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1 October 2013

Dear Sir

Proposal for a Quality Contract in Tyne & Wear

I refer to your letter of 26 September 2013 requesting an extension of the current formal consultation period in respect of the Proposed Quality Contract from 5 November 2013 for at least another four weeks.

Nexus has also received a letter of 20 September from Arriva North East and a letter of 24 September from Messrs Herbert Smith Freehills on behalf of Stagecoach both requesting extensions to the consultation period of varying lengths. I note that each of the letters was copied to the other major bus operators.

Nexus has considered each of the requests for an extension carefully. I do not as currently advised consider that any extension is required.

Nexus is grateful to all of the statutory consultees who have been requested to participate in the current consultation process for the time and effort they are committing to responding fully and effectively within the current consultation period.

The 14 week consultation period was established taking due account of the summer holiday period and the length and complexity of the proposed QCS Proposal. Nexus considered that a 14 week period would be adequate and still considers that to be the position. The current position is that some five weeks of the 14 week consultation period are still outstanding. We consider that this should be more than adequate for all consultees to complete a full and effective review of the QCS Proposal and to respond to Nexus with comments.

None of the letters raise any specific issue which means that a specified period of additional time within which to respond to the consultation is required. It is clear to us that each of the statutory

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consultees has already had ample opportunity to undertake a detailed review of the Proposal. Nothing in any of the letters we have received leads us to believe that there has been or will be insufficient time for all statutory consultees to complete a full analysis of the Proposal and then respond substantively in the time now remaining. It follows that I do not see that there is any case for an extension based on the arguments that have been advanced.

If during or following the close of the consultation Nexus considers that further or extended consultation is required then this will be proposed. However, Nexus is also mindful that if following this stage of consultation the ITA decides to progress the QCS Proposal further, the next stage will be a full review of the Proposal before a QCS Board.

It follows that Nexus is not persuaded, based on the letters referred to above, that there is any need to agree to an extension of the consultation period at this time and/or to agree to an extension of the varying lengths proposed. If, at any stage, any consultee raises a specific issue or issues with Nexus and it is clear that further time may properly be required for that matter(s) to be considered and addressed in the context of the consultation then Nexus will respond appropriately

I hope this response has clarified matters.

Yours faithfully



Bernard Garner

Director General

