

Metro's new Operations Director brings 30 years of experience to the role

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The Tyne and Wear Metro has appointed a new operations director, who brings three decades of railway industry experience to the role.

John Alexander has taken over the responsibility for managing day to day services on the Metro network following a successful recruitment process.

Nexus, the public body which owns and manages Metro, said they had found the best candidate as the service recovers from lockdown – and prepares for the arrival of its new train fleet from 2023.

John, 45, who began his railway career as an apprentice engineer aged 16, has taken on the new challenge after spending the last ten years as manager of Northern Rail's Heaton depot in Newcastle.

He said: "I'm absolutely delighted to become the new operations director for the Tyne and Wear Metro.

"This is the fresh challenge that I was looking for. It's a wonderful opportunity for me to test myself working for such an iconic mass transport network.

"I've got a fantastic new team who are extremely knowledgeable and have a great deal of pride in the services that they deliver every day.

"I want to bring a disciplined approach to the role, and also let people develop so that I can get the best out of them. The most critical resource is the people that we have working for us."

John began his career as a British Rail apprentice in 1991, at a train depot in Gateshead.

It was from there that he went on to secure a full-time career in railways, going on to work in engineering and then leadership roles for Northern Rail.

He added: "I am making a move from rail engineering into the operations side of things. That is the challenge I was looking for and the skills are transferrable given that the two disciplines are so closely connected. I am really proud to take this on with the Tyne and Wear Metro.

"I can remember I was five years old when the Metro first opened and since then it has become embedded in the communities that it serves.

"The challenge is to make Metro great again. There is a realisation that we can make it better for the customers and I want to be a part of that.

"It is an exciting time to join Nexus, with new trains and a new depot on the way over the next few years, and I see myself being part of this new chapter for many years to come."

Photo credit: Nexus