.

NET DEBT

The Authority's borrowings less cash and liquid resources.

NON-DISTRIBUTED COSTS

These are overheads for which no user now benefits and as such are not apportioned to services.

NON-OPERATIONAL ASSETS

Fixed assets held by the Authority but not directly occupied, used or consumed in the delivery of services. Examples are investment properties, assets under construction or assets surplus to requirements pending sale or redevelopment.

OPERATING LEASE

A lease where the ownership of the fixed asset remains with the lessor.

OPERATIONAL ASSETS

Fixed assets held and occupied, used or consumed by the Authority in the pursuit of its strategy and in the direct delivery of those services for which it has either a statutory or discretionary responsibility.

PAST SERVICE COST (PENSIONS)

For a defined benefit pension scheme, the increase in the present value of the scheme liabilities related to employee service in prior periods arising in the current period as a result of the introduction of, or improvement to retirement benefits.

PENSION SCHEME LIABILITIES

The liabilities of a defined benefit pension scheme for outgoings due after the valuation date. Scheme liabilities measured during the projected unit method reflect the benefits that the employer is committed to provide for service up to the valuation date.

PROVISION

An amount put aside in the accounts for future liabilities or losses which are certain or very likely to occur but the amounts or dates of when they will arise are uncertain.

RELATED PARTIES

There is a detailed definition of related parties in FRS 8. For the TfN's purposes related parties are deemed to include the Authority's members, the Chief Executive, its Directors and their close family and household members.

RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

The Statement Of Recommended Practice requires the disclosure of any material transactions between the Authority and related parties to ensure that stakeholders are aware when these transactions occur and the amount and implications of such.

REMUNERATION

All sums paid to or receivable by an employee and sums due by way of expenses allowances (as far as those sums are chargeable to UK income tax) and the money value of any other benefits. Received other than in cash. Pension contributions payable by the employer are excluded.

RESERVES

The accumulation of surpluses, deficits and appropriations over past years. Reserves of a revenue nature are available and can be spent or earmarked at the discretion of the Authority. Some capital reserves such as the fixed asset restatement account cannot be used to meet current expenditure.

RESIDUAL VALUE

The net realisable value of an asset at the end of its useful life.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

All forms of consideration given by an employer in exchange for services rendered by employees that are payable after the completion of employment.

REVENUE EXPENDITURE

The day-to-day expenses of providing services.

REVENUE EXPENDITURE CAPITALISED UNDER STATUTE (REFCUS)

Expenditure which ordinarily would be revenue but is statutorily defined as capital. Examples of REFCUS include grants of a capital nature to voluntary organisations and back pay expenditure capitalised under Secretary of State Direction.

USEFUL ECONOMIC LIFE (UEL)

The period over which the Authority will derive benefits from the use of a fixed asset.

Independent auditor's report to the members of Transport for the North

Report on the audit of the financial statements

Opinion on the financial statements

We have audited the financial statements of Transport for the North ('TfN') for the year ended 31 March 2025, which comprise the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, the Movement in Reserves Statement, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including material accounting policy information.

The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2024/25.

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the financial position of the TfN as at 31st March 2025 and of its expenditure and income for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2024/25.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the "Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements" section of our report. We are independent of the TfN in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Section 151 Officer's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, and taking into account the requirements of the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2024/25, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the TfN's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Section 151 Officer with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the Statement of Accounts, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The Section 151 Officer is responsible for the other information. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover

the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements, or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Responsibilities of the Section 151 Officer for the financial statements

The Section 151 Officer is responsible for the preparation of the Statement of Accounts, which includes the financial statements, in accordance with proper practices as set out in the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2024/25, and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view. The Section 151 Officer is also responsible for such internal control as the Section 151 Officer determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

The Section 151 Officer is required to comply with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2024/25 and prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis on the assumption that the functions of the TfN will continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. The Section 151 Officer is responsible for assessing each year whether or not it is appropriate for the TfN to prepare its accounts on the going concern basis and disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud.

Based on our understanding of the TfN, we considered that non-compliance with the following laws and regulations might have a material effect on the financial statements: employment regulation, health and safety regulation, anti-money laundering regulation, data protection, environmental protection, corruption and anti-bribery, non-compliance with implementation of government support schemes relating to COVID-19.

To help us identify instances of non-compliance with these laws and regulations, and in identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect to non-compliance, our procedures included, but were not limited to:

- gaining an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework applicable to the TfN, the environment in which it operates, and the structure of the TfN, and considering the risk of acts by the TfN which were contrary to the applicable laws and regulations, including fraud;
- inquiring with management and the Audit and Governance Committee, as to whether the TfN is in compliance with laws and regulations, and discussing their policies and procedures regarding compliance with laws and regulations;
- inspecting correspondence, if any, with relevant licensing or regulatory authorities;
- reviewing relevant meeting minutes in the year;
- communicating identified laws and regulations throughout our engagement team and remaining alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout our audit; and
- considering the risk of acts by the TfN which were contrary to applicable laws and regulations, including fraud

We also considered those laws and regulations that have a direct effect on the preparation of the financial statements, such as the Local Government Act 2003 (and associated regulations made under section 21), the Local Government Finance Acts of 1988, 1992 and 2012, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

In addition, we evaluated management’s incentives and opportunities for fraudulent manipulation of the financial statements (including the risk of override of controls) and determined that the principal risks were related to posting manual journal entries to manipulate financial performance, management bias through judgements and assumptions in significant accounting estimates.

Our audit procedures in relation to fraud included but were not limited to:

- making enquiries of management and the Audit and Governance Committee on whether they had knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud;
- gaining an understanding of the internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud;
- discussing amongst the engagement team the risks of fraud; and
- addressing the risks of fraud through management override of controls by performing journal entry testing.

There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above and the primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of irregularities including fraud, rests with both management and the Audit and Governance Committee. As with any audit, there remained a risk of non-detection of irregularities, as these may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal controls.

We are also required to conclude on whether the Section 151 Officer’s use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate. We performed our work in accordance with Practice Note 10: Audit of financial statements and regularity of

public sector bodies in the United Kingdom, (Revised 2024) and Supplementary Guidance Note 01, issued by the National Audit Office in November 2024.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council’s website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor’s report.

Report on the TfN’s arrangements for securing economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in its use of resources

Matter on which we are required to report by exception.

We are required to report to you if, in our view we are not satisfied that TfN has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2025.

On the basis of our work, having regard to the guidance issued by the Comptroller and Auditor General in November 2024, we have identified the following significant weakness in Transport for the North’s arrangements in relation to Governance for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Governance – ensuring appropriate processes are in place to support timely and accurate financial reporting to support budgetary control

| Significant weakness in arrangements | Recommendation |
|--|--|
| <p>Weakness in Financial Reporting</p> <p>Transport for the North has faced significant challenges in preparing its draft Statement of Accounts for 2024/25. Transport for the North published their accounts by the 30 June 2025 deadline, however the version published contained incomplete disclosures and material disclosure errors relating to the implementation of IFRS 16 and the application of an asset ceiling to the defined benefit pension liability. The draft statement of accounts was signed off by the s151 Officer as giving a true and fair view of Transport for the North’s financial position despite being aware of these issues. We consider the findings to be evidence of a significant weakness in the body’s arrangements for governance, specifically ensuring appropriate processes and systems are in place to support its statutory financial reporting requirements.</p> | <p>Transport for the North should review and strengthen its financial accounts preparation and review processes to ensure they are sufficiently robust to support timely and accurate financial reporting.</p> <p>Review the capacity within the body’s Finance team to build resilience into the accounts production and financial reporting processes.</p> |

Responsibilities of the TfN

The TfN is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in its use of resources, to ensure proper stewardship and governance, and to review regularly the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements.

Auditor's responsibilities for the review of arrangements for securing economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in the use of resources

We are required under Section 20(1)(c) of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 to satisfy ourselves that the TfN has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in its use of resources. We are not required to consider, nor have we considered, whether all aspects of the TfN's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in its use of resources are operating effectively.

We have undertaken our work in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice, having regard to the guidance issued by the Comptroller and Auditor General in November 2024.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception under the Code of Audit Practice

We are required by the Code of Audit Practice to report to you if:

- we issue a report in the public interest under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014;
- we make a recommendation under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014; or
- we exercise any other special powers of the auditor under sections 28, 29 or 31 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

We have nothing to report in these respects.

Use of the audit report

This report is made solely to the members of Transport for the North, as a body, in accordance with part 5 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies published by Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the members of the TfN those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the members of the TfN, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Delay in certification of completion of the audit

We cannot formally conclude the audit and issue an audit certificate until we have received confirmation from the NAO that the group audit of the Whole of Government Account has been completed and that no further work is required to be completed by us

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Daniel Watson'.

Daniel Watson,
Key Audit Partner For and on behalf of Forvis Mazars LLP (Local Auditor)
One St Peter's Square
Manchester
M2 3DE
Date: 27 March 2026



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