

Doing Buses Differently: Consultation on a Proposed Franchising Scheme for Greater Manchester

Qualitative Research Summary Report

**Produced by Ipsos MORI for Transport for Greater
Manchester (instructed by Greater Manchester
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Summary of Key Insights

Purpose of the research

The Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) is proposing changes to how local bus services should be run across Greater Manchester in the future, specifically the introduction of a Proposed Bus Franchising Scheme. In order to allow statutory¹ consultees and other interested parties (including service users) the opportunity to comment on the proposed changes, GMCA instructed Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) who launched a public consultation (“the consultation”) on behalf of GMCA, which ran for just over 12 weeks from 12 noon on 14 October 2019 to 23:59 on 8 January 2020.

Alongside this, a programme of qualitative research was delivered by Ipsos MORI and overseen by TfGM to complement the consultation process. The purpose of this element was to gain a detailed understanding of what public transport users, taxpayers and small and medium sized businesses know about the current bus market and their thoughts on the Proposed Franchising Scheme in lieu of other reform options considered by GMCA in its assessment.

The findings of the qualitative research were analysed by Ipsos MORI and distilled into a report which will be produced alongside the results of the consultation.

Deliberative workshops and focus groups

Two deliberative workshops were held in Manchester city centre in November 2019. In addition to the deliberative workshops, six focus groups were carried out during December 2019. Three of these groups were carried out face-to-face, and three were conducted as online focus groups due to the geographical dispersal of the participants. The groups and workshops were designed to engage with a range of individuals who had varying experience of the Greater Manchester bus service i.e. frequent, infrequent, lapsed and non-users. Please see section 2 for a full breakdown of the events.

Summary of findings

Summary of overall opinion towards the Proposed Bus Franchising Scheme

- On the whole, participants in all strands of the qualitative research were in agreement with the case to reform the bus market in Greater Manchester. The wide variation in service provision, the perceived unreliability of buses, the lack of integration with the wider transport network and the need for standardised pricing were all identified as reasons why the bus market is currently not operating as well as it could be;
- There was broad support for the Proposed Franchising Scheme as a solution to reform the bus market. A majority of participants supported the Scheme from what they were told and understood;

¹ Statutory consultees are organisations and bodies, defined by statute, which GMCA was legally required to consult with before reaching a decision on how local bus services should be run across Greater Manchester in future.

- Certain elements of the Proposed Franchising Scheme caused concern amongst participants. These mainly centred around the Economic and Financial Cases, including the higher upfront cost to establish the Scheme (relative to alternative options) and who was going to pay for it – in particular, the impact on Council Tax payers was an issue for some, including whether other services would be denied funding as a result. There was also confusion around Net Present Value (NPV), which led to some scepticism around the benefits presented;
- However, the benefits of the Scheme were clear to those who supported it. Few participants altered their overall view in support of the Scheme, mainly because of the positive outcomes for bus users in terms of consistent pricing and integrated ticketing, the positive impact on the wider Greater Manchester economy and the integration of the bus market with other forms of transport.

Buses in Greater Manchester: current challenges

- Most participants thought that buses are an important part of the public transport system in Greater Manchester, but current provision varied greatly depending on the operator and area;
- There was very limited awareness of the current deregulated model, with many believing there was already central co-ordination of provision through other bodies such as GMCA or TFGM. There was an appetite for a more centralised model, as the high level of variation in standards, and the complexity of current pricing, were considered problematic for bus users and potential bus users;
- Participants identified that the variation in service provision across Greater Manchester meant that some routes were well catered for by a number of bus operators whilst others were serviced infrequently, if at all; and
- One of the key barriers to using buses was their perceived unreliability. Most had experienced buses not arriving as scheduled, infrequent buses being over-full and not stopping and buses stuck in traffic. Many compared this with trams where the service was perceived to be much more reliable, with better, real-time information about how long a journey would take. Online data about buses was also perceived to be unreliable.
- Overall, there was **broad support amongst participants** that the bus network was not performing as well as it could do.

Reforming the bus market

- There was general support for moving away from a commercial model and participants were quick to appreciate the improvements they might experience as a result of the proposed changes;
- People liked the idea of an integrated transport system where modes and connecting buses work together more efficiently to connect people in a reliable way;
- The proposed changes to a standardised pricing strategy, and simplified ticketing to be used across all buses were welcomed by participants, who said it would make their lives easier. Alongside this, participants welcomed the potential for better routes. Businesses overwhelmingly agreed that

employees would approve of the proposals and that both employees and employers would benefit from them;

- However, there were reservations from individuals about the finances and costing of the proposal. Beyond the initial reservations, participants raised concerns about how the service would be affected, the impact on the cost of a ticket and the potential for 'monopolisation' of a few operators versus the current deregulated system, as well as risk to employees of bus companies, particularly the potential for job losses.
- Businesses expressed concerns about operators adhering to standards that they should already be achieving under the current system (but are not). In other words, they were already starting from a low bar and providing a sub-standard service.

Current public sector funding

- Across all groups, there was limited awareness of current funding arrangements generally, including levels of investment, where this investment comes from or the scale of public contributions to the bus network as a whole;
- There was surprise that operators don't contribute more through re-investment, coupled with the assumption that they should and could afford to do so;
- Although there was general agreement that route subsidisation may be necessary in order to fulfil public need, some people thought that operators should take responsibility for this and have a duty to provide subsidised routes as service providers;
- Concessionary passes are popular, particularly amongst those who currently benefit from them, with concern about how the Proposed Franchising Scheme may impact their availability and coverage; and
- In order to fulfil sustainability objectives, more should be done to encourage people onto public transport generally (including buses) and concessionary fares are seen as a means of achieving this with certain groups in particular who make decisions based upon cost.

The Economic Case

- The Economic Case put forward was hard for the public to grasp. Participants found it very difficult to understand Net Present Value (NPV) and there was scepticism around the benefits presented;
- Participants immediately wanted to know who was going to pay for the initial investment, raising concerns that it would be the taxpayer;
- One of the most convincing elements of the Economic Case was the convenience that will be passed on to the passenger in terms of consistent pricing and integrated ticketing;
- The Proposed Franchising Scheme was also seen as being good for the economy in that it connected residents for employment as well as having environmental and social benefits for example by being able to control vehicle standards and emissions;

- There was a broad acceptance that in order to get the best service, there would need to be some large upfront investment. However, the initial cost outlay of £134.5m was seen as substantial, which made some people hesitant about the proposal;
- Businesses particularly, highlighted issues around less profitable routes and how these would be serviced under the Proposed Franchising Scheme. There were concerns that the Scheme overall wouldn't work on the basis that it would be unsustainable due to low profit margins;
- The forecast for patronage was met with a mixed response. Some groups responded to the figures with great surprise, while for others the drop in patronage was in line with their expectations. Many groups could see the potential for the Proposed Franchising Scheme to arrest the level of decline in patronage; and
- It is detailed in the Proposed Franchising Scheme that a franchising model will provide a better platform for Phase 2 interventions in the future to further improve the bus services. As part of this discussion, some participants were keen to see that the Scheme is reviewed as it progresses to ensure adaptations are made when things change and any poor performance from franchisees is addressed. Some individuals also expressed a wish that these further interventions took account of the whole public transport network.

The Financial Case

- Participants in the workshops and groups found this topic challenging to understand and had a lot of follow-up questions. They were particularly keen to understand what exactly the taxpayer money would be used for, how confident GMCA are in the numbers presented and what contingency plans were in place if the Financial Case was not correct;
- Participants in the deliberative workshops were split between those who thought this was a good use of Council Tax and/or GMCA resources more generally because it would improve public transport, and those who thought the money would be better spent elsewhere. These views were not necessarily related to current bus usage as some bus users were worried about double-paying (through fares and taxes) while some non-users thought the investment would be worthwhile for the wider benefits, even if they did not use them personally;
- Many were keen to emphasise the importance of not re-purposing funds already allocated to other council services, such as social care, in order to pay for these changes. Their support for the Proposed Franchising Scheme was contingent on it not leading to cuts in other services, as well as the Scheme realising the benefits described in the consultation; and
- Most believed the proposed rises in Council Tax would be affordable to them, but they were concerned that if this was just one increase among a raft of other incremental rises in their Council Tax to fund other local authority priorities, then people may struggle to pay.

1 Introduction and research objectives

1.1 Purpose of this report

Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) is proposing changes to how local bus services should be run across Greater Manchester in the future. Specifically, this includes the introduction of a Proposed Bus Franchising Scheme (“the Scheme”).

In order to allow statutory² consultees and other interested parties (including service users) the opportunity to comment on the proposed changes, GMCA launched a public consultation (“the consultation”). The consultation ran for just over 12 weeks from 12 noon on 14 October 2019 to 23:59 on 8 January 2020.

Alongside this, a programme of qualitative research was carried out to complement the consultation process and to explore the Proposed Franchising Scheme with members of the public and other key interest groups, including businesses, young people and those residing outside of Greater Manchester in neighbouring authorities. This report presents the key insights from the qualitative research which was undertaken.

The findings of the qualitative research were analysed by Ipsos MORI and distilled into a report which will be produced alongside the results of the consultation.

1.2 Context

The Bus Services Act 2017 amended the provisions of the Transport Act 2000 (“the Act”) and provides new franchising and partnership powers with the aim of strengthening, and in some circumstances, reforming, the operation of local bus services in England.

The Act contains powers for Mayoral combined authorities to create Bus Franchising Schemes in their regions. Following the introduction of the Act, GMCA considered the use of the new franchising powers and decided to prepare an assessment of a Proposed Franchising Scheme in accordance with sections 123B and section 123C (4) of the Act. The assessment took the form of a five-model business case in line with Guidance issued by the Secretary of State for Transport.

Having met the various requirements of the Act and The Department for Transport’s (DfT) Franchising Scheme Guidance (“the Guidance”), such as including an assessment of partnership and do minimum alternatives, the Scheme was determined as the preferred option for Greater Manchester and that a statutory consultation should be carried out. Guidance issued by the Secretary of State for Transport covered what should be included in the consultation. TfGM, on behalf of the GMCA has taken such guidance into account and has undertaken a statutory consultation on a proposal to replace the current

² Statutory consultees are organisations and bodies, defined by statute, which GMCA was legally required to consult with before reaching a decision on how local bus services should be run across Greater Manchester in future.

system of deregulated bus services with the Scheme, in which all bus services continue to be operated by private companies but under contract to GMCA.

TfGM have reviewed the consultation responses and TfGM has now finalised its report on the consultation. As the consultation closed before the outbreak of COVID-19 and any effects of COVID-19 on the bus market in particular and the economy more generally manifested themselves, the consultation did not address those matters. Consideration of this would need to be carried out by TfGM on behalf of GMCA before any decision could be taken by the Mayor as to whether or not to make the Proposed Franchising Scheme (with or without modifications).

Why GMCA believes changes are necessary

GMCA believes that the current system is disadvantageous to users and detracts from its ambition to provide world class public transport across Greater Manchester as set out in the Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040.³ As set out in Section 4.18 in the consultation document, GMCA is of the opinion that the current system offers limited competition which results in:

- **Fare increases.** Fares have increased above inflation between 2003 and 2017, and recent increases have confirmed this trend, although some of the increase may be attributable to increases in cost factors.
- **Lack of co-ordination of networks.** Firms operate individual networks that are not co-ordinated with each other's or with the wider transport network, particularly with the Greater Manchester's rail and the Metrolink system.
- **Services for social and economic need are not provided where they are not profitable.** This can reduce the utility of the network as a whole for passengers as evening and weekend services cannot be provided, which in some cases leads GMCA to have to step in and fund a replacement service.
- **Complex fares and ticketing arrangements.** The market does not incentivise integrated fares as operators seek to keep passengers on their own buses and networks. This creates a confusing picture for passengers with a vast range of tickets available for trips, often at different prices.

Subject to the outcome of the consultation and as part of Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040, GMCA believes that the introduction of the Scheme would align with its ambitions for network integration, provision of a simplified and integrated fares system, a consistent customer experience, and value for money. If the proposed changes are implemented, such ambitions could be realised given that bus services throughout Greater Manchester would come under local authority control, with GMCA deciding on which bus routes to run in the interests of service users.

1.3 Objectives of the qualitative research

The insights from the qualitative research will accompany a separate report by GMCA on its consultation. The objectives of the qualitative strand of research were to:

³ <https://tfgm.com/2040>

- Discover levels of knowledge and interest about who runs the buses in Greater Manchester;
- Present balanced arguments for and against franchising and other models or provision, such as partnership between operators and local authorities;
- Understanding views on the Economic and Financial Case in the Proposed Franchising Scheme, including the funding proposal
- Test views on the Proposed Franchising Scheme and how these change as people are provided with more information;
- Understand specific concerns about franchising and ways of making it a more attractive proposition; and
- Obtain feedback on the Proposed Franchising Scheme.

1.4 The need for qualitative research

Given that levels of knowledge and interest in how bus services are planned and run were expected to be low (based on previous TfGM research), GMCA was keen to conduct qualitative research having provided participants with the detail of how the current deregulated system of bus provision works and how any potential alternative models, such as partnerships and the Proposed Franchising Scheme, would work. They also wanted a forum in which participants could ask technical questions and then respond from an informed viewpoint. To this end, the qualitative research was a combination of deliberative workshops and focus group discussions.

1.5 The purpose of deliberative workshops

Deliberative workshops are designed to allow the detailed presentation of particular issues. In this case, a range of participants were recruited to attend a full day (10am until 3.15pm) which meant they could receive information about the Proposed Franchising Scheme and then be given an opportunity to express their spontaneous and then informed opinions, both within plenary sessions but also in small group formats. Recruitment quotas were set on gender, age, ethnicity, disability and socio-economic group to ensure a broadly representative mix of individuals from Greater Manchester participated. There was also a range of users, lapsed-users and non-users of public transport and a mix of frequent and infrequent bus users to ensure that a range of individuals with different experiences came together to share their views. Finally, quotas on local authority residence ensured that there was balanced representation from each of the ten boroughs in Greater Manchester.

1.6 The purpose of focus groups

GMCA also wanted to engage with some specific target groups as part of this qualitative research strand. These groups included young people, those residing outside of Greater Manchester and small and medium size businesses within Greater Manchester. There were a number of reasons why it was felt that these groups should be engaged separately rather than included in the deliberative workshops, specifically:

- **Young people** in our experience can be overwhelmed and reluctant to speak out in large scale events. They are much more likely to feel comfortable amongst their peers. Furthermore, young people will have particular views about public transport and buses in particular, which offer early independence. Their reliance on buses will vary depending on family circumstance and we therefore would explore these specific issues in more detail which would not fit well in a large-scale forum;
- **Business owners** and managers have the greatest time pressures and it is unlikely that they would commit to a five-hour workshop. There are specific issues to explore for businesses, specifically around access to workforce and (transport of goods/services) which are separate to the interests of the wider population; and
- **Cross-boundary users** may have struggled to attend groups in Manchester city centre for practical logistical reasons. As residents outside of the Combined Authority their perspectives are also considered to be different and would therefore require a tailored discussion.

A series of focus groups were held with these groups. These groups were shorter in length compared to the deliberative workshops. Given this, it was impractical to present the same level of detail about bus reform and the Proposed Franchising Scheme within these groups compared to the deliberative workshops. The discussion within each group was therefore tailored to cover specific issues which were of interest to each target group (see section 2.5 for more detail on the specific issues covered for each group).

1.7 Structure of the report

Given the deliberative sessions covered the proposals in the greatest level of detail, the content of this report is predominantly reporting on the insights from these participants. Insights from the focus groups are also included for each section where relevant, but not every area of deliberation within the workshops was covered in the focus groups. Therefore, if there are no insights from young people, those living outside of Greater Manchester or small and medium size businesses, then this is because opinions were not sought from those particular groups as part of the focus group discussion since specific issues were focussed on in each. For reference, the structure and content of the deliberative workshops and the focus groups are appended to this document.

The report is structured in the following way:

- **Section 2** - summarises the approach to the qualitative research, including timings, venue selection, recruitment of participants and analysis;
- **Section 3** - Summary of insights into current challenges with the bus market in Greater Manchester;
- **Section 4** – Summary of insights into reforming the bus market;
- **Section 5** – Summary of insights into current public sector funding;

- **Section 6** – Summary of insights about the Economic Case and its conclusion; and
- **Section 7** – Summary of findings about the Financial Case and its conclusion.

2 Methodology

2.1 Introduction

This section summarises the approach to the qualitative research, including timings, venue selection, recruitment of participants and analysis.

2.2 Timetable of engagement events

Two deliberative workshops were held at the Holiday Inn in Manchester city centre on Saturday 23rd and Saturday 30th November 2019. The venue was chosen to be in the city centre of Manchester in order to maximise the potential of participants from each of the 10 Greater Manchester authorities to be able to travel to participate.

Both workshops were attended by a representative from TfGM – the Head of Policy attended on 23rd November and the Head of Consultations and Engagement attended on 30th November. Each representative presented key detail from the Proposed Bus Franchising Scheme (see Appendix C) and responded to clarification questions from participants during the course of the days.

In addition to the deliberative workshops, six focus groups were carried out during December 2019. Three of these groups were carried out face-to-face, and three were conducted as online focus groups due to the geographical dispersal of the participants.

Table 2.1: Summary of engagement events

Event	Participant summary
Deliberative workshop 1	80 members of the public (40 per workshop), all living within Greater Manchester
Deliberative workshop 2	
Focus group 1 (face-to-face)	Eight 11-15-year olds from across Greater Manchester
Focus group 2 (face-to-face)	Eight 16-18-year olds from across Greater Manchester
Focus group 3 (face-to-face)	Eight 19-20-year olds from across Greater Manchester
Online focus group 1	17 residents who live outside of Greater Manchester but travel in for either work or social purposes with varying frequency
Online focus group 2	13 owners of small businesses, employing between 1-15 employees
Online focus group 3	15 senior managers from medium sized businesses employing 51 members of staff

2.3 Recruitment

All participants were recruited by Ipsos MORI specialist recruiters. A purposive sampling approach was adopted, whereby key quotas were set, and participants were recruited according to these using a screening questionnaire.

For the deliberative workshops, minimum quotas were set for key demographic criteria including gender, age, ethnicity, disability, area of Greater Manchester in which they resided, social grade, type of bus user, travel preferences and whether they had access to a car.

The focus groups had specific target participants. For the young people groups, the main criterion was participants' age, with all falling within a target age band. In addition, monitoring quotas were set to ensure a spread from across Greater Manchester.

For the business focus groups, businesses were recruited according to their size, specifically the number of employees. Additional monitoring quotas were set around business sector, whether the business ran shifts and whether the business had retail outlets. A good mix was achieved based on these criteria.

A full profile of participants for both the deliberative workshops and the focus groups can be found in the appendices.

2.4 Structure of the deliberative workshops

A discussion guide was developed for the deliberative workshops. This detailed the key timings of the event, structured the areas of discussion for each part of the day and outlined the issues which were to be presented by TfGM and subsequently discussed within the workshops.

The discussion guide was developed in partnership with TfGM. It focussed on some of the core questions included in the short consultation questionnaire, specifically concerning the Strategic Case, the Financial Case and the Economic Case, including current public sector funding and future funding sources:

- **The case for reform** – this gave participants the opportunity to talk about their experiences and/or perceptions of buses in Greater Manchester at present. It covered the importance of buses as a mode of transport, tested understanding of how the bus network currently operates and the importance of integrating it with other forms of transport;
- **The challenges facing the local bus market** – TfGM presented the challenges facing the bus market as presented in the Strategic Case (along with the 'Doing Buses Differently' video which presented a high-level view of the case for change and the Proposed Franchising Scheme). The subsequent discussion tested if participants think that reforming the market is the correct thing to do;
- **Introduction of reform options** – TfGM presented the options which have been assessed in GMCA's assessment of a Proposed Franchising Scheme;

- **Public sector funding** – TfGM presented how buses are currently funded and the discussion tested opinion on whether GMCA needs to subsidise certain routes and invest in the bus network for social value;
- **The Economic Case** – TfGM presented the Economic Case, which concludes that the Scheme provides the best value for money compared to the options considered. This included a presentation of the future year ridership forecasts and a discussion around the potential need to intervene further into the bus network in the future;
- **The Financial Case** – TfGM presented the Financial Case, which includes the funding requirement, the three pillars of funding, an explanation of the funding sources and the implications for Council Tax-payers. Subsequent discussion sought to understand opinion towards the Financial Case; and
- **Overall discussion about the Scheme** – this gave an opportunity for participants to clarify any information they had heard during the day, before discussing their overall opinions about the Scheme and the reasons underpinning these. Participants were also asked if they thought any changes could be made to the Scheme which would improve it, and what these were.

The full discussion guide is included in the Appendix.

Voting in the deliberative events

Participants in the deliberative events were asked to record their response to the following question at regular intervals throughout the day long session: *'To what extent do you support or oppose the introduction of the Proposed Franchising Scheme?'* Participants were given five response options – strongly support, tend to support, neither support nor oppose, tend to oppose or strongly oppose. Votes took place at three points during the day:

1. At the introduction of reform options (after participants had been presented with *How buses are run now* (p13 of the Consultation Document) and *Reforming the bus market – the options*);
2. After the presentation and discussion around the financial and economic cases; and
3. At the end of the day.

The purpose of the votes was to assist the Ipsos MORI moderators when prompting participants' reaction and to use any change in opinion as a lead in to probing what specific piece of information had changed their minds. It also allowed moderators to probe why participants had not changed their minds as they were presented with new and additional information about the Proposed Franchising Scheme. Where specific detail of the Proposed Franchising Scheme led to a variance in opinion this is summarised in the relevant sections of the report.

However, the overall voting (in terms of numbers who voted for each option) is not reported as quantifying support or opposition for the Proposed Franchising Scheme as this was not the purpose of the deliberative events.

A summary of the voting scores is included in Appendix D for reference.

2.5 Structure of the focus groups

As referenced earlier in the report, the focus groups were shorter events than the immersive, deliberative workshops. They specifically targeted young people, those living outside of Greater Manchester and small and medium size businesses across Greater Manchester. The content was designed to cover the most relevant elements of bus reform proposals specific to them.

Focus groups with young people

Three discussion guides were developed, which differed in sophistication depending on the age profile of the participants. Discussions with young people covered the following key areas:

- **Current use of buses** - this gave participants the opportunity to talk about their experiences and/or perceptions of buses in Greater Manchester at the moment, and covered the network and frequency of buses, the wider service quality and the social aspect of buses;
- **Introduction of the Scheme** – participants were shown the 'Doing Buses Differently' video which presented a high-level view of the Scheme. Participants were then asked about the challenges facing the bus market and whether they thought that reforming the market was the correct thing to do;
- **The relevance of the proposed benefits of the Scheme** – what did they consider to be most important and why; and
- **Discussion around specific changes proposed in the Bus Franchising Scheme** – specifically this focussed on tangible impacts on young people, around ticketing, prices and routes and timetables.

The full discussion guide for each group is included in the Appendix.

Focus groups with businesses

Discussion guides were developed for the business focus groups which covered the following key areas:

- **Current use of buses** – this gave businesses the opportunity to talk about how important buses are for their business, employees and/or customers and how buses are run at the moment;
- **Introduction of the Scheme** – presentation of the challenges facing the bus market as presented in the Strategic Case to understand if participants thought that reforming the market was the correct thing to do;
- **The relevance of the proposed Benefits of the Bus Franchising Scheme** – what did they consider to be most important to their businesses and why; and
- **The Financial and Economic Cases** – presentation of the conclusion of the Economic Case and businesses' view towards it. This included a short presentation (delivered by the Ipsos MORI

moderator) of how the Scheme would be funded to understand opinions towards the proposed funding sources.

Focus groups with those living outside of Greater Manchester

Discussion guides were developed for the discussions with those living outside of Greater Manchester which covered the following key areas:

- **Current use of buses** – exploring current use of buses and what they use them for and why, including how buses are currently run;
- **Introduction of the Scheme** - presentation of the challenges facing the bus market as presented in the Strategic Case and understanding if participants think that reforming the market is the correct thing to do;
- **The relevance of the proposed benefits of the Bus Franchising Scheme** – what did they consider to be the most important and why; and
- **Cross-boundary services under the Proposed Franchising Scheme** – how bus franchising could impact on the cross-boundary services, and what the potential benefits and limitations are to cross-boundary travellers as presented in the Proposed Franchising Scheme.

2.6 Interpretation of findings

When considering these findings, it is important to bear in mind what a qualitative approach provides. It explores the range of attitudes and opinions of participants in detail. It provides an insight into the key reasons underlying participants' views. Findings are descriptive and illustrative, not statistically representative of a wider population. Often individual participants hold somewhat contradictory views – often described as 'cognitive dissonance'.

Participants were also provided with information to help them make informed judgements. In the case of the deliberative workshop participants, this information was very detailed, for the focus groups, less so; however, a certain amount of baseline information about the Proposed Franchising Scheme was provided, which means that these individuals are not representative of the general public at large. This report is divided into chapters which follow the broad outline of the short consultation response form. Each chapter leads with insights from the workshops, reflecting the broad profile of participants and the volume of content covered. These insights are then supplemented by those gathered from the focus groups, in which participants were not subjected to as detailed information, nor given sufficient time to understand the Scheme in more detail and where the participants represented specific sub-groups of the population.

2.7 A note on illustrative quotations

The report presents direct quotations from the qualitative research to illustrate key points. Where possible, all quotes have been attributed with the participants' gender, age and local authority in which they live. However, on occasions, due to the fast-flowing nature of a discussion, not all of the information

as to who said what has been captured. There are, therefore, quotations which have a limited amount of classification information.

3 Summary of findings: Buses in Greater Manchester: current challenges

3.1 Introduction

Participants in the deliberative workshops and the focus groups were initially asked to provide spontaneous views as to the way buses are run, the importance of them, their understanding of how they are currently operated, challenges facing the local bus market and the importance of an integrated network.

In the deliberative workshops TfGM presented detail from the Consultation Document.⁴ The subsequent discussion then focussed on the following question:

- There are challenges facing the local bus market which means it is not performing as well as it could. Do you have any comments on this?

It should be noted that, focus group participants were not subject to the same amount of information as those participating in the deliberative workshop as they were not presented with detailed information from the Consultation Document. Insights from these groups have therefore been included where relevant.

⁴ See Section 01 in the workshop presentation in the Appendix.

3.2 Summary of key findings

- Most participants thought that **buses are an important part of the public transport system in Greater Manchester**, but current provision varied greatly depending on the operator and area;
- There was very **limited awareness of the current deregulated model**, with many believing there was already central co-ordination of provision through other bodies such as GMCA of TfGM. There was **an appetite for a more centralised model**, as the high level of variation in standards, and the complexity of current pricing, were considered problematic for bus users and potential bus users;
- Participants identified that the **variation in service provision across Greater Manchester** meant that some routes were well catered for by a number of bus operators whilst others were serviced infrequently, if at all;
- One of the key barriers to using buses was their perceived **unreliability**. Most had examples of buses not arriving as scheduled, infrequent buses being over-full and not stopping and buses stuck in traffic. Many compared this with trams where the service was perceived to be much more reliable, with better, **real-time information** about how long a journey would take. Online data about buses was also perceived to be unreliable;
- Overall, there was **broad support amongst participants** that the bus network was not performing as well as it could do.

3.3 Views of buses in Greater Manchester

In the deliberative workshops the **general public had varied experiences of using buses**. Some used the bus regularly to get around; typically having one or two routes they used most often. Others would use the bus occasionally, particularly when they want to come into the city centre. Some participants never used the bus, either because there are no convenient routes nearby, because they find the tram easier and more convenient, or because they simply do not like using buses. Regardless of current behaviour, **almost all believed that there is scope to substantially improve buses in Greater Manchester**, although some would prefer to see more investment in trams which most believed were better than buses due to their speed and comparable reliability.

"I can see the vision. I think it's excellent. Everything about integrated travel, value for money."
(Male, 70, Stockport)

3.4 Fares and ticketing

Most of the general public who participated in the deliberative workshops felt that **fares and ticketing are a significant source of frustration for all bus users, and a source of confusion for occasional users**. The main concern was the lack of consistent pricing, and the difficulty of changing between bus companies, which resulted in some having to pay twice. Some spontaneously compared it with the situation in London, which they felt had a better system (Oyster). Consequently, most participants thought that **tickets which could be used on all operators' buses would be an improvement**. There was limited awareness that you could already get an 'any bus' ticket.

"Compared to London with the Oyster card and contactless card- seems it'd make it a lot more convenient for people."

(Male, 21, Bury)

"I like the idea of one ticket, like the Oyster card. It's easier."

(Female, 70, Stockport)

Although **participants broadly supported any efforts to make pricing more consistent, some had concerns this would be used to justify price increases.** Many described experiencing price rises on their regular bus routes which was impacting on their willingness to use the bus, particularly for short journeys. Some mentioned the prohibitive cost of travelling with a family on the bus.

"They'll have to increase fares to make the changes."

(Female, 38, Bolton)

Other insights concerning fares and ticketing included:

- It would be better if people could **purchase tickets in advance** (quicker and safer than dealing with cash onboard);
- **People liked discounts which apply to monthly tickets** and thought the ability to set up **direct debits** made this a convenient option;
- **Payment options have improved.** For example, contactless and phone payments have made boarding a bus less of a hassle. However, there are still problems paying with notes; and
- A few raised concerns about the **restrictions on concessionary travel** as they felt not being able to travel before 9.30am was a barrier to using the bus.

The views of young people on fares and ticketing

Participants in the young peoples' groups were particularly **price conscious. They liked the idea of integrating different types of public transport into one ticket** – for example, if you bought a zone 4 tram ticket, they thought it should also work on zone 4 buses.

The under 16s group thought they should have free bus travel. They also thought there should be better provisions for young people who board the bus without sufficient cash to pay for their journey.

The 16-18 year olds were aware of 'Our Pass'⁵ and thought it was great value. The availability of this pass was a significant driver in encouraging bus use amongst this demographic.

The older age groups (19 and 20 year olds) suggested that **the bus 'feels' more expensive than the tram now that Metrolink's zone ticketing system is in place** and noted the 'ever-increasing' price of annual passes. They also spontaneously mentioned London's approach to ticketing as a superior approach.

⁵ launched in 2019 as free travel bus pass for all 16-18 year olds, as well as half price Metrolink travel and offers/discounts/tickets

"I like the way in London you tap on and tap off. Some stand going through change and it takes ages. Should be able to do it yourself."

(Female, 19, Oldham)

The views of businesses on fares and ticketing

The businesses saw **buses as a cheap way to travel**, but thought people had other reasons for not using them, specifically around their quality and lack of reliability.

"The fares aren't that much of the issue, it's the standards of the buses and the lack of reliability."

(Small business, Bolton)

However, **there was support for an 'Oyster style' ticketing system** which they thought would make it simpler and easier to travel by bus. The medium-sized businesses were aware of the problem of having to watch a bus come and go because you had a ticket for a different operator on the same route – this was an issue also raised in the deliberative workshops.

3.5 Timetables and frequency

The views towards timetables and frequency in the deliberative workshops depended on where participants lived and which routes they used. **Buses in the city centre were perceived to be frequent and convenient, while those further out were perceived to be irregular and unreliable.** People working shifts commented that the buses are too infrequent at night for them to get to/from work.

For those who were serviced by irregular buses, there were also **concerns about the accuracy of the timetables**, whether the bus stop showed the most up-to-date version, and how to know whether a bus had departed its stop earlier than timetabled. Many described long waits for buses that never came, often followed by several buses arriving at once. In contrast, some in the workshop were frustrated when the bus arrived and left earlier than timetabled (because it was ahead of schedule).

"The thing that annoyed me was when the buses are running early, so it gets there early - there is no excuse for them running early."

(Male)

Many made comparisons with **the trams which, in contrast to buses, were perceived to provide up-to-date and accurate information.** Some had experience of using mobile phone 'apps' for bus information but found these to be inaccurate, slow and 'clunky' to use.

"If you look at Transport for London [the bus app] is fabulous and proper switched on, know exactly where it's going and gives you like real time journey updates... Greater Manchester... Rubbish."

(Male, 34, Bolton)

A further source of frustration was the over-crowding on buses, often by school children during peak times. Participants in the workshops widely believed this surge in passengers was predictable at peak

times and there was frustration when a bus drives past a bus stop as it is full, especially when the wait for the next one could be half an hour. They thought frequency should be increased at these times.

“That last bus is packed. There should be a later one.”

(Male, 55, Salford)

People would support more frequent buses, and noted the changes to fares outlined above would improve the experience for people who lived on routes currently serviced by multiple operators. They also wanted to see contract penalties for bus companies which consistently failed to deliver the timetabled services.

The views of young people on timetables and frequency

The young people groups echoed the frustrations with **inconsistent and unreliable buses with limited capacity at peak times**, such as the start of the school/college day. This was highlighted as a particular issue along arterial routes, such as Bury Old Road and the A6 to Stockport. However, as most did not have the option of driving, they have no alternative but to continue to use buses.

“One day it can come at 8 and the next day at 20 past 8. Don’t trust them.”

(Male, 11, Oldham)

Some of the youngest group (under 16s) described finding it **difficult to understand timetables and the 24-hour clock used**. The 16-20 year olds echoed concerns of the wider public that single operator apps sometimes provided inaccurate real time information.

The views of businesses on timetables and frequency

The businesses did not have strong views about timetables, although they thought **the unreliable nature of buses limited the potential to use them for business travel**. One smaller company mentioned that they allocate people reliant on the bus to day shifts due to the infrequent and unreliable night service.

3.6 Branding

Branding was not a concern for most participants in the deliberative workshops. **Currently people associated different brands with different levels of service**, with some perceived to be better than others. Some thought that the companies would want to retain their brand identities, so they could attract customers, but generally few felt much money was spent on current bus advertising.

The views of young people on branding

The young people suggested **colour-coding could be used to show how far a bus was going, or where it was going**. For example, they suggested different parts of the city could have different colours. However, others thought that having clearer bus numbers and the destination and next stop shown clearly were more important to them.

“They should make the numbers clearer so you know where you’re going. Number in big bold letters and where it’s going in big bold letters. Next stop shown.”

(Female, 13, Bolton)

The views of businesses on branding

Similarly, businesses had different views of the different brands but **no strong views on the need for a shared brand.**

3.7 Current routes

Views about current routes were influenced by where people lived and whether they perceived their local routes to be convenient. **Those living close to bus stops were more positive about using buses.** A common issue was the time taken for buses to cover short distances due to their winding routes (‘around the houses’). Some commented that sometimes bus stops could be very close together, leading to more stops than they thought were necessary.

“There’s a service, but it would take three hours to get to work. There’s no direct bus route to get to work.”

(Male, 32, Manchester)

There was a desire for more fast-track / express routes and guided buses. The bus was compared with trams, which are viewed as considerably quicker (unless the bus had a dedicated bus lane).

“There is a guided bus line to Tyldesley... it’s apparently pretty decent.”

(Male, 34, Bolton)

There was a perception that bus companies servicing villages were reducing their services. People suggested that these relatively low patronage routes should be bundled with the popular routes (such as the 112, 142 and 192) so that companies would be required to service them.

“Right now, bus providers are saying, ‘That bus isn’t making money. We’re not going to run it’. With this in place, they’ll have more buses running on the less profitable routes.”

(Male, 24, Stockport)

One group discussed the fact that **by combining different buses you can get anywhere you need to go, although it might take some time.** Other groups felt that the number of useful routes depended on where you lived. Manchester and particularly the Oxford Road corridor were perceived to be well served, while Bolton was mentioned by one group as not being adequately serviced.

“I think they’re very good actually. They go everywhere. If you can’t get one you can always find a roundabout route.”

(Female, 69, Stockport)

The views of young people on current routes

The young people groups echoed the view of some of the general public, that **the network of buses in Greater Manchester meant they could generally get everywhere they needed to.** They understood

that rural areas would have fewer buses than the city and valued the fact buses run in areas where there are no trams.

"I think there's loads of routes and stops. You can live in an area and be far away from the Met. The bus takes you wherever you want. It's convenient. It might take you closer to places than a tram could."

(Female, 17, Bury)

The views of businesses on current routes

The medium sized businesses also commented that **those living centrally are much better served**. They also commented that, in their opinion, particular areas lack adequate connectivity to the centre of Manchester (North Manchester, Wythenshawe and Altrincham). They noted that although the latter location has trams these are perceived to be expensive so better buses would provide a lower cost alternative.

3.8 Views on current standards

As noted above, **the standards of different operators in Manchester were perceived to be variable**. Overall, most felt there was scope for improving standards.

"Other cities have fancy buses with charging ports etc. here it's all sticky, rubbish everywhere, looks like the 60s."

(Male, 21, Bury)

The main areas in which standards were perceived to differ, and which mattered to people, were:

- The **cleanliness** of buses (litter, smell);
- The **age of the bus fleet** (linked by some to emissions and environmental impact);
- The **additional services** available (Wi-Fi, comfortable seats, charging points);
- The **attitudes of bus drivers** – how polite and helpful they were, whether they would wait for someone running for the bus;
- The **quality of drivers** – whether they drove in a courteous way and change speed and direction carefully so that passengers do not fall over; and
- The **safety** of passengers (due to behaviour of other passengers, CCTV installed etc).

There was broad support for standardising services, and most thought there was scope for improving standards on many of the buses. Several groups commented that buses were considerably less pleasant in the rain, when the floor and seats would quickly become wet.

“Everyone deserves the same service, even if it’s a different bus operator.”

(Male, 58, Oldham)

Some current bus users expressed **concerns about changes to the services they rely on as a result of standardisation**. For example, one person liked the app for their current bus operator as it meant they could keep their ticket on their phone, rather than having a paper version. Another raised concerns that **prices might rise to pay for the improved buses**.

“I currently use the Vantage bus with chargers, tables, nice bus drivers but can definitely see it would make a difference with the other buses.”

(Female, 20, Wigan)

The views of young people on current standards

Young people thought that raising standards would make bus travel more appealing. They wanted to make buses cleaner and less smelly, and to encourage drivers to be nicer. Some also had concerns about their personal safety, although others thought that the presence of a physically accessible driver made them safer than trams.

“It depends what bus you get. The 192 is horrible. You get smackheads on it.”

(Male, 16, Stockport)

“There always seems to be weirdos on the bus.”

(Female, 17, Stockport)

As in the general public workshops, **a few were more positive about their current experiences** – describing buses as comfortable and warm with Wi-Fi and USB charging on some, which they wanted as standard.

The views of businesses on current standards

Businesses perceived buses as having a negative image. As such, they would not consider using them for business travel.

The views of those living outside of Greater Manchester on current standards

Those living outside of Greater Manchester believed that a central body was responsible for setting fares and standards. **Only two participants knew these decisions were made by the operators**. The group also thought the local authority sets the routes. Participants did not think it mattered who runs the buses, as long as standards are maintained and prices are not too high.

3.9 A fragmented network

Many participants expressed surprise that routes were not designed/controlled centrally, and there was support for better planning to ensure all areas of Greater Manchester are well served. There was also **an appetite for integrating bus services with other public transport**, specifically trains and trams.

"Imagine if it's joined up. Imagine a train leaves at half past and the bus arrives at quarter past. At the moment there's no co-ordination. They could improve the routes they're doing."

(Male, 27, Tameside)

They thought that London's transport network was much more integrated and achieving similar should be a priority for Greater Manchester. One participant noted that when they lived in Canada the public transport was all connected and involved one ticket which made travel much easier. However, for some this was already a reality in Greater Manchester. For example, some participants noted that interchanges were making bus and train travel better. Another would take the bus to the train station, the train to Piccadilly and then the tram in the city and felt that worked ok.

"I would like it if it was simpler, different companies, numbers, timetables, lots to take in. If it was one company, timetables are easier, it's cheaper and more straightforward."

(Member of the public)

Overall people thought that **joining up the public transport network more consistently would be an improvement.** However, some raised a concern about how this would be enforced, noting that trains are already regulated but do not necessarily run on time.

The views of young people on a fragmented network

The youngest group mainly discussed **the lack of a joined-up approach to ticketing.** The older group (19-20 year olds) spontaneously mentioned that **the bus timetable is not linked up with other modes of transport,** including showing which bus stops are close to tram stops. The older group also thought that having **fewer operators and a less fragmented system would make it easier to navigate.**

Most of the 16-18 year olds claimed to be aware that operators were in control and they were curious to understand the impact of franchising. The 19-20 year olds thought that buses were provided by a mix of private companies and the local authority. This group also expressed some surprise that there is no single body co-ordinating buses centrally.

The views of businesses on a fragmented network

The business groups were confused about who currently runs the buses, with answers ranging from Andy Burnham (the Mayor) to TfGM and GMPTE, local authorities or the operators. Only one person was aware operators have flexibility once licenced. Some thought they had seen Diamond "take over" a route previously run by another company and assumed the company had been "bought out".

"I find it all rather complex with who owns / runs what."

(Medium sized business)

Businesses agreed that a more **joined-up system would mean people could travel further on one ticket** (on different modes of transport) so this would be cheaper for users. They also thought this could save time as people could use the faster modes of transport for longer distances and then use the bus at no extra cost to get from the tram or train stop to their destination. Most agreed there are currently too many operators running on similar routes with minimal, if any, co-ordination.

“Too many buses and different companies on the road at the same time, they need to work together to make it more beneficial for everyone.”

(Medium sized business)

3.10 Changes in bus patronage

People did not necessarily attribute the decline in bus use to an increase in cars. There was an assumption that **some of the journeys which used to be made by bus were now displaced onto the tram.** This was because the tram was seen to be quicker and more reliable.

“It’s what I expected. A lot of people are ditching the bus for the tram.”

(Female, 30, Trafford)

Others thought that **car sharing was on the increase** and might have impacted on the number of bus users. Other groups believed that people prefer to use their own car— especially as the price of a bus ticket was perceived to be similar to the cost of petrol for a journey.

“It’s expensive [to buy a bus pass] considering a lot of people run a car as well. If you’re convincing people to leave [their car] at home, it costs £2 or £3 in petrol so the bus needs to be good.”

(Female, 34, Rochdale)

Some individuals described their personal reasons for stopping use of the bus. For example, the **unreliability of buses** had led some to stop using them.

“I used to use the bus, but it was making me late for work.”

(Female, 44, Bolton)

Some thought that more bus lanes would solve this problem, but others were concerned that would make driving in the city worse. Others mentioned they no longer use the bus due to **safety concerns**, as they were worried about the passengers they share the bus with.

The views of young people on changes in bus patronage

The 16-18 year olds felt there is **a stigma around using the bus and would always use a car if they could.** Most thought they would drive as soon as they passed their test (regardless of cost) as it would be cleaner, quicker, good value and would offer freedom from hanging around and checking unreliable timetables. The only exception for one participant was journeys into the city centre where parking might become an issue.

“Sometimes, when I’m stood waiting for the bus and people are driving past you, you wish you were in the car. Driving gives you freedom. You’re not limited by times. You’re not stood there waiting for it.”

(Female, 17, Bury)

The views of business on changes in bus patronage

One business noted that employees have started using the bus more, as **congestion** meant that driving could take a lot longer than taking a bus which had a dedicated bus lane.

4 Summary of findings: Reforming the bus market

4.1 Introduction

This section summarises key insights from the qualitative discussions about the 'case for change' and options for reform.

TfGM presented detail from the Consultation Document about the 'case for change' and options for reform.⁶ This outlined the legislative process of bus reform, the reform options which had been assessed, an outline of the Proposed Franchising Scheme and the scope for the Proposed Franchising Scheme (in terms of a phased introduction). They were also shown the consultation video entitled 'Doing Buses Differently', which gave them an overview of some of the ways in which the current network was funded.

The subsequent discussion then focussed on answering the following question:

- To what extent do you agree or disagree with the conclusion that reforming the bus market is the right thing to do to address the challenges facing the local bus market?

It should be noted that, focus group participants were not subject to the same amount of information as those participating in the deliberative workshop as they were not presented with detailed information from the Consultation Document. Insights from these groups have therefore been included where relevant.

⁶ See Section 02 in the workshop presentation in the Appendix.

4.2 Summary of key issues

- There was **general support for moving away from a commercial model** and participants were quick to appreciate the improvements they might experience as a result of the proposed changes;
- People **liked the idea of an integrated transport system** where modes and connecting buses work together more efficiently to connect people in a reliable way;
- The **proposed changes to a standardised pricing strategy, and simplified ticketing to be used across all buses were welcomed** by participants, who said it would make their lives easier. Alongside this, participants welcomed the potential for **better routes**. Businesses overwhelmingly agreed that employees would approve of the proposals and that both employees and employers would benefit from them;
- However, there were **reservations from individuals about the finances and costing of the proposal**. Beyond the initial reservations, participants raised concerns about how the service would be affected, the impact on the cost of a ticket and the potential for 'monopolisation' of a few operators versus the current deregulated system, as well as risk to employees of bus companies, particularly the potential for job losses;
- Businesses expressed concerns about operators adhering to standards that they should already be aiming for under current systems. In other words, they were already starting from a low bar and providing a sub-standard service.

4.3 Key messages/themes favourable towards reforming the bus market

There was **general support for moving away from a 'profit driven' model**. Once people learned more about how the current system worked, there was some surprise that it had not been changed before now. There was a feeling that the current model was unjust and that bus operators should not be able to 'cherry pick' the parts of the service they want and take the profit. A shift to focusing on the needs of communities when deciding where to provide services was popular.

"I think it's a great idea."

(Member of the public, Male)

"I say it's a really good thing."

(Member of the public, Female)

Participants were quick to consider the improvements they might experience as a result of the proposed changes. There was discussion about how **current services do not meet needs, particularly at non-peak times in the evening and at weekends**. Unless you live on a particularly well serviced route, they can be limited. Participants were hopeful that the proposed changes would improve their experience.

"Maybe that would improve the service where I live. There are none after 6pm and none at night."

(Female, 68, Bolton)

“If they’re bidding for it, though, they might try harder and it might be a good thing.”

(Female, 20, Oldham)

Participants liked the idea of **an integrated transport system where other forms of transport and connecting buses work together more efficiently to connect in a reliable way**. Groups were hopeful that this would be a seamless experience which would simplify the current approach to ticketing and fares.

“To me, the whole thing would come together. There could be a number 1 bus every fifteen minutes, then one that’s going to arrive at such and such a time. Working together, I think you will get your reliability back.”

(Female, 44, Bolton)

“I think one ticket would be better.”

(Female, 69, Stockport)

Overall there was an understanding that these proposed changes were all a part of **taking control** (i.e. wider devolution), which was viewed positively.

Favourable views of young people towards reforming the bus market

The **proposed changes to pricing, and simplified ticketing to be used across all buses were welcomed by young people**, who said it would make their lives easier. These changes particularly appealed to those who have to take multiple buses currently run by different operators. While many young people have free bus passes, cost is still important to them and they highlighted ‘Our Pass’ as a positive part of the current system.

“Good thing. If you get a bus in one place and want to get on one in another, if it’s the same it’s much easier.”

(Female, 13, Bolton)

“I like the way in London you top up on and off.”

(Female, 19, Oldham)

“I’ve got the Our Pass. It’s £10 a year and you get on all the buses for the year. It’s £4 for a train one way.”

(Female, 17, Stockport)

Many of the young people bought into the idea that if buses were brought under TfGM's control, routes would be more efficient and run quicker. However, they highlighted that it would be important to look at capacity and align with demand to ensure routes have enough buses at peak times.

"Think it would be better. If they're all controlled by one it would be quicker. Sometimes they go the long way for no reason. A bit more efficient."

(Female, 13, Bolton)

There was **concern about getting things right for the various demographics which rely on buses**, citing the elderly, families with children and those going to school/work. There was also agreement that **timetables were sometimes difficult to comprehend** with no central place for information making it hard to find, unlike for trains (e.g. 'The Trainline'). The **suggestion of centrally controlled timetables and planning was met positively**, particularly with regards to reliability, convenience and issues of timetables and overcrowding. There was general agreement that for them, **real-time information in one easy app would be much more user friendly**.

"I think for elderly people, the timetables would be really helpful. An elderly person might not have an iPhone with an app on it. They rely on what it says at the bus stop."

(Female, 16, Oldham)

Young people responded well to the suggestion of raising standards, saying **they would use buses more if they were cleaner, more modern and guaranteed to turn up**. Environmental concerns and a sense of safety on the bus were also important issues for young people. There was some recognition that buses were more environmentally friendly than driving and they had a positive response to the idea that there could be the opportunity through reform to employ a more environmentally friendly fleet.

"If they got more ecological buses for the environment that would be good."

(Male, 20, Salford)

Favourable views of businesses towards reforming the bus market

Businesses expressed an immediately positive impression of the proposal after watching the video. Through further discussion there was agreement that a coherent approach would be an improvement resulting in a **more joined-up, integrated service**. So long as the central authority was competent, many agreed they would be in the best position to set routes, timetables, pricing and ensure everything is integrated. They felt it offered a common-sense approach that had already been proven to work in other cities such as London.

"Looks like a no brainer to me"

(Male, Wigan)

"Feel things would run so much better under the one umbrella, better prices, better routes and timetable could surely be organised if one company making decisions."

(Female, Oldham)

There was an overwhelming consensus that **employees would approve of the proposals and that both employees and employers would benefit from them**. Participants felt that cheaper, more reliable commuting options would offer better flexibility for their business and staff in terms of overtime, better time-keeping and easier access from a wider range of areas. Some even discussed that it may allow them as a business to offer some perks to staff if the system was streamlined.

“More staff can use this service and know they will be able to do overtime and not worry about getting back home.”

(Medium-sized business)

“It may open up other routes into work if they were all connected.”

(Medium-sized business)

“As a business, being able to offer free bus travel as a result of having a one stop shop for payment for services would be a good thing.”

(Medium-sized business)

The final element highlighted as particularly appealing was **the potential for simplified ticketing for a more seamless journey**, which would also help to save passengers money.

“One card/app would be perfect.”

(Medium-sized business)

“Longer routes would be a great help. People requiring 2 buses is something that straight away turns them off public transport - certainly having to buy two different types of ticket.”

(Medium-sized business)

Favourable views of those living outside of Greater Manchester towards reforming the bus market

There was a lot of general support for reforming the market from those living outside of Greater Manchester. Being under the control of TfGM was seen as particularly positive and there were suggestions that **franchising would work in the public interest rather than focusing on money**.

The **cost of travel was seen as one of the most important benefits of change, alongside better routes, tickets which allow travel on Metrolink, and reliability**. Participants felt that an integrated network would help to address current issues and make buses much more accessible. They emphasised **the need for a ticket** that can be used across public transport, again citing the Oyster card system in London as best practice.

“London is 100% better than Up North.”

(Female, 24, Derbyshire)

“I really like how the buses are run in London, just tap your card and mainly 1 price per journey.”

(Female, 41, Lancashire)

Though **a single brand was not seen as very important per se, a single source of information was seen as useful**. For example, having one agency would enable complaints to be taken more seriously.

4.4 Key messages/themes unfavourable towards reforming the bus market

There were **reservations from some about the finances and costing of the proposal**. People didn't have a clear understanding of where the funding would come from. Beyond this concern, some

participants shared more general reservations about the change overall, with one saying that she expected things to go wrong.

“There’s going to be funding needed to organise the system, where is that going to come from?”

(Male, 54, Rochdale)

“In the video when it was showing it’s all under one company what makes you think they’ll get it right? Things will go wrong before they go right. Transport is never perfect.”

(Female, 33, Tameside)

Beyond the initial reservations, participants raised concerns about **how the service would be affected, how pricing could be impacted and the potential for 'monopolisation'**.

“My only worry is that TfGM will dictate the times and routes. How will they work that out and still make money? Will the services be reduced?”

(Male, 54, Salford)

“I’d be concerned that, once the market’s monopolised, they can charge what they want. I like the idea that I can go to a different company. If you don’t like it, there’s nothing you can do. It sounds good in principle, but I need to know the prices will be reduced.”

(Male, 32, Trafford)

Finally, there were issues raised about **the risk to employees of bus companies**, particularly the potential for job losses if and when contracts are lost.

“I think for the workers definitely. If the bus companies don’t make as much money, there are going to have to be cuts somewhere.”

(Male, 27, Salford)

“I would worry about the jobs of the bus drivers and things like that. Drivers might have a job one year and if they lose the contract, they might lose the job.”

(Female, 35, Wigan)

Unfavourable views of young people towards reforming the bus market

There was some **scepticism in response to price changes** with young people questioning whether ticket prices would actually reduce. Linked to this, some participants felt that the information provided in the video was not specific enough about how changes would happen (NB – these participants had not engaged with the Consultation Document and associated materials).

Some young people felt that changes would make very little difference to their lives. There was a feeling that they would get a car as soon as they could and at that point **most would choose to drive rather than take the bus because of speed, cleanliness and the sense of freedom it enables**. Given this, some of the younger age groups felt that the reforms would be irrelevant to them, as they would be driving by the time they were made.

“It’s not necessarily an improvement for me. I have bus routes that I use anyway. Unless they put more buses on it doesn’t matter.”

(Male, 18, Bury)

Unfavourable views of businesses towards reforming the bus market

While businesses bought into the proposal in theory, **concerns existed around whether the Scheme would work in practice**. They had questions about how it would work with so many independent providers, how bus companies would feel about timetables and prices being set for them, as well as questions on timetables and costs (NB – these opinions were raised prior to the Financial Case being presented to them).

“It sounds good in theory, but in practice, might not work. Consumers will end up paying for it”

(Male, Bury)

Scepticism also existed about **operators adhering to standards that they should already be aiming for under current systems**. Some participants felt that the standards needed to be set in such a way as to ensure TfGM would maximise the number of tenders to get the best service at the lowest price to the taxpayer. There were concerns about setting an unrealistic ‘utopia’ that a substandard operator may take on and ultimately not deliver. Linked to this was a feeling that it would be hard to force private sector bus operators to comply with the standards set.

“The bus operators turn round and say, no, we can’t deliver that, we can deliver this and price for that. Without the constant competition the standards could therefore drop.”

(Medium-sized business)

“Surely they still need to keep the bus companies happy though.”

(Small business)

“Depends on who sets the standards, whether they are realistic and whether they make a better service for the passengers.”

(Small business)

Unfavourable views of those living outside of Greater Manchester towards reforming the bus market

There was scepticism around how TfGM would tangibly implement some of these changes so that people could realise the benefits. Some participants highlighted the **importance of changes being for the benefit of the passenger** but ultimately felt that this would not be the case. They raised concerns about changes to routes and fares and wondered how decisions would be made about what routes to add or remove.

"I'd prefer the system to stay as it is but then again, I don't like change, it might push the prices up."

(Male, 33, Blackburn)

Generally, as with other audiences, there were **questions about how much it will cost, where the money will come from and the length of the transfer process.**

"I would say it needs improving but for that amount of money I think there's worse problems in Manchester to address."

(Female, 23, Liverpool)

A **single brand was the lowest priority** for this group with nearly everyone highlighting how uninterested they were in buses having the same appearance, so long as standards and routes are good.

"I'm not bothered what the bus looks like, as long as it's clean and gets me to a job on time that's all I care about."

(Female, 24, Derbyshire)

4.5 Additional comments on reforming the bus market

There was overall general agreement that the proposal was positive on the whole, but underlying concerns over whether or not the final result would be positive. Queries were largely **around the implementation period timescales** considering the size of overhaul planned. One group in particular didn't understand what was meant by franchising which left them with even more questions.

"If they do it and we don't like it, we're stuck."

(Female, 34, Rochdale)

Some in the deliberative workshop, particularly those that included participants who lived outside of the city centre, raised specific **concerns about people travelling outside of Greater Manchester's borders** and how that would work under the new system.

Additional comments from young people on reforming the bus market

Some young people felt **rebranding was important** and that it would be necessary to have coloured branding to indicate specific service areas. Others felt that more consideration should be given to numbers and destinations, making them bigger and clearer than they currently are.

"Salford should have a set colour [bus] so for example ... area specific."

(Male, 14, Manchester)

Additional comments from businesses on reforming the bus market

There wasn't universal agreement that change was needed, though most saw potential for improvement, whether or not they were confident that this could be realised. A number of people were keen to ensure that during the transition process 'bugs and fixes' would need to be considered to try and make it go smoothly. In order to achieve this, businesses highlighted that care needs to be paid to plan, research and review to make it a success.

Additional comments from those living outside of Greater Manchester on reforming the bus market

Some participants were clear that if travelling further afield, they would get the train instead of a bus and so wouldn't be affected by changes. However, others suggest they could see personal benefits of improvements to the bus service. Below are the key benefits and limitations that were highlighted by participants living outside of Greater Manchester for cross boundary journeys. In terms of benefits:

- **Reduced congestion** and vehicle use were seen as a positive outcome. One participant highlighted that more would need to be done to make people not use their cars and suggested reducing types of cars or banning them at certain times in the city;
- Being able to **use franchised services as well as the cross-boundary services** was seen as a benefit, as long as prices do not increase as a result;
- **Permits which initiate an increase in standards** was universally seen as a positive development;
- **Multi-operator ticketing schemes** were seen as helpful in simplifying things for customers since generally, the easier their journeys can be made, the better; and
- One participant suggested that GMCA could provide **financial assistance** to services which operate over boundaries that require upgrades.

In terms of limitations of the Proposed Bus Franchising Scheme for cross-boundary users:

- **Cross-boundary services may not match Greater Manchester minimum standards** established through franchising, which people would find off-putting, since they see safety and quality as key attributes of any service;
- **Tickets for cross-boundary services might not necessarily match** and there would be an absence of joined up information for connecting services;
- One participant said he'd resort to using a car after hearing about the limitations:

"This would make me drive to avoid the messing about with different prices and not knowing and competing services etc. I'd just sack it off and drive in."

(Male, 29, Glossop, Derbyshire)

There was some acknowledgement in discussions that **government funding is to ensure that people from isolated areas have access to transport** and that the money comes from the taxpayer.

5 Summary of findings: Current public sector funding

5.1 Introduction

This section summarises key insights from the qualitative discussions about how the buses in Greater Manchester are currently funded.

TfGM presented detail from the Consultation Document about the how buses are currently funded, with a focus on current public sector funding.⁷ Participants in the focus groups were not presented with detailed information in the form of a presentation, but were shown the video 'Doing Buses Differently'.

The subsequent discussion explored three questions:

- What do you think about the way buses in Greater Manchester are currently funded?
- What do you think about the need for GMCA to subsidise certain routes?
- How important is it for GMCA to invest in the bus network in this way?

It should be noted that, focus group participants were not subject to the same amount of information as those participating in the deliberative workshop as they were not presented with detailed information from the Consultation Document. Insights from these groups have therefore been included where relevant.

⁷ See Section 03 in the workshop presentation in the Appendix.

5.2 Summary of key issues

- Across all groups, there was **limited awareness of current funding arrangements** generally, including levels of investment, where this investment comes from or the scale of public contributions to the bus network as a whole;
- There was **surprise that operators don't contribute more through re-investment**, coupled with the assumption that they should and could afford to do so;
- Although there was general agreement that route subsidisation may be necessary in order to fulfil public need, some people thought that **operators should take responsibility** for this and have a duty to provide subsidised routes as service providers;
- **Concessionary passes are popular**, particularly amongst those who currently benefit from them, with concern about how the Proposed Franchising Scheme may impact their availability and coverage; and
- In order to fulfil sustainability objectives, **more should be done to encourage people onto public transport generally (including buses)** and concessionary fares are seen as a means of achieving this with certain groups in particular who make decisions based upon cost.

5.3 Current funding of buses

Participants had **very limited or no awareness of the existing funding arrangements and scale of public investment** in the bus network and infrastructure across Greater Manchester.

"I didn't realise we spent that amount of money."

(Male, 27, Salford)

Many were surprised by the **cost of the existing system** and unaware of local authority contribution levels to maintain it.

"Didn't know it was central government funded. They're spending millions to improve it all."

(Male, 70, Stockport)

There was also general confusion around funding sources, with some participants identifying **TfGM as key financial contributors**, but unable to identify where it receives its funding from.

"Does TfGM get the funding from our Council Tax?"

(Female, 69, Stockport)

A key question arising from participants focused on the **profits of operators**. Once the current public sector funding arrangements were presented, participants were surprised at the lack of reinvestment by operators and questioned why fare revenue and profit couldn't be used instead of contributions currently made by the public.

“...surely the revenue should go back into funding the system.”

(Male, 48, Salford)

“It should be like if you make a profit, they should have to do these things on the side. It doesn't seem right.”

(Female, 69, Stockport)

When further clarification was provided on this point, there was uncertainty due to the **perception that bus operators make a lot of money from fares** and should therefore be able to invest in services anyway. Others concluded that this may explain a lot about the current challenges faced by the local bus market, with control and decision-making power held by those making the profit.

“I don't think it's right if they're keeping the money from the tickets.”

(Male, 24, Stockport)

“They have all the power.”

(Male, 27, Tameside)

Some expressed a more **positive appraisal of the current system**. Although the deregulated system was the focal point of much criticism, there was **limited support for the current arrangement** and how it has created a competitive market in Greater Manchester, promoting choice and functions successfully.

“We have been spoiled by the deregulated system with the proliferation of choice of buses and services.”

(Female, 48, Tameside)

There were also a number of participants who **struggled to fully understand this section of the discussion**. Having been introduced to the Scheme, they wanted to understand the planned funding arrangements for comparative purposes to better contextualise the figures.

The views of businesses on the current funding of buses

There was **no clear awareness amongst businesses about current funding arrangements**. There was uncertainty as to who funded the network, whilst others thought it was government funded/operated. Some thought it was run by private operators which received a subsidy to do so. Others thought that advertising revenues provided a source of funding as well.

“The GMCA fund it.”

(Small business, Bury)

“Run by private firms who get a subsidy.”

(Small business, Trafford)

“Thought it was government funded or operated in some way.”

(Small business, Trafford)

“I would have thought from bus fares/advertising on sides etc.”

(Medium-sized business, Trafford)

The views of those living outside of Greater Manchester on the current funding of buses

When asked how they think buses in Greater Manchester are currently funded, **those living outside of Greater Manchester thought the government was responsible** but couldn't provide further clarification. When probed to expand upon this, some suggested taxes as the main source of funding.

“Is there something on the Council Tax bill that says transport?”

(Female, 41, Lancashire)

“Because they have to arrange for the public to get from place to place. It will come from our taxes etc.”

(Male, 50, Lancashire)

5.4 Route subsidisation

Participants wanted initial **clarification and explanation** around the presented figure that a fifth (20%) of routes across Greater Manchester are currently subsidised. This was predominantly due to the perception that bus companies generate large amounts of revenue through fare collection and should have the financial means to run these routes.

“They're obviously making profit, they've got no risk - they seem to have a fall back.”

(Male)

There was also general concern around a **perceived operator focus on profit** as opposed to providing services and routes where they are needed. This was particularly important to those who rely upon localised services or are not well served by other transport modes (such as tram or train).

“Right now, bus providers are saying, ‘That bus isn’t making money. We’re not going to run it.’”

(Male, 24, Stockport)

“If an old lady relies on this service for the doctors, it’s unfair to penalise people like that because it’s not profitable.”

(Female, 29, Trafford)

Many participants were surprised that **subsidisation through public funds** was necessary. They felt that operators as service providers should be obliged to provide services and fund routes regardless of profitability if there is social need.

“They’re having their cake, eating it and coming back for seconds at the moment. It looks like it is all in the operators’ favour, rather than what services are required from them.”

(Male, 48, Salford)

However, there was acceptance that these routes and services need to be maintained, and if the other option is for them to cease, the **current method of subsidisation should continue**. The issue of cost was raised in response to this, as many current bus users had already raised concerns about expensive fare rates, before learning of their additional contributions via taxes.

“I think that’s a shock to everyone that they’re paying twice. Not many people knew.”

(Male 27, Salford)

“So where does that money go? At the moment, Diamond say, we’re paying to get on the bus and they’re also getting government funding.”

(Female, 44, Bolton)

This led to discussions around **fairness**, and who should ultimately be paying for the service. Some discussed whether or not it is fair for those who don’t use the service to be subsidising routes through Council Tax for service users.

“People who use the service should contribute to it, not everyone.”

(Male, 37, Oldham)

The view of businesses on route subsidisation

There was **minimal unprompted awareness of current subsidisation arrangements** within the business groups, but it wasn’t discussed in depth as they weren’t presented with the necessary information.

“Subsidised by Manchester City Council- i.e. a public private sector initiative.”

(Male, Medium Business Group, Manchester)

The views of those living outside of Greater Manchester on route subsidisation

There was **limited but accurate awareness** around the current subsidisation of less profitable routes in order to maintain services that would otherwise be discontinued.

“Some buses are funded by subsidiaries from the government on certain routes to keep them running.”

(Male, 30, Merseyside)

There was an understanding that in these circumstances, **government funding is vital to ensure that people from isolated areas continue to have access to these services.**

5.5 Concessionary passes

Amongst the general public, there was some initial anxiety about whether the **commitment to concessionary passes** and fares would be maintained under any new scheme. This was raised as an issue by several current pass holders who expressed concerns that without them, they wouldn't be able to afford bus travel.

“Hopefully they'll keep [concessionary passes]. Not just for pensioners; disabled and children too. If they do away with that, they won't be able to use the bus.”

(Male, 73, Stockport)

Overall, people supported the **principle of free/low cost travel for particular groups** such as the elderly, disabled and young people. However, some participants thought that it should go further, and also include all children, not just the 16-18 year olds who currently benefit from the Scheme.

“It should be free [for children].”

(Male, 55, Salford)

“If you're going to school, it should be free.”

(Male, 28, Oldham)

Despite this, there was some **concern about the cost to the public of funding concessionary passes**, again with comparative reference to the perceived revenue streams of the operators.

“...travel seems to be in a world of its own, where we have to stump up and pay for it out of our Council Tax, it's a lot of money and I think they are laughing, getting complacent. I think it is morally wrong we are trying to stump up money.”

(Female, 51, Trafford)

There was also frustration felt by some commuters who saw **the bus as almost as expensive as running a car**. Whilst providing value to those with passes, this does not apply to all, and those who use it regularly don't always benefit from passes.

"Yes. I think everybody should have equal access. As a commuter I should be paying less. The pensioners and school children should have access too."

(Female, 34, Rochdale)

The views of young people on concessionary passes

The **Under 16s** all felt that they should be entitled to **free bus travel** and provision should be made more generally for those who need to use the bus but may struggle to afford it.

"I say a lot of families don't have a lot of money and they are quite expensive, and people have to pay for other things so Under 16s should get free bus travel."

(Female, 14, Salford)

As with the deliberative workshop participants, **young people were concerned about changes to concessionary pass schemes** under the Proposed Franchising Scheme, and sought reassurance that these passes would be maintained.

The **16-18-year olds** had direct experience of the benefits of concessionary passes, with all but one participant using the Our Pass for current travel. The group was in agreement that this was the main reason for their decision to use the bus over other available modes of travel.

"When the Our Pass came out, so many more people got the pass because it's so much cheaper. It's the price of the ticket. Since we're students, we're not bringing in money. Price is a big thing. We wouldn't get the bus if it was £5-6 there and back."

(Female, 17, Bury)

Young people identified **cost as a significant factor when choosing how to travel**, hence why the Our Pass was well received. They expressed similar concerns as to whether this scheme would be maintained under the Proposed Franchising Scheme.

"It was £250 last year. It dropped to £10. You had to apply for it, and you get it within 10 days. You can use it anywhere."

(Female, 17, Bury)

A number of participants in the older 19-20 year old group either currently use or had **used student travel passes** which entitled them to discounted bus travel.

"I used to get this pass- Uni Rider. £250 for the year and you could travel anywhere in Greater Manchester with that pass."

(Male, 20, Trafford)

"I used it and got it for free with my uni. Thought I'd use that instead of train."

(Female, 20, Stockport)

They viewed a discounted pass as this an **incentive to travel by bus** and would choose bus over other modes (such as tram) if it was free or significantly discounted.

"It's definitely an incentive."

(Male, 19, Stockport)

"I'd use whatever the mixture of cheapest and quickest way is. Only time I need to go somewhere is in town and the bus was free. If it was the easiest option and cheap, yes."

(Male, 20, Salford)

"I'd use it (i.e. a discounted pass) to be fair. I pay £82 a month every 28 days on the tram. It depends if I'm out with friends and they want to go on the bus I'd use it rather than not going out."

(Male, 20, Rochdale)

The views of businesses on concessionary passes

Whilst concessionary passes weren't raised with businesses, there was spontaneous mention by a couple of participants who highlighted the need to **maintain current concessionary fares for elderly and disabled passengers** in any new model.

5.6 Requirement for GMCA to invest in the bus network

There was a general acceptance that **GMCA funding is required in order to keep the bus network running** and continue to provide a service to those who need it. It was initially likened by one participant to education funding:

"At some point you're going to use that. It's like paying for education. Someone else might need to use it, or you might, eventually."

(Male, 48, Salford)

Amongst some participants there was support for taxpayer's money to continue to be invested in this way. Some also discussed the importance of creating an **environmentally sustainable bus network for the future**- encouraging people out of cars and into public transport to reduce overall emissions. The objectives to reduce car journeys and promote more sustainable travel habits was therefore well supported overall.

"It's massive for the future. For the future environment for our children. It's imperative. The only way you'll get people to use it is to make it affordable...you need to get cars off the road."

(Female, 37, Stockport)

“Very important [creating environmentally sustainable bus travel]. You can’t increase people using the bus and not put the money in.”

(Male, 27, Salford)

“If you’re not going to invest, people are going to use more cars, you’ve got to think of the environment.”

(Male, 54, Rochdale)

However, there were concerns about the **cost to the public** of these measures, although a broad acceptance that they are largely necessary in order to sustain the network and enable travel for those in isolated areas or who require additional funding support.

There was also an observation that **significant investment has gone into the tram network**, which is perceived to be effective and popular, so directing further investment towards other modes may be of future benefit to GMCA.

“It’s not just about buses. It’s about getting more people on public transport. It’s more of a unified thing with tram and trains.”

(Male, 35, Rochdale)

The views of businesses on the requirement for GMCA to invest in the bus network

The businesses echoed the thoughts of the public, emphasising the **importance of maintaining smaller and sometimes less popular routes that many people rely on**. GMCA therefore plays an important role in providing the funding to sustain these services.

6 Summary of findings: The Economic Case

6.1 Introduction

This section summarises key insights from the qualitative discussions about the Economic Case.

TfGM presented detail from the Consultation Document about the Economic Case and its conclusion.⁸

The subsequent discussion explored the following question:

- The Economic Case concludes that the Proposed Franchising Scheme provides the best value for money compared to the partnership options because it would:
 - offer a ‘high’ ratio of benefits to the cost to GMCA, one which is broadly comparable with the partnership options;
 - provide the most economic value (Net Present Value); and
 - create the best platform from which further economic value could be delivered.

What comments do you have in response to the Economic Case of the bus reform options we’ve just discussed?

It should be noted that, focus group participants did not discuss the Economic Case in detail, nor were they presented with any background from the Consultation Document. Basic detail about the Economic and Financial Cases were presented to the business groups, specifically the headline conclusions from the Economic Case and the funding proposal for the Proposed Franchising Scheme.

⁸ See Section 04 in the workshop presentation in the Appendix.

6.2 Summary of key findings

- The **Economic Case put forward was hard for the public to grasp**. Participants found it very difficult to understand NPV and there was scepticism around the benefits presented;
- Participants immediately wanted to know who was going to pay, raising **concerns that it would be the tax payer**;
- One of the most convincing elements of the Economic Case was the **convenience that will be passed on to the passenger** in terms of consistent pricing and integrated ticketing.
- The Proposed Franchising Scheme was also seen as being good for the economy in that it connected residents for employment as well as having environmental and social benefits for example by being able to control vehicle standards and emissions;
- There was a broad acceptance that in order to get the best service, there would need to be some large upfront investment. However, **the initial cost outlay of £134.5m was seen as substantial**, which made some people hesitant about the proposal;
- Businesses particularly, highlighted issues around **less profitable routes** and how these would be serviced under the Proposed Franchising Scheme. There were concerns that the Scheme overall wouldn't work on the basis that it would be unsustainable due to low profit margins;
- The **forecast on impact of patronage was met with a mixed response**. Some groups responded to the figures with great surprise, while for others the drop in patronage was in line with their expectations. Many groups could see the potential for the Proposed Franchising Scheme to arrest the level of decline in patronage; and
- Some participants were keen to see that **the Scheme is reviewed as it progresses** to ensure adaptations are made when things change and any poor performance from franchisees is addressed. Some individuals also expressed a wish that these further interventions took account of the whole public transport network.

6.3 Initial comments and clarifications

The TfGM presentation on **the Economic Case was met with a fair amount of confusion**. Participants felt that the figures didn't explain what the benefits would actually be, and the Economic Case put forward was hard for the public to grasp and understand. Participants had questions about the detail of the Economic Case and also about the process of developing it. These clarifications were asked during the deliberative workshops and TfGM responded to them. Some of the key clarifications included:

- **What benefits are they measuring/counting** and how they are calculated? Clarification around Net Present Value (NPV), what it actually meant, and that it included intangible benefits, not just profits;
- Did the Economic Case go through some **arbitration**?
- A request by some to see **more figures including current costs**;

“They didn’t give us all of the figures. All we have seen is what they’re paying out, but we need to see what the current cost and what they’re paying out will be.”

(Male, 40, Trafford)

- Confusion around the **use of figures from ten years ago**;

“Why is it based on figures from 10 years ago? I’m sure they have figures for each year.”

(Male, 28, Oldham)

- On **partnership options**, what would the money be spent on?
- Why would **depots** come under TfGM control? It was felt that using old depots was preferable over building new buildings (from an environmental and cost saving perspective);
- There was an interest in **what the operators might think about the proposals** - would they bid for the packages on offer? Would there be due diligence done on the tender process?

“Would they have to put tenders in?”

(Female, 56, Oldham)

- Participants also wanted to know **who was going to pay, raising concerns that it would be the taxpayer**. Linked to this were questions about the impact on ticket pricing and concessionary fares.

“Where’s the funding coming from? Will Council Tax go up?”

(Male, 73, Stockport)

“We talked about London and Barcelona. How is that deducted from their taxes? If there’s to be a figure on my Council Tax bill, how will that look? Will it go up, down, or stay the same?”

(Female, 68, Bolton)

Participants were sceptical about **whether the price of tickets would decrease** and that cost savings would not necessarily be passed on to them. They worried that prices would go up gradually under this system in order to pay for it, expressing concern that it might be cheap at the outset, but then become more expensive.

Some wanted to know what would happen to **concessionary and young people bus passes**, and there was concern that these could be adversely affected. Others wanted to know to what extent **the fleet would be upgraded** and whether operators would pay, or if they, as passengers, would end up paying with higher ticket prices. There were also questions around the potential fare system – for example, if it was zonal, would someone going two stops pay the same as someone going twenty stops?

6.4 Most and least convincing elements of the Economic Case

One of the most convincing elements of the Economic Case was the **convenience** that will be passed on to the passenger. The public were particularly convinced by the promise of a **more stable, convenient, and better service** since the Proposed Franchising Scheme would give TfGM the ability to regulate

providers. They were hopeful there would be more **consistency around both service and price, regardless of the area they lived in**. Paying the cheapest price to get to a destination was a high priority which appealed.

"Most convincing would be the convenience, if it works out, if it does work."

(Female, 27, Oldham)

Some participants were convinced by the **higher net benefits of the Proposed Franchising Scheme**. While they thought that the first few years of franchising would be expensive, many felt that the costs would level off, and the bus network would ultimately become more sustainable.

"I think it's the benefits. They're much higher than the other schemes. It's the net benefits."

(Male, 55, Bury)

There was a **broad acceptance that in order to get the best service, there would need to be some large upfront investment** and so long as the current system would improve, there was an acceptance that this investment was necessary. Participants assumed in the franchise model that profits would go to TfGM to reinvest rather than to bus operators, and this was received very positively.

"You've got to put in what you get out of it. With £111 million⁹ you'll get all the new systems, even though you're putting more in, you're getting more out."

(Female)

"No value in having a poor running service. You pay for ease and comfort and by changing the system the benefits are huge. With other systems it seems [to me that] you're sticking to what's easy and already there. You need to put money in to get money out."

(Male, 21, Bury)

The Proposed Franchising Scheme was seen as being **good for the economy as well as having environmental and social benefits**:

- People would be able to **get to work easily and more money would be spent in shops and in town centres**;
- More buses mean that more people would be able to **access public services** such as hospitals, schools and libraries, which was viewed as very positive; and
- **People may reduce their car usage**, thereby making a positive impact on the environment.

When considering these combined positive impacts of the Proposed Franchising Scheme, it was viewed as a way to **future-proof the city and make things better for future generations**.

⁹ £111m was presented in the deliberative sessions to show the Present Value of Costs (PVC 2010)

“Thinking of your children and your grandchildren, it’s going to be for them. They’ve got to try to see how it works.”

(Female, 68, Wigan)

However, the **initial cost outlay of £134.5m was seen as a substantial upfront investment, particularly in comparison to the other options**, which made some people hesitant about the proposal. There was a feeling that this initial expense would be spent on rebranding and buying depots, and therefore not have any obvious benefit to an improvement in service.

The **length of time** the proposals would take to implement was an issue for some. Although they acknowledged it is a long-term vision, they wanted to be able to see a difference quicker. They particularly wanted to see short-term benefits that would make a tangible difference to them.

Some people had **concerns around the impact on bus operators**. One or two participants felt it was slightly unfair on bus operators which had built up a business over the last 20 years to have that removed and be stripped of their identity in the city if they became franchisees. Other participants were concerned about the risk of creating monopolies for the big companies.

“It’s monopolising the market...the big companies knock the small companies out of the water.”

(Female, 35, Wigan)

There were also fears that bus providers may be put off bidding due to **unprofitable routes**. Linked to this were general concerns about subsidising routes, which some felt would be an excessive and unnecessary cost, especially if patronage remains low.

“How do we set up routes in areas that are more difficult to sell, rather than just looking at the market forces? Regarding the franchises, what happens with the ones that aren’t profitable?”

(Male, 55, Bury)

6.5 Insights concerning Net Present Value

Participants found it very difficult to understand NPV. More explanation was required to clearly translate the benefits, and questions were asked of the TfGM representative on the day. For example, the fact that the Proposed Franchising Scheme had slightly less efficient Benefit Cost Ratio took a lot of explaining, and the Proposed Franchising Scheme NPV and Benefit Cost Ratio did raise doubts. For those who could understand some of the benefits, there was a call for more evidence.

“The customer benefits in the reduced cost of the fares, and more services in more areas. That’s where you know you will benefit. This net benefit, I want more of a breakdown of what we’re getting out of it. I’m not convinced congestion will be reduced, with population growth.”

(Male, 32, Trafford)

There was **scepticism around the benefits presented** with some people left unconvinced by the figures and how that money could be converted into tangible paybacks they would see day-to-day. There was a feeling from some that the benefits laid out seemed only to be applicable to the GMCA (i.e. as profits).

Beyond this, there were questions as to whether 'benefits' should be considered as such, or rather, simply part of a standard service anyway.

"It seems sketchy, that £345 million figure. I'm not sure how you measure the benefits. It seems very much an estimate. It's very difficult to measure the benefits of it. That's a concern, where that figure has come from."

(Male, 32, Trafford)

"I'm not understanding is when you say benefits, buses improved they should be at that standard anyway."

(Male, 21, Bury)

There was also some concern about **cost projections** due to known over-runs on other projects the public were aware of, such as HS2. However, not everyone was sceptical, as some people felt that the £111 million¹⁰ spend represented good value for money.

"I think it's good that the Proposed Franchising Scheme has just one expenditure. The fact that it delivers so much more net present value is good. If you split it out with smaller projects, you end up spending £111 million on all the costs and consultation. I think it's good bundled into one."

(Male, 27, Tameside)

With many finding NPV hard to grasp, some participants were left looking for **more tangible paybacks that they could realise quickly, such as guaranteed ticket prices**. With the benefits as presented it was felt that there was not enough incentive to prevent people from using their cars over buses.

6.6 Forecast of the impact of reform on patronage

The forecast of the impact of bus market reform on patronage was met with a mixed response.

Some participants responded to the figures with great surprise, while for others the drop in patronage was in line with their expectations. The former based their surprise on what they observed day to day with bus usage. For the latter, the assumption was that young people, as soon as they reach the legal driving age, are keen to turn their backs on public transport. There was also an assumption that some of the decline would be as a result of new Metrolink lines, and the modal shift that these could bring about.

"About the decline, people don't have time to be waiting for buses. The journey is so long, it's no wonder people don't use buses."

(Female, 20, Oldham)

There was some **confusion about why patronage is going down** and participants asked for the key factors behind the figures. Linked to this, some felt uncertain as to **why such a large amount of money was being invested into a declining mode of transport**.

¹⁰ £111m was presented in the deliberative sessions to show the Present Value of Costs (PVC 2010)

"I'm trying to get my head round it. What's the point in all this if it's going down? Why invest so much money?"

(Male, 44, Tameside)

However, **many participants could see the potential for the proposal to arrest the sharpness of the decline** and bought into arguments that additional investment and potential to decrease fares could arrest it, while reducing traffic and improving the environment. At least one participant felt that, after seeing the figures on decline in patronage, the franchising proposal didn't go far enough.

"If you look at what she just said then, it's a no-brainer. The decline is going to happen, but it will make it less."

(Male, 55, Bury)

"Maybe it's not ambitious enough - if the aim is to reduce car journeys, it's surprising that buses are going to fall."

(Male)

Most groups saw the environmental importance of reducing carbon footprints by encouraging people to use public transport. **Greener, quicker and reduced times at bus stops were all cited as factors that would make a difference to whether people use buses more.** However, this was qualified with the point that as long as driving, or taxi services such as Uber remain cheaper, more convenient and more comfortable, bus patronage is likely to continue to decline. The only way participants thought this may change was if a congestion charge was introduced, or if parking became impossible.

6.7 The need for further, future (Phase 2) intervention

Some groups were keen to see that **the Scheme is reviewed as it progresses** to ensure adaptations are made when things change. Similarly, they wanted reassurance that poor performance by franchises would be held to account.

"I assume it will get reviewed even though it's a 30-year plan. It must get reviewed in 10 years. Things change."

(Female, 30, Trafford)

"They should review it every 3 years. If they can't keep it, they should lose the contract and it would go back to the bidding again."

(Male, 24, Stockport)

"Will there be financial implications to the companies if they don't meet their service level agreements? If they promise something and they don't do it, do they have something they have to meet?"

(Female, 35, Wigan)

There were some people who felt TfGM should go further and **reinvest over the whole public transport system**, rather than focusing on buses which have declining patronage. Certain groups felt that trams, in particular, were more popular than buses and so they should not miss out on investment.

"I want to know the money will be put into the (entire public transport) system, rather than the buses, which are declining."

(Male, 30, Bury)

"If they're doing all this, why don't they publicise the whole system?"

(Male, 24, Stockport)

6.8 The views of businesses on the economic case

Basic detail about the Economic and Financial Cases were presented to the business groups, specifically the headline conclusions from the economic case for the Proposed Franchising Scheme.

In line with concerns raised by some of the general public, businesses highlighted issues around **less profitable routes** and how these would be serviced under the Proposed Bus Franchising Scheme. They felt that if routes were already unprofitable, operators would not want to run them or be able to sustain them.

"In theory sounds great and will improve the customer experience but dubious about the cost or how the members could make it work for little margin."

(Small business, Trafford)

There were concerns that the franchise system overall wouldn't work on the basis that it would be **unsustainable due to low profit margins**.

"I see a situation where franchise holders will find it unsustainable and will withdraw from the agreement."

(Medium-sized business, Bury)

"I have seen too many times all these companies take over franchise - promising the earth and then having to give them up due to extremely low profit or running at a loss, it simply doesn't work. Margins are too low. You are asking business people and we will give an honest answer."

(Small business, Trafford)

Finally, businesses worried about **the impact of lower profit margins on the standards of the bus fleet**. They raised questions about whether bus companies would be able and/or willing to provide the desired standard of service with the promised profit margins.

7 Summary of findings: The Financial Case

7.1 Introduction

This section summarises key insights from the qualitative discussions about the Financial Case.

TfGM presented detail from the Consultation Document about the Financial Case.¹¹ This included information about the funding requirement, the three 'pillars' of funding, an explanation of the funding sources and the implication for taxpayers.

The subsequent discussion explored the following questions:

- What comments do you have in response to the financial case of the Proposed Franchising Scheme?
- What do you think about the investment necessary to move from the current operating model to the Proposed Franchising Scheme ?
- What do you think about the proposed funding sources for the Proposed Franchising Scheme ?
- The Financial Case concludes that GMCA could afford to introduce and operate the Proposed Franchising Scheme . After completing the Assessment and in advance of this consultation, GMCA has proposed how it would fund the introduction of a fully franchised system. Do you have any comments on these matters?

Focus group participants did not discuss the Financial Case in detail, nor were they presented with any background from the Consultation Document. Basic detail about the Financial Case was presented to the business groups, specifically the funding proposal for the Scheme.

¹¹ See Section 05 in the workshop presentation in the Appendix.

7.2 Summary of key issues

- Participants in the workshops and groups **found this topic challenging to understand** and had a lot of follow-up questions. **They were particularly keen to understand what exactly the taxpayer money would be used for**, how confident GMCA are in the numbers presented and what contingency plans were in place if the Financial Case was not correct;
- Participants in the deliberative workshops were **split between those who thought this was a good use of Council Tax and/or GMCA resources more generally because it would improve public transport, and those who thought the money would be better spent elsewhere**. These views were not necessarily related to current bus usage as some bus users were worried about double-paying (through fares and taxes) while some non-users thought the investment would be worthwhile for the wider benefits, even if they did not use them personally;
- Many were keen to emphasise the **importance of not re-purposing funds already allocated to other council services**, such as social care, in order to pay for these changes. Their support for the Scheme was contingent on it not leading to cuts in other services, as well as the Scheme realising the benefits described in the consultation; and
- Most believed the **proposed rises in Council Tax would be affordable to them**, but they were concerned that if this was just one increase among a raft of other incremental rises in their Council Tax to fund other local authority priorities, then people may struggle to pay.

7.3 Initial responses and questions

Following the presentation by TfGM, participants had questions about the **wider financial implications of the Proposed Franchising Scheme**. Most found it quite confusing. In particular, they wanted to know:

- What the impact would be on bus fares?
- How much **profit** the operators would make and how it would be shared between TfGM and the bus companies?

"Why are we paying for a privately-owned business to run itself?"

(Male, 30, Tameside)

- How confident TfGM were in the **costing**, and how much further it might rise in future years? Which parts of the finances were definitely already agreed? What happens after the transition funding ends?

"If it's going up that much in 5 years and not taking cost of living into account, what about in 50 years."

(Female, 56, Oldham)

- What would happen if the tenders were above the anticipated budget? What other risks exist and how are they being mitigated? What happens if the company that wins the franchise fails?
- Has this been done successfully elsewhere and are these figures based on the experiences of other cities? How can we be sure that this is good value?

"I want more specifics - where exactly is the money going to be spent specifically?"

(Male)

Initially, several participants were concerned that **taxpayers were effectively paying the bus operators to do their job**, which they currently do anyway. They were not sure if that was a good use of taxpayer money and were also unclear whether **Council Tax** would definitely go up, or whether it would only go up if needed. However, others believed the investment was worthwhile.

"I think that we all agree that services are terrible and that something must be done. It's a long-term fix, which, in this day and age, is unusual."

(Male, 54, Salford)

Initial responses and questions from business

Small and medium businesses also found this part of the Proposed Franchising Scheme difficult to understand. They expressed **concerns about the amount of money needed as they were unsure whether that was good value for the taxpayer**. They assumed rises in Council Tax and business rates would be the main source of the funds. As with the public they requested more information about comparable schemes in other cities.

"Just seems like another way of lining someone's pockets."

(Small business, Wigan)

7.4 Proposed sources of funding

Participants in the workshops were split between those who thought this was **a good use of Council Tax** because it would improve public transport, and those who thought the **money would be better spent elsewhere**. Most thought the proposed Council Tax increase was not large enough to be a cause for concern. However, given the predicted continued decline in patronage some were not convinced further investment was justified.

"I don't have much to say about it really. In terms of extra Council Tax, if it's going to make a difference it's good for the people who use it."

(Female, 20, Wigan)

Reflecting their initial concerns about the relative importance of public transport, some participants expressed **a concern that any money from the Mayoral earn back funds or local authorities should not be displaced from funds already allocated** to other services such as social care.

"Councils say they have no money for everything, so where is this money coming from?"

(Male)

Some were concerned that it would not be fair on **non-bus users to make them pay for these improvements through Council Tax**. However, some non-users said they were happy to pay. Others suggested that non-users would benefit from the **reduction of carbon emissions and congestion** which might result from people using buses instead of driving. They also thought new bus routes might increase house prices.

"I didn't say I was happy paying. All you guys apart from the pensioners use the buses more than I do so I won't get the benefit of it, my Council Tax will go up for a service I don't use so I don't buy into that. I use it once or twice a week."

(Female, 33, Tameside)

A number of participants thought it was a good idea to raise some of the funding through **business rates** as they thought that **businesses would benefit from improved transport links as well**. However, there were some concerns about relying on business rates, given the number of businesses closing in the region.

"In theory it's a good idea but in practice I don't know. The amount of businesses closing because of business rates you can't rely on them."

(Female, 56, Oldham)

There were a number of suggestions about how additional funding for the Proposed Franchising Scheme could be found:

- Some participants suggested that **people should be able to invest in the franchise** and then they could get a 'cut' when they sold their shares;
- Some participants wanted to see **bus companies paying some of the bill** – they felt they already paid these companies for buses through their fares and did not want to "pay twice";
- Some participants wanted to see **more funding from central government**, in line with London's spending of central government funding on Crossrail; and
- Some participants were happy as they saw the **initial cost as an investment**, which would lead to payback in the future.

"They'll make a lot of profit over the next 30 years. By the time we get to 2030, it will fund itself. I'm hopeful."

(Male, 30, Bury)

Support for the funding proposals was largely conditional on the promised service quality improvements being realised. Some thought the investment would result in increased usage, while others pointed out that recent price rises had been accompanied by a decline rather than improvement in service levels. Several wanted to see information provided on their Council Tax bill to show where the money had been spent.

“If the service is better, that’s fine. If you’re paying more and the service isn’t better, I wouldn’t.”

(Female, 35, Wigan)

Views of young people on the proposed sources of funding

This issue was only discussed by the older age group (the 19-20 year olds). **They were broadly supportive of increasing what people pay through tax.** They thought it did not seem like a large increase. Again, their support was conditional on seeing the expected benefits materialise.

Views of business on the proposed sources of funding

Basic detail about the Economic and Financial Cases were presented to the business groups, specifically the headline conclusions from the Economic Case and the funding proposal for the Scheme.

The small and medium business groups also thought that **the council had higher priorities for funding**, including addressing the condition of the roads. They saw the money coming out of their pockets both through Council Tax and business rates and did not think it was fair to raise business rates.

“I don’t think an increase in Council Tax will go down well to use for public transport when the state of our roads is so poor.”

(Small business, Trafford)

Some were pleased to see that there was some **funding from central government** alongside the local contribution. Some expressed concern that the sources of the funding were not completely agreed and thought the work should not go ahead until all the funding was secured and in place.

7.5 Affordability of the Proposed Franchising Scheme

Although most participants felt the proposed increases in Council Tax were relatively small, **concerns about the affordability** of the Scheme and its impact on cost of living were raised in several ways:

- Bus users were keen to ensure **bus fares did not rise along with Council Tax** as they perceived this as ‘paying twice’;

“What’s going to cost us when we get on the bus? If that stays the same or gets cheaper, I’m prepared for the Council Tax.”

(Male, 24, Stockport)

- Similarly, there were concerns that **taxes could go up further in the future** to continue funding the Scheme, leading to it becoming unaffordable.

“I’m worried it will cost a lot more. I can be persuaded either way, I think it’s a good idea, I just find these schemes are costed in favour of the person who wants it to happen. It’s usually not a true reflection of what you’re working with.”

(Female, 34, Rochdale)

- Others were concerned that, when added with other rises in tax and the cost of living, the increase could make life more difficult for people.

As noted above, some participants were concerned about **whether the local authority could afford this investment**. They did not want to see other services being cut back to pay for improvements to buses. These concerns led some people to reduce their support for the proposal.

Views of young people on the affordability of the Proposed Franchising Scheme

The young people (16-18 year olds) thought it would be important to ensure that bus fares remain affordable. They thought **price was a key driver of behaviour** and if the cost increased then many people would use cars more.

Views of business on the affordability of the Proposed Franchising Scheme

Although businesses did not welcome increased taxes, **some considered the Scheme affordable and 'a good deal'**. Others questioned whether £134.5m was typical for a scheme of this size and ambition, as it sounded like a lot of money.

Appendix A – Glossary

Key terms	Definition
Concessionary pass	A form of discount to enable eligible people to travel on reduced fares or for free.
Deliberative workshop	Deliberative workshops are a form of facilitated group discussions that provide participants with the opportunity to consider an issue in depth, provide spontaneous opinions, challenge each other's opinions and develop their views/arguments to reach an informed position.
Deregulated bus services	Bus services that are run by commercial bus companies who decide the routes, timetables, fares and standards. The bus companies receive the revenue from fares and retain the profits.
Focus group	A qualitative research method which brings together a group of individuals to discuss and provide feedback on a product, service, concept, or campaign. These can be held online or face-to-face.
Franchising	An operating model under which a central body specifies what bus services are to be provided and decides the routes, timetables and fares. The services themselves are operated under contract by private companies through a competitive tendering process.
Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA)	The devolved combined authority body of Greater Manchester. Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) is made up of the ten Greater Manchester local authorities (Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan) and the GM Mayor and works with other local services, businesses, communities and other partners to improve the city-region.
Our Pass	Free travel bus pass across Greater Manchester for all 16-18 year olds, as well as half price Metrolink travel and offers/discounts/tickets
Oyster card	A contactless smart card for public transport across the Transport for London network. An Oyster card is 'topped up' by its owner with money that is used to pay the fares for public transport, or season tickets can be loaded onto the card.
Partnership	Alternative models to franchising. This involves working with the bus operators in different ways than franchising to improve services, either through a voluntary agreement or through a legal scheme.
Proposed Franchising Scheme ("the Scheme")	Taking bus services under Greater Manchester's control – whereby TfGM on behalf of GMCA would set routes, timetables, fares and standards. The bus companies would competitively bid for contracts in order to run services on GMCA's behalf.
Subsidise	To pay part of the cost of a service or product.
Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM)	Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) is Greater Manchester's Passenger Transport Executive, the public body responsible for coordinating Greater Manchester's transport strategy and delivering its objectives.

Appendix B – Participant profiles

Deliberative Event 1 – Saturday 23rd November Attendee Breakdown

Age	SEG	Gender	Respondent Occupation	Local authority residence (Q3)	Area live in (Q3a)	Ethnicity (Q11)	Long-standing health problems (Q12)	Access to a car (Q19)	Frequency travel by bus (Q20a)	Primary mode of transport (Q21)
64	E	F	Non-working	Salford	Urban	White British	No	No	Once a fortnight	Taxi
48	B	M	Regional Manager	Salford	Urban	White British	No	Yes	At least once every 3 months	Train
30	B	M	Web Designer	Salford	Urban	Black Caribbean	No	Yes	5 days a week or more	Bus
20	C1	F	Administrator	Wigan	Semi-rural	White British	No	Yes	5 days a week or more	Bus
29	C2	F	Non-working	Wigan	Semi-rural	Thai	No	Yes	5 days a week or more	Bus
59	C2	F	Non-working	Wigan	Urban	White British	No	Yes	At least once every 3 months	Taxi
20	C1	F	Student	Wigan	Semi-rural	White British	No	Yes	2-3 days a week	Bus
43	C2	M	Operations Manager	Salford	Urban	White British	No	No	Not used in the last 12 months	Train, Cycling
73	C2	M	Retired Electrician	Stockport	Semi-rural	White British	Yes	Yes	Not used in the last 12 months	Car - In non-electric vehicle
48	C1	M	Administrator	Manchester	Urban	White British	No	Yes	5 days a week or more	Tram
37	C1	F	Conference Consultant	Stockport	Urban	White British	No	Yes	2-3 days a week	By taxi

Age	SEG	Gender	Respondent Occupation	Local authority residence (Q3)	Area live in (Q3a)	Ethnicity (Q11)	Long-standing health problems (Q12)	Access to a car (Q19)	Frequency travel by bus (Q20a)	Primary mode of transport (Q21)
70	C2	M	Retired BT Engineer	Stockport	Semi-rural	White British	Yes	Yes	Once a week	Tram
39	D	M	Shop Worker	Tameside	Urban	Pakistani	No	No	5 days a week or more	Bus
58	C1	F	Receptionist	Manchester	Urban	Black Caribbean	No	No	2-3 days a week	Bus
23	B	F	Teacher	Manchester	Urban	Pakistani	No	No	At least once a month	Walking
29	D	F	Catering Assistant	Stockport	Semi-rural	White British	No	No	5 days a week or more	Bus
58	E	F	Non-working	Manchester	Urban	White British	No	Yes	Once a fortnight	Walking
37	C2	M	Sheet Metal Worker	Oldham	Urban	White and Black Caribbean	No	Yes	At least once a year	Car - In non-electric vehicle
30	D	M	Driver	Tameside	Urban	Pakistani	No	No	5 days a week or more	N/A
56	B	F	Lecturer	Trafford	Semi-rural	White British	No	No	5 days a week or more	N/A
56	C1	F	Administrator	Oldham	Semi-rural	White British	Yes	Yes	At least once a month	Tram
33	C1	F	Estate Agent	Tameside	Urban	Pakistani	No	Yes	Once a week	Car - In non-electric vehicle, Bus
24	D	F	Retail Assistant	Tameside	Semi-rural	White British	No	Yes	Not used in the last 12 months	Car - In non-electric vehicle, Tram
51	D	F	Bakery Assistant	Trafford	Semi-rural	Indian	No	Yes	4 days a week	Tram

Age	SEG	Gender	Respondent Occupation	Local authority residence (Q3)	Area live in (Q3a)	Ethnicity (Q11)	Long-standing health problems (Q12)	Access to a car (Q19)	Frequency travel by bus (Q20a)	Primary mode of transport (Q21)
44	C2	M	Painter & Decorator	Tameside	Rural	White British	No	Yes	At least once every 3 months	Car - In non-electric vehicle, Tram
34	C2	M	Voice Engineer	Bury	Semi-rural	White British	No	Yes	At least once a month	Car - In non-electric vehicle, Tram
32	B	M	Accountant	Trafford	Urban	White British	No	Yes	Not used in the last 12 months	Car - In non-electric, vehicle, Tram
21	D	M	Student	Bury	Urban	Pakistani	No	Yes	Once a fortnight	Tram
20	D	F	Student	Rochdale	Urban	Pakistani	No	No	5 days a week or more	Bus
28	C1	M	Manager	Oldham	Urban	Pakistani	No	Yes	4 days a week	Bus
27	C1	F	Teaching Assistant	Oldham	Urban	Pakistani	No	Yes	At least once a month	Car - In electric vehicle (either as driver or passenger)
32	B	F	Civil Engineer	Bolton	Semi-rural	White British	Yes	No	Not used in the last 12 months	By taxi
38	B	F	H.R. MGR.	Bolton	Rural	White British	No	Yes	Not used in the last 12 months	Tram
39	C1	F	Youth Worker	Bolton	Semi-rural	White British	No	Yes	At least once a month	Car - In electric

Age	SEG	Gender	Respondent Occupation	Local authority residence (Q3)	Area live in (Q3a)	Ethnicity (Q11)	Long-standing health problems (Q12)	Access to a car (Q19)	Frequency travel by bus (Q20a)	Primary mode of transport (Q21)
										vehicle (either as driver or passenger)
58	C2	M	Caretaker	Oldham	Semi-rural	White British	No	Yes	2-3 days a week	Bus
57	D	M	Laundry Worker	Rochdale	Rural	White British	No	Yes	At least once a year	Car - In non-electric vehicle (either as driver or passenger)
69	D	F	Cleaner	Bolton	Semi-rural	White British	Yes	No	5 days a week or more	Bus
63	D	M	Support Worker	Bury	Urban	White British	No	Yes	Not used in the last 12 months	Tram
34	C1	F	Admin	Rochdale	Semi-rural	White British	No	Yes	Once a fortnight	Tram
68	C2	M	Retired Team Leader	Rochdale	Semi-rural	White British	No	Yes	5 days a week or more	Bus

Deliberative Event 2 – Saturday 30th November Attendee Breakdown

Age	SEG	Gender	Respondent Occupation	Local authority residence (Q3)	Ethnicity (Q11)	Long-standing health problems (Q12)	Access to a car (Q19)	Frequency travel by bus (Q20a)	Primary mode of transport (Q21)
27	C1	M	Bank Official	Salford	White British	No	Yes	5 days a week or more	Bus
54	C1	M	Business Development Manager	Salford	White British	No	Yes	5 days a week or more	Bus
55	C2	M	Maintenance, Property	Salford	White British	No	Yes	At least once every 3 months	Train
68	E	F	Retired	Wigan	White British	Yes	Yes	Once a fortnight	By taxi
20	D	M	Support Worker	Wigan	White British	No	Yes	Once a fortnight	By taxi
24	C2	F	Administrator, Estate Agent	Salford	Mixed	No	Yes	Once a fortnight	Train, Walking
40	E	F	Unemployed	Salford	White British	No	Yes	5 days a week or more	Bus
35	C1	F	Administrator, Health	Wigan	White British	No	Yes	4 days a week	Bus
69	E	F	Retired	Wigan	White British	Yes	Yes	5 days a week or more	Bus
26	E	F	Non-Working	Manchester	Black Caribbean	No	No	Once a fortnight	Walking
24	C2	M	Support Worker	Stockport	White British	No	No	5 days a week or more	Walking
32	C2	M	HGV Driver	Manchester	White and Asian	No	Yes	At least once a year	Other
55	D	M	Carer	Stockport	White British	No	No	2-3 days a week	Bus
21	C2	M	Scaffolder	Manchester	Black Caribbean	No	Yes	Once a week	Bus
36	D	F	Sales Assistant	Manchester	Black Caribbean	No	No	2-3 days a week	Bus
41	C1	M	Traffic Officer	Manchester	White British	No	Yes	At least once a month	Tram
69	D	F	Retired Cleaner	Stockport	White British	Yes	Yes	Once a week	Bus

Age	SEG	Gender	Respondent Occupation	Local authority residence (Q3)	Ethnicity (Q11)	Long-standing health problems (Q12)	Access to a car (Q19)	Frequency travel by bus (Q20a)	Primary mode of transport (Q21)
42	D	F	Cleaner	Stockport	White British	No	Yes	Not used in the last 12 months	By taxi
70	C1	F	Receptionist	Stockport	White British	No	Yes	At least once a year	Tram
21	D	M	Engineer	Oldham	White British	No	Yes	4 days a week	Other
20	D	F	Student	Oldham	Pakistani	No	No	5 days a week or more	Other
30	C1	M	Insurance Claims Officer	Bury	White British	No	No	Not used in the last 12 months	Tram
34	C1	M	Administration Officer	Bolton	White British	No	Yes	Once a fortnight	Car
44	D	F	Sales Assistant	Bolton	White British	No	Yes	At least once a month	By taxi
40	B	F	Administrator	Rochdale	Pakistani	No	Yes	4 days a week	By taxi
54	B	M	Security Terminal Manager	Rochdale	White British	No	Yes	Not used in the last 12 months	Car
55	C1	M	Photographer	Bury	Indian	No	Yes	At least once every 3 months	Car
49	D	F	Non-Working	Rochdale	Pakistani	Yes	Yes	At least once a month	Car
68	C2	F	Shop Assistant	Bolton	White British	No	No	4 days a week	Other
72	E	F	Retired	Bolton	White British	Yes	Yes	2-3 days a week	Other
35	E	M	Non-Working	Rochdale	White British	Yes	No	5 days a week or more	Bus
19	C1	M	Bar Manager	Bury	White British	No	No	Once a week	Tram
27	B	M	Account Manager	Tameside	White British	No	Yes	2-3 days a week	Train
48	C1	F	Legal Assistant	Tameside	White British	Yes	No	5 days a week or more	Bus
29	C1	F	Accounts Clerk	Trafford	Mixed	No	Yes	5 days a week or more	Bus
57	E	F	Non-Working	Oldham	White and Black Caribbean	Yes	Yes	2-3 days a week	Bus & Walk

Age	SEG	Gender	Respondent Occupation	Local authority residence (Q3)	Ethnicity (Q11)	Long-standing health problems (Q12)	Access to a car (Q19)	Frequency travel by bus (Q20a)	Primary mode of transport (Q21)
23	B	M	Accountancy Manager	Tameside	White British	No	Yes	Not used in the last 12 months	Taxi
40	D	M	Factory Worker	Trafford	Black African	No	Yes	2-3 days a week	Tram & Train
30	C1	F	Sales Assistant	Trafford	Indian	No	Yes	Not used in the last 12 months	Tram
28	D	M	Bakery Operative	Oldham	White British	No	Yes	5 days a week or more	Bus

Young people focus groups – Group 1 – Tuesday 3rd December Attendee Breakdown – 11-15 year olds

Age	SEG	Gender	Respondent occupation	Local authority currently live in (Q4a)	Area live in (Q4b)	Ethnicity (Q11)	Any long-standing health problem or disability (Q12)	Nature of your condition (Q13)	Any adaptations or considerations (Q15)	Working status (Q16)	Frequency travel by bus (Q18)	Time(s) usually travel by bus (Q19)	Ever travelled by bus more often than you do now (Q20)	How regularly did you travel by bus (Q20b)	Primary mode of transport when travelling around Greater Manchester (Q21)
11	C1	F	Student	Trafford	Urban	Other Mixed/Multiple ethnic background	No	N/A	N/A	In education or training	Once a fortnight	Off peak	N/A	N/A	In non-electric vehicle
14	B	F	Student	Salford	Urban	White and Black African	No	N/A	N/A	In education or training	5 days a week or more	Peak time	N/A	N/A	Bus
15	D	M	Student	Oldham	Urban	Pakistani	Yes	Mental health condition	No	In education or training	Not used in the last 12 months	N/A	Yes	2-3 days a week	In non-electric vehicle
13	C2	F	Student	Bolton	Semi-rural	White British	No	N/A	N/A	In education or training	At least once every 3 months	Off peak	N/A	N/A	N/A
11	C1	M	Student	Oldham	Rural	White British	No	N/A	N/A	In education or training	5 days a week or more	Peak time	N/A	N/A	N/A
11	C1	F	Student	Manchester	Urban	White and Black Caribbean	No	N/A	N/A	In education or training	5 days a week or more	Peak time	N/A	N/A	Bus
14	C1	M	Student	Manchester	Urban	White British	No	N/A	N/A	In education or training	5 days a week or more	Peak time	N/A	N/A	Bus
12	C1	M	Student	Trafford	Semi-rural	White British	No	N/A	N/A	In education or training	At least once every 3 months	Off peak	N/A	N/A	In non-electric vehicle

Group 2 – Wednesday 4th December Attendee Breakdown – 16-18 year olds

Age	SEG	Gender	Respondent occupation	Local authority currently live in (Q4a)	Area live in (Q4b)	Ethnicity (Q11)	Any long-standing health problem or disability (Q12)	Nature of your condition (Q13)	Any adaptations or considerations (Q15)	Working status (Q16)	Frequency travel by bus (Q18)	Time(s) usually travel by bus (Q19)	Ever travelled by bus more often than you do now (Q20)	How regularly did you travel by bus (Q20b)	Primary mode of transport when travelling around Greater Manchester (Q21)
16	B	M	Student	Rochdale	Semi-rural	White British	No	N/A	N/A	In education or training	At least once every 3 months	Off peak	N/A	N/A	N/A
16	C1	F	Student	Oldham	Rural	White British	No	N/A	N/A	In education or training, Employed part-time	5 days a week or more	Peak time	N/A	N/A	N/A
17	D	M	Student	Oldham	Urban	Pakistani	Yes	Mental health condition	No	In education or training	Not used in the last 12 months	N/A	Yes	2-3 days a week	Tram
16	D	M	Student	Stockport	Urban	White British	No	N/A	N/A	In education or training	Once a week	Peak time	N/A	N/A	N/A
17	C1	F	Student	Stockport	Semi-rural	White British	No	N/A	N/A	In education or training	5 days a week or more	Peak time	N/A	N/A	N/A
17	B	F	Trainee Cake Maker	Bury	Semi-rural	White British	No	N/A	N/A	Apprenticeship	5 days a week or more	Peak time	N/A	N/A	N/A
18	C1	M	Trainee Accountant	Bury	Semi-rural	White British	No	N/A	N/A	Apprenticeship	Once a week	Peak time	N/A	N/A	N/A
17	B	F	Student	Bury	Semi-rural	White European	No	N/A	N/A	In education or training	5 days a week or more	Peak time	N/A	N/A	N/A

Group 3 – Thursday 5th December Attendee Breakdown – 19-20 year olds

Age	SEG	Gender	Respondent occupation	Local authority currently live in (Q4a)	Area live in (Q4b)	Ethnicity (Q11)	Any long-standing health problem or disability (Q12)	Nature of your condition (Q13)	Any adaptations or considerations (Q15)	Working status (Q16)	Frequency travel by bus (Q18)	Time(s) usually travel by bus (Q19)	Ever travelled by bus more often than you do now (Q20)	How regularly did you travel by bus (Q20b)	Primary mode of transport when travelling around Greater Manchester (Q21)
19	D	F	Student	Oldham	Urban	Pakistani	No	N/A	N/A	In education or training	5 days a week or more	Peak time, Off peak	N/A	N/A	N/A
20	B	M	Banking Consultant	Rochdale	Semi-rural	White British	No	N/A	N/A	Employed full-time	Not used in the last 12 months	N/A	Yes	5 days a week or more	Tram
20	C2	F	Non-Working	Oldham	Semi-rural	White British	No	N/A	N/A	Looking for work/unemployed	At least once a month	Peak time, Off peak	N/A	N/A	N/A
20	D	F	Student	Stockport	Semi-rural	White British	No	N/A	N/A	In education or training	5 days a week or more	Peak time	N/A	N/A	Bus
20	C1	M	Student	Trafford	Urban	Bangladeshi	No	N/A	N/A	In education or training	5 days a week or more	Peak time	N/A	N/A	Bus
19	C1	M	Trainee Police Officer	Stockport	Rural	White British	No	N/A	N/A	In education or training	At least once a year	Off peak	Yes	5 days a week or more	In non-electric vehicle, Tram, By taxi
20	B	F	Student	Oldham	Semi-rural	White British	No	N/A	N/A	In education or training	2-3 days a week	Peak time	Yes	5 days a week or more	In non-electric vehicle, Not used in the last 12 months
20	C1	M	Student	Salford	Urban	White British	Yes	Longstanding illness or health condition	No	In education or training	Once a fortnight	Off peak	Yes	5 days a week or more	Tram

Online focus groups – Group 1 – Monday 9th December Attendee Breakdown – Outside GM residents

Age	SEG	Gender	Respondent occupation	Local authority currently live in (Q2)	How often travel into Greater Manchester (Q3a)	Time usually travel into Greater Manchester (Q3b)	Main reason for travelling into Greater Manchester (Q5)	Ethnicity (Q13)	Any long-standing health problem or disability (Q14)
50	B	F	Magistrate	West Yorkshire	Once a week	Peak time	For work or education	White British	No
42	B	M	Senior Support Worker	West Yorkshire	Once a week	Off peak	Social or other purposes	White British	No
44	E	M	Non-Working	Lancashire	Once a week	Off peak	Social or other purposes	British Indian	No
23	C1	F	IT Officer	Merseyside	3-4 days a week	Peak time	For work or education	White British	No
30	C1	M	Customer Services	Merseyside	5 days a week or more	Peak time	For work or education, Social other purposes	White British	No
21	C1	F	Welfare Officer	West Yorkshire	Once a week	Peak time	For work or education	White British	No
37	C1	F	Housing Support Worker	West Yorkshire	Once a week	Peak time	For work or education	White British	No
50	C1	M	Civil Servant	Lancashire	Once a week	Off peak	For work or education	Black British	No
34	C2	F	Beautician	Cheshire East	Once a week	Off peak	Social or other purposes	White British	No
63	D	F	Non-Working	Warrington	Once a week	Off peak	Social or other purposes	White British	Yes
45	D	F	Dog Walker	Cheshire East	4 days a week	Off peak	Social or other purposes	White British	No
33	D	M	Removals	Blackburn with Darwen	Once a week	Off peak	Social or other purposes	White British	No
41	B	F	Nurse	Lancashire	Once a week	Off peak	Social or other purposes	White British	Yes

Age	SEG	Gender	Respondent occupation	Local authority currently live in (Q2)	How often travel into Greater Manchester (Q3a)	Time usually travel into Greater Manchester (Q3b)	Main reason for travelling into Greater Manchester (Q5)	Ethnicity (Q13)	Any long-standing health problem or disability (Q14)
39	B	F	Manager, Care Home	Warrington	2-3 days a week	Peak time, Off peak	For work or education, Social other purposes	White British	No
29	C1	M	Credit Controller	Derbyshire	2-3 days a week	Peak time	For work or education	White British	No
74	D	M	Retired	Lancashire	2-3 days a week	Peak time, Off peak	Social or other purposes	White British	No
24	C1	F	Recruitment Consultant	Derbyshire	Once a week	Peak time	For work or education	White British	No

Group 2 – Tuesday 10th December Attendee Breakdown – Small business owners

SEG	Gender	Respondent occupation	Local authority currently of business (Q4)	Number of employees (Q5)	Business Sector (Q6)	Operate shift pattern working (Q7)
B	M	Company Director	Wigan	1-15	Alcohol Distribution	No
B	M	Company Director	Manchester	1-15	Retail	Yes
B	M	Company Director	Manchester	1-15	Interior Landscaping	No
B	M	Company Director	Trafford	1-15	Retail	Yes
B	F	Company Director	Trafford	1-15	Cleaning	Yes
B	M	Company Director	Trafford	1-15	Property Management	Yes
B	F	Senior Director	Trafford	1-15	Manufacturing	Yes
B	F	Company Director	Oldham	1-15	Accountants	Yes
B	M	Company Director	Trafford	1-15	Hospitality	Yes
B	M	Company Director	Bury	16-50	Catering	Yes
B	F	Company Director	Manchester	1-15	Plumbing/Heating	Yes
B	M	Company Director	Bolton	1-15	Manufacturing	No
B	M	Company Director	Bury	1-15	Recruitment	Yes

Group 3 – Thursday 12th December Attendee Breakdown – Medium business owners

SEG	Gender	Respondent occupation	Local authority currently of business (Q4)	Number of employees (Q5)	Business Sector (Q6)
B	M	Company Director	Manchester	51+	Highways Maintenance
B	M	Company Director	Manchester	51+	Retail & Manufacturing
B	M	Operations Manager/Director	Manchester	51+	Construction, Logistics, IT
B	M	CEO	Stockport	51+	Health
B	F	Company Director	Manchester	51+	Retail
B	F	Company Director	Manchester, Trafford	51+	Hospitality
B	M	Company Director	Bury	51+	Manufacturing / Wholesaler
B	M	Company Director	Manchester	51+	Manufacturing / Wholesaler
B	F	Company Director	Rochdale	51+	IT
B	F	Company Director	Manchester	51+	Catering
B	F	Company Director	Bury	51+	Social Care
B	M	Facilities Manager	Manchester	51+	Large Retailer
B	M	Company Director	Manchester	51+	Floor Inspections
B	F	Company Director	Bury	16-50	Retail
B	M	Company Director	Manchester	51+	Business

Appendix C – Discussion guides

Deliberative workshops discussion guide

'Doing Buses Differently'

Bus Reform Consultation: Deliberative Events

Saturday 23 November and Saturday 30 November

Holiday Inn, 25 Aytoun Street, Manchester, M1 3AE

8.30am	Meet in lower ground floor of Holiday Inn Hotel
8.30am-9.30am	Set up room and supporting collateral
9.30am	Meet and greet at hotel entrance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TBC to be at hotel entrance and direct delegates to lower ground floor Ensure directional signs are in place
9.40am-10.00am	Sign in delegates (lower ground floor) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up table in lower ground floor with sign in sheets, name badges, seat plan Sign-in delegates and provide name badges Invite for refreshments and breakfast (in adjacent area)
10.00am	Start of deliberative event

Guide Key:

General Instructions
Discussion questions asked to participants
Other moderator instructions
Instruction for TfGM

Arrival and Introductions

Time	Title	Facilitation Instructions / Moderator discussion questions
10.00-10.10	Welcome and introduction	<p>Chair to introduce self, Ipsos MORI and facilitators</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Thank participants for taking part in the deliberative event. 2. Explain what a deliberative event is <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>(Deliberative Workshops are a form of facilitated group discussions that provide participants with the opportunity to consider an issue in depth, challenge each other's opinions and develop their views/arguments to reach an informed position).</i> 3. Explain that each person present has something to bring to the discussion – we are keen to hear opinions from all and to that effect, will break up the event into small groups, enabling all to express themselves. 4. Explain that the topic of the event is bus reform: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reiterate the position that GMCA is proposing to introduce the Proposed Bus Franchising Scheme as the optimum way to reform buses. However, there are other options (e.g. do minimum, new partnership) and some of the discussion will need to introduce these options for comparative purposes. ○ However, focus of discussion is on the Proposed Bus Franchising Scheme. <p>The event's purpose is to: provide information outlined and articulated in the consultation document and enable participants to clarify their understanding of the Proposed Bus Franchising Scheme directly with TfGM and then provide their opinions in a group setting.</p> <p>Explain the structure of the event:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 sessions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Session 1: 10.00-11.00am: Introduction/the case for reform. Session split into two: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Gaining initial, top of mind feedback on how buses are run now. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Comments about the network and frequencies: do you have bus services which take you to where you want to go; are they sufficiently frequent; do they run at convenient times? b. Fares & tickets: are buses easy to use; is it easy to identify and buy the best ticket; do fares offer value for money? c. Service quality: are buses safe, clean, comfortable; are drivers friendly and helpful; can you find the information you need; is it easy to make a complaint? B. It would be expected for some of the detail to have already come out in the first part of this session. However, the session could then be 'interrupted' to present the 'official' case and invite reactions. Present information from the consultation document:

		<p>a. Decline in bus patronage, actual and forecast (4.13 to 4.14)</p> <p>b. Spiral of decline (4.15)</p> <p>c. Challenges associated with external trends (4.16)</p> <p>d. Effects of limited competition (4.18)</p> <p>e. Adapting to new technology (4.19)</p> <p>f. Conclusion (4.20 to 4.21)</p> <p>2. 11.00-11.15am: Tea/coffee</p> <p>3. 11.15-13.30: The Economic and Financial cases</p> <p>Single plenary presentation outlining:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The economic case 2. Affordability for GMCA/taxpayer <p>4. 13.30-14.00: Lunch</p> <p>5. 14.00-15.15: Session 3: Final questions</p> <p>The final session will bring participants together again in a plenary session to address the final questions in the consultation questionnaire about levels of support for and opposition to the Proposed Bus Franchising Scheme and any changes which might improve it. It would also deal with the question as to whether the Proposed Bus Franchising Scheme is the best way to achieve GMCA's objectives to improve bus services.</p> <p>Role of Ipsos MORI – independent research organisation, here to facilitate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everything you say is confidential – MRS rules. <p>Explain tone and nature of discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relaxed and informal • No right or wrong questions or answers • We are keen to hear about everyone's views • Please feel free to disagree with one another; just keep it polite • The moderator will make sure everyone gets a chance to share their opinion • Please try to avoid talking over one another • Plenty to get through, so the moderators may have to move people on from time to time <p>Any other housekeeping – fire alarms, facilities, etc.</p>
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Session 1: The case for reform

Time	Title	Facilitation Instructions / Moderator discussion questions
10.10-10.30	The case for reform discussion	<p>Moderators introduce selves with participants at their table.</p> <p>Moderators to reiterate ground rules.</p> <p>Ice breaker discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce to person next to you. Name + how you travelled to the venue today • Introduce pair to table • Let's talk about the buses in Greater Manchester at the moment. Whilst you will all focus on the service in your local area, please think about the services more widely. Firstly, how do you think the buses are run at the moment? • Are buses important? Why? Why not? • For what purposes are buses important? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Probe: Types of journey, types of traveller etc. • What do you think about how the buses are run now? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What is good about the buses? ○ What is not so good about the way buses currently run? ○ MAKE PARTICULAR NOTE OF: network and frequencies – routes and run at suitable times (timetable), fares & tickets, coordination and integration ○ Service quality: safety, cleanliness, drivers who are friendly/helpful, signposting (e.g. complaints etc.) routes, frequency of service, quality of fleet, real-time information • How important is it to have buses which integrate into other forms of transport? • TO NON-USERS: Why do you not use the bus at the moment? • What could be done to encourage non-users to use the bus more (invite views from both users and non-users)
10.30-10.50	How buses are run now	<p>TfGM representative to introduce key points for this section (5 mins).</p> <p>Encourage participants to make notes about what they hear if they wish.</p> <p>This summarises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How buses are run now (p13 of the Consultation Document) – 01 on the accompanying presentation <p>Moderators to ask if there are any questions arising from plenary presentation and write on flipchart.</p> <p>1. There are challenges facing the local bus market which means it is not performing as well as it could. Do you have any comments on this? issues with the bus market that you have just heard?</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What do you think about the list of issues you have just heard about? ○ PROBE REASONS GIVEN IN PRESENTATION: fares, no single brand, bus companies decide routes/frequencies (timetable), customer standards vary ○ 17% decline in bus journeys over last 10 years, 61% of daily trips taken by car, value for money ○ REFER TO REASONS GIVEN EARLIER AS WELL AND WHICH CHALLENGES THEY THINK ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO OVERCOME <p>2. To what extent do you agree or disagree with conclusion that reforming the bus market is the right thing to do to address the challenges facing the local bus market?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Probe degrees of agreement/disagreement across the 5 point scale used in consultation
<p>10.50-11.00</p>	<p>Introduction of reform options</p>	<p>TfGM representative to introduce key points for this section (10 mins). Encourage participants to make notes about what they hear if they wish. This summarises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reforming the bus market – the options 02 on the accompanying presentation <p>Play video about bus reform (c.1:40) - https://youtu.be/okjt91adSEs</p> <p>VOTE</p> <p>Each delegate will have a voting slip with the 5 points scale on it (i.e. strongly support, tend to support, neither support nor oppose, tend to oppose, strongly oppose). Before breaking, the chair will ask participants to record on their voting slip (under Vote 1 – 11am) their response to the following Q:</p> <p>To what extent do you support or oppose the introduction of the Proposed Franchising Scheme?</p> <p>Moderator please probe the main reasons why people have voted how they have.</p> <p>Chair should explain that the purpose of this is to understand how support or opposition changes as you find out more information about the proposals, so they will be asked to vote again at various points throughout the day – at these points it is fine to keep to your original opinion and it is fine to change your opinion, we will just ask you to explain the reasons behind your choice at the time.</p> <p>Chair to remind participants that there is more information contained within their delegate packs and they can read this during the refreshment break.</p>

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Break

Time	Title	Facilitation Instructions / Moderator discussion questions
11.00-11.20	Break	Short comfort break – refreshments served out in the lobby area. Please return to seats for 11.15 and bring drinks if necessary.

Session 2: The financial and economic cases

Time	Title	Facilitation Instructions / Moderator discussion questions
11.20-11.30	TfGM presentation on current public sector funding - plenary	<p>TfGM representative to introduce key points for this section – 03 in accompanying presentation. This summarises:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Current public sector funding (p13 of the Consultation Document) <p>Moderators to ask if there are any questions arising from plenary presentation and write on flipchart.</p>
11.30-11.50	Current public sector funding discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What do you think about the way buses in Greater Manchester are currently funded? What do you think about the need for GMCA to subsidise certain routes? <p>Reiterate that these routes would not run without GMCA's intervention. EXPLAIN: every GM taxpayer pays for these routes.</p> <p>GMCA also invests in infrastructure and concessionary fare schemes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How important is it for GMCA to invest in the bus network in this way? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why do you say that? <p>PROBE: What, if any, alternatives are there? What the strengths of these other alternatives? What are the weaknesses?</p>
11.50-11.55	TfGM presentation on the financial and economic cases	<p>TfGM representative to introduce key points for this section – 04 in accompanying presentation. Encourage participants to make notes about what they hear if they wish.</p> <p>This summarises:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Economic case (pp50-54) Economic case conclusion (pp53-54). <p>Moderators to ask if there are any questions arising from plenary presentation and write on flipchart.</p> <p>Moderator should explain that this section could be challenging to understand.</p>
11.55-12.25	Economic case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Economic Case concludes that the Proposed Franchising Scheme provides the best value for money compared to the partnership options because it would:

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>offer a 'high' ratio of benefits to the cost to GMCA, one which is broadly comparable with the partnership options;</i> ○ <i>provide the most economic value (Net Present Value); and</i> ○ <i>create the best platform from which further economic value could be delivered.</i> <p>What comments do you have in response to the economic case of the bus reform options we've just discussed?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the most convincing elements of the economic case? Moderator to write answers on flipchart <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Why is that? Why did that point stand out more than the others? <p>Remind participants of the benefits and probe views as to why they weren't as convinced by others</p> • What elements of the economic case are least convincing? Moderator to write answers on flipchart <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Why is that? Why did that point stand out more than the others? • Optional exercise: Moderator to explain that there are different parts of the Gtr Manchester economy which could be impacted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Residents/tax payers/property prices ○ Accessing new/wider employment opportunities ○ Businesses – accessing new/wider pools of talent • Ask participants to write on post-it notes what the impact of the economic case would be on each on the different elements of the economy and why? <p>Probe positive/negative</p>
<p>12.25-12.35</p>	<p>Economic case – the outcome</p>	<p>Moderator to show 'Future year ridership forecasts' graphic (4.61) and explain that all options will not stop decline in patronage – 05 in accompanying presentation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What comments do you have on the projected continued decline of bus use up to 2050? <p>Moderator to explain that further investment will be required to help the slow decline in patronage. The Proposed Franchising Scheme gives a 'far better platform' upon which to deliver additional investment into the bus system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What comments do you have about the potential need to intervene further into the bus system?

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What about the need for further financial investment into the network?
12.35-12.40	Vote	<p>VOTE</p> <p>Each delegate will have a voting slip with the 5 points scale on it (i.e. strongly support, tend to support, neither support nor oppose, tend to oppose, strongly oppose). Before breaking, the chair will ask participants to record on their voting slip (under Vote 2 – 12.40) their response to the following Q:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">To what extent do you support or oppose the introduction of the Proposed Franchising Scheme?</p> <p>Moderator please briefly probe the main reasons why people have voted how they have.</p>
12.40-12.45	TfGM presentation on the financial case in plenary	<p>All groups return to plenary and TfGM representative to introduce participants to the financial case – 06 in accompanying presentation.</p> <p>Encourage participants to make notes about what they hear if they wish. This summarises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The funding requirement of £122m (4.122) • The 3 'pillars' of funding (4.125) – local authorities, GM Mayor, central government • Explanation of funding sources (table on p72) • Implications for Council Tax payers (p72)
12.45-13.15	Financial case discussion	<p>Moderators to ask if there are any questions arising from plenary presentation and write on flipchart.</p> <p>Moderator to clarify that this discussion focuses only on the Proposed Franchising Scheme and not the other bus reform options.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What comments do you have in response to the financial case of the Proposed Franchising Scheme? 2. What do you think about the proposed funding sources for the Proposed Franchising Scheme? 3. What do you think about the investment necessary to move from the current operating model to the Proposed Franchising Scheme? Remind participants that this will amount to £122m over the first five years of the Proposed Franchising Scheme <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. In what way, if at all, does this change your view of the Proposed Franchising Scheme? Why do you say this? 4. The Financial Case concludes that GMCA could afford to introduce and operate the Proposed Franchising Scheme. After completing the Assessment and in advance of this consultation, GMCA has proposed how it would fund the

		<i>introduction of a fully franchised system. Do you have any comments on these matters?</i>
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Lunch

Time	Title	Facilitation
13.15-14.00	Lunch	Chair to point out where lunch will be served and advised to be back in their seats by 13.30 for the last session of the day.

Session 3: Support or opposition to the Proposed Franchising Scheme

Time	Title	Facilitation
14.00-14.05	Plenary presentation	<p>TfGM representative to introduce key points for this section – Section 07 in accompanying presentation. Encourage participants to make notes about what they hear if they wish. This summarises:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Conclusion that the Proposed Franchising Scheme is the best way to achieve GMCA's objectives to improve bus services (4.215-4.226).
14.05-14.30	Discussion in tables/plenary	<p>Chair to explain to participants that they have now heard an overview of the Proposed Bus Franchising Scheme.</p> <p>In existing tables, moderators to ask participants to work in pairs and discuss elements of what they have heard which are unclear.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Is there anything you have heard today which is unclear and you'd like to clarify?</i> <p>Pairs to write a question each and then decide between them which question to give back to moderator. Moderator to group questions on flipchart according to case (i.e. strategic, economic, financial, other).</p> <p>Moderators to select 1-2 questions from each area to ask back to the TfGM representative in plenary. Moderators please ensure you select a different question from other tables.</p>
14.30-14.35		<p>VOTE</p> <p>Each delegate will have a voting slip with the 5 points scale on it (i.e. strongly support, tend to support, neither support nor oppose, tend to oppose, strongly oppose). Before breaking, the chair will ask participants to record on their voting slip (under Vote 3 – 14.30) their response to the following Q:</p> <p><i>To what extent do you support or oppose the introduction of the Proposed Franchising Scheme?</i></p>
14.35-14.55	Group discussion on overall Proposed Franchising Scheme, probe vote	<p>Moderator should then discuss why people have voted the way they have voted. During this discussion, please focus on those whose opinions have changed to understand why and those whose opinions have not and why.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>What are the reasons why you support/neither/oppose the Proposed Bus Franchising Scheme?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>What single issue has brought you to that conclusion?</i> <i>Why was that important to you?</i> <i>TO THOSE WHOSE VOTE HAS CHANGED: Please explain why you have changed your vote?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>What specific piece of information made you change your previously held opinion on the Proposed Franchising Scheme?</i>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TO THOSE WHOSE VOTE HAS NOT CHANGED: Please explain why you have not changed your vote? What element of the case were strongest for you? <p>Moderator move on to understand if any changes could be made to the Scheme which would improve it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there any changes or improvements which could be made to the Proposed Franchising Scheme which would make you change your opinion? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are these? How would this change the Proposed Franchising Scheme? Would you support the Proposed Scheme if this change was made?
14.55-15.05	Plenary discussion	<p>Moderator to summarise the key reasons for support/neither/oppose from each table in plenary.</p> <p>Chair to give other tables opportunity to comment on anything they hear from opposing view.</p>

Closing

Time	Title	Facilitation Instructions / Moderator discussion questions
15.05-15.10	End of day reflection	<p>Participants to stay on their tables are write on post-it notes their response to the following Q:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What's the one thing you're taking away from this deliberative event about the Proposed Franchising Scheme for Greater Manchester? <p>Moderator to collate themes on flipchart.</p> <p>Chair to close the day, thanking all for their contributions.</p>

15.10 Thanks and leave/incentives

15.20 Close down

Deliberative Workshop – Supporting materials

Doing Buses Differently:

Consultation on a proposed franchising scheme for Greater Manchester

Emma Flinn
TfGM

Transport for Greater Manchester

GMCA

Ipsos MORI Ipsos



- Public body responsible for coordinating Greater Manchester’s transport strategy and delivering its objectives
- Owns the Metrolink system, as well as interchanges, bus shelters and bus stops.
- Accountable to and directed by the GMCA, the ten Greater Manchester Councils and the GM Mayor



- 10 Greater Manchester local authorities + GM Mayor
- Powers include public transport, skills, housing, regeneration, waste management and the environment as well as fire services
- Also makes decisions about transport as set out in Local Transport Act 2008

The Greater Manchester Mayor

- Chairs GMCA
- Has specific executive powers, including some related to transport
- Has the power to decide whether to introduce the proposed franchising scheme



Since 1986
bus services in Greater Manchester have been **deregulated** – they are run by commercial bus companies who decide the routes, timetables, fares and standards.

4

Greater Manchester's current bus services

150+

Fares and ticketing are complex. There are more than 150 types of ticket.

There is no single brand or source of travel information.

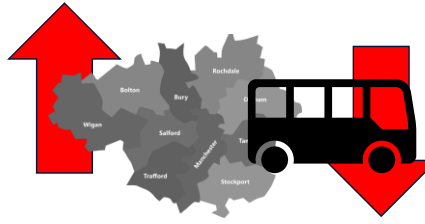
Bus companies decide which routes to run based on commercial reasons meaning some routes are well served and others less so.

Customer standards vary.

Difficult to plan a network that meets the future needs of the city region.

3/4 

Of public transport journeys in GM are by bus



Greater Manchester is growing, but bus use is falling



Limited oversight and coordination

OUR PEOPLE OUR PLACE OUR NETWORK

Greater Manchester's ten-year vision for world-class public transport



17%
decline in bus journeys over 10 years



61%
of daily trips in Greater Manchester are made by car



Target of...

50%
of all journeys in Greater Manchester to be made by foot, bike and public transport (including bus) by 2040

Vision for Bus

GMCA wants buses that:

- Integrate with the rest of the public transport network** (Icon: Bus, tram, and train icons in a circle)
- Have simple fares and tickets** (Icon: Hand holding a ticket with a pound symbol)
- Provide a consistent customer experience** (Icon: Smiling face)
- Offer value for money** (Icon: Pound symbol on a cart)



The proposed franchising scheme

What would it mean?

Taking bus services under Greater Manchester’s control – whereby TfGM on behalf of GMCA would set routes, frequencies, fares and standards. The bus companies would competitively bid for contracts in order to run services on GMCA’s behalf.

Bus franchising is currently in place in London and other cities globally.

DOING BUSES DIFFERENTLY

Have your say on how your buses are run
gmconsult.org

GMCA Greater Manchester Combined Authority



Reforming the bus market

02

9

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Legislative process

- November 2014: Devolution Deal between GM and government includes promise of powers to reform the bus market
- April 2017: Bus Services Act received Royal Assent
- June 2017: GMCA decided to use the powers in the Bus Services Act and prepare an assessment of a proposed bus franchising scheme
- The Bus Services Act requires an assessment, an audit and for the scheme to be consulted on
- The outcome of the consultation will go to the GM Mayor who will decide whether or not to implement the scheme

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Options assessed

1 Status quo

Services continue as they are, and bus operators choose services they provide. Does not deliver GMCA objectives, but no additional cost/risk compared to other options

2 New partnership

Working with bus operators in different ways to improve services

3 Proposed franchising scheme

Taking bus services under Greater Manchester's control – TfGM on behalf of GMCA would set routes, timetables, fares and standards

11

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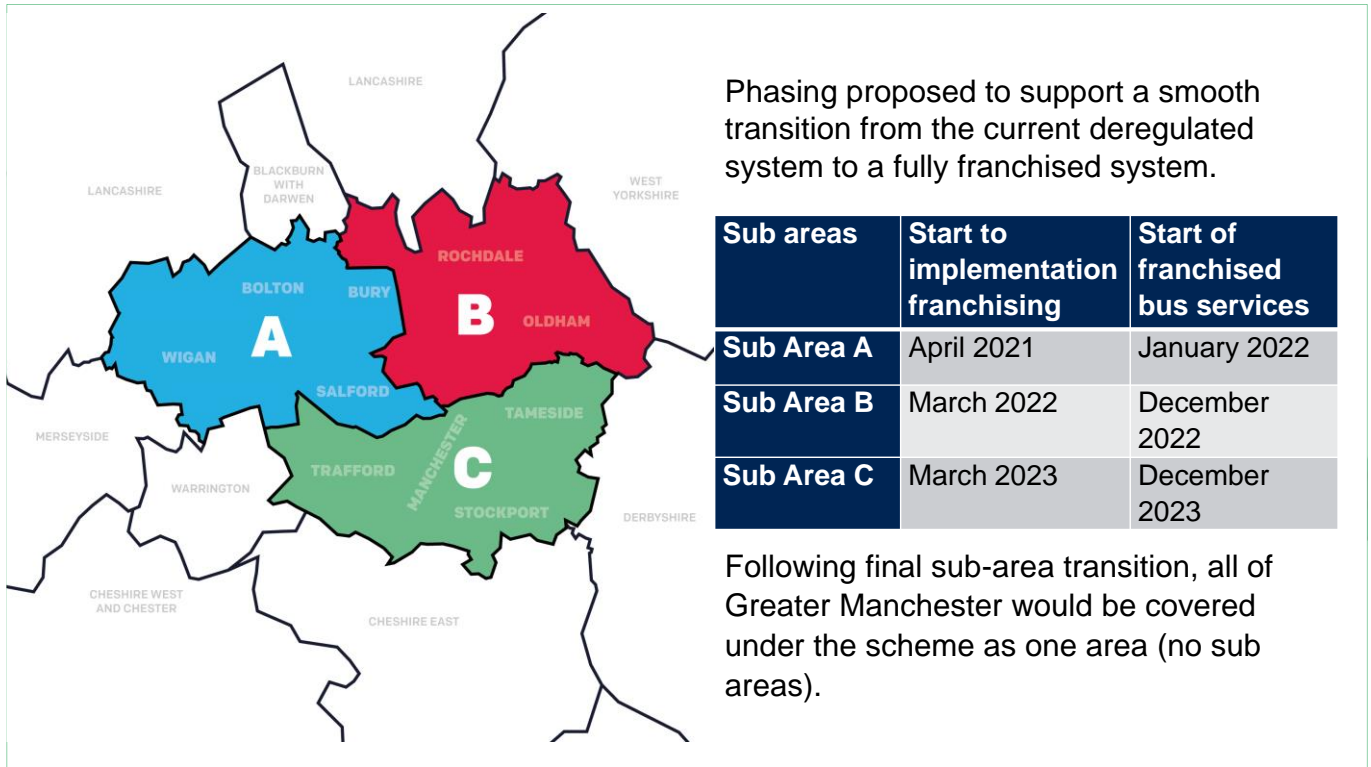
Under the proposed franchising scheme it is intended that all local bus services provided within Greater Manchester (with some exceptions) would be provided under franchise contracts.

The operators would then have to run these services on the terms specified in the contract, including relating to frequency, fares and standards.

12

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Current public sector funding

03

14

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There are two main ways the current bus market is funded:

The tickets passengers buy and public sector funding

15

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Current public sector bus funding

PUBLIC SECTOR: REVENUE 2018/19

- GMCA/TfGM spent approximately £27m on **subsidised bus services** (c20% of bus services).
- GMCA/TfGM funds **Concessionary fare schemes** for free or low-cost travel - **c£46m in 2018/19**.
- Central government funds the Commercial **Bus Services Operating Grant**, which refunds some of the Fuel Duty incurred by operators. In the last financial year 2018/19, across Greater Manchester this came to approximately £16m.

PUBLIC SECTOR: CAPITAL

- Since April 2014, GMCA/TfGM has spent **over £250m** on bus priority measures, bus stations and interchanges.

Ipsos MORI 

The economic case

04

17

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Reminder of the options assessed

1 Status quo

2 New partnership

- Operator Proposed Partnership
- Ambitious Partnership

3 Proposed franchising scheme

18

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An economic impact of the options has been carried out.

An appraisal of the benefits and costs to the public purse over a 30-year period was completed.

19

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The method



We have assessed impacts to passengers of investing in improvements to the bus system through franchising and partnership arrangements, including improvements to the passenger experience by better matching bus service supply with the demand for travel.

The impacts to operators, wider society and GMCA have also been assessed.

The level of benefits is set out for each option and then also compared against the capital and operating costs to the public purse (which are higher for the proposed franchising scheme than the partnership options).

20

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Net present value (NPV)

the benefits minus the costs



The Proposed Franchising Scheme has a Net Present Value (the benefits minus the costs) almost three times higher than the Operator Proposed Partnership.

In addition, all options have a 'high' benefit cost ratio rating, with partnership performing slightly better.

Quantified Economic Impacts	The Proposed Franchising Scheme	Operator Proposed Partnership	Ambitious Partnership
Present Value of Benefits (PVB 2010)	£345m	£113m	£142m
Present Value of Costs (PVC 2010)	(£111m)	(£33m)	(£39m)
Net Present Value (NPV 2010 = PVB - PVC)	£234m	£80m	£103m
Benefit Cost Ratio (PVB/PVC)	3.1	3.5	3.7



Forecast impact on patronage

05

23

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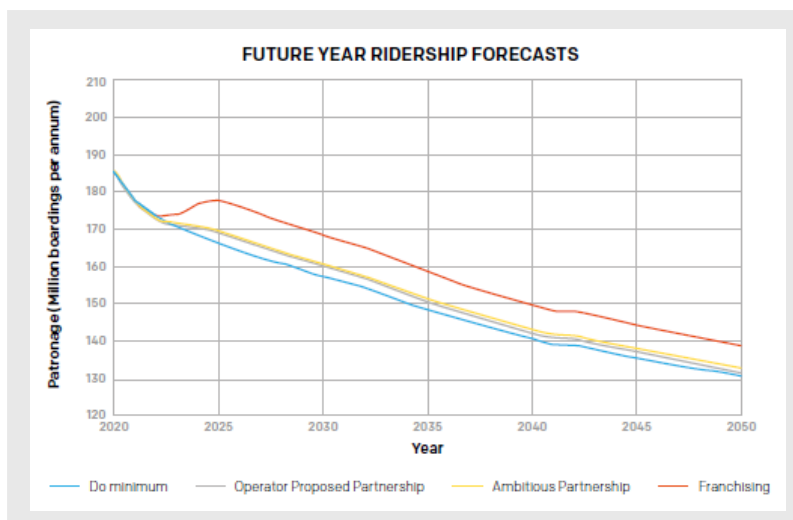


None of the options fully arrest or reverse the forecast decline in bus patronage.

The proposed franchising scheme performs significantly better in terms of boosting patronage.

Further investment to improve the quality of the system is likely to be required.

The proposed franchising scheme provides the best platform upon which to deliver further investment.



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The financial case

06

25

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The financial case sets out whether GMCA would be able to afford the transition to, and to operate, any of the options.

The financial case considers the forecast income, costs and risks of each option and the associated funding requirements.

26

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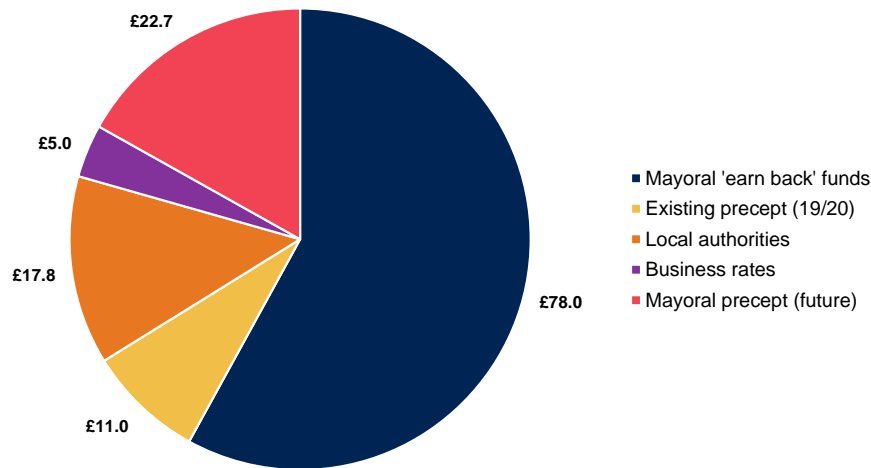
Affordability of the options

- The proposed franchising scheme would require **additional funding of £122m** over a transition period that covers the first five years of the scheme. The position across subsequent years is a forecast cumulative net surplus of approximately £94m.
- The Operator Proposed Partnership would require additional funding of £97.4m over the full appraisal period to 2051 and the Ambitious Partnership would require £112.5m over the same period.
- The financial case sets out **a range of credible additional funding sources** that could, in principle, be used to fund any of the options.
- In the case of the proposed franchising scheme, **the additional funding sources could fully fund** the total forecast transition requirement of £134.5m (£122m plus £12.5m forecast increases over the same period).

All options would require additional funding

27

Approved proposal for transition funding



28

Mayoral precept – future funding

- £22.7m could be required from Council Tax **via the Mayoral Precept – Council Tax ‘Requirement’ – GMCA to decide whether to be raised from precept or met from savings elsewhere**
- **From £3 per year incrementally over four years to £18.20 per year for Band D (35p per week) by the time the proposed franchising scheme would be introduced across all of GM**
- **82% GM properties are below Band D – Band B, which is the GM average, costs up to £14.20 (27p per week)**
- In October, Government committed to providing bus revenue funding for areas such as GM

The conclusion

07

The Proposed Franchising Scheme is option which is most likely to...

Support the delivery of GMCA's strategic objectives for Greater Manchester set out in the Greater Manchester Strategy.

Support the delivery of the objectives of the 2040 Strategy, which are supporting sustainable economic growth, improving quality of life for all, protecting the environment and developing an innovative city-region

Achieve the outcomes set out in Greater Manchester's Vision for Bus

Ipsos MORI



Delivering the Vision for Bus

- **Network:** GMCA can plan the bus network and better integrate with other forms of public transport and more scope to make changes
- **Fares and ticketing:** simpler ticketing, more competitively priced fares across buses and other forms of public transport
- **Customer experience:** GMCA to set consistent standards, one 'brand', joined up travel information
- **Value for money:** the proposed franchising scheme delivers more benefits and is affordable, commercially viable and deliverable

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THANK YOU.

For more details of the consultation please visit:

<https://www.gmconsult.org/strategy-team/gmbusconsultation/>

11-15 year olds focus group discussion guide

'Doing Buses Differently' Bus Reform Consultation: Focus Groups

11 – 15 years age group - Tuesday 3rd –December

Ipsos MORI North, Piccadilly House, 49 Piccadilly, Manchester, M1 2AP

Timings

Guide Key:

General Instructions
<i>Discussion questions asked to participants</i>
Other moderator instructions
Instruction for TfGM

Arrival and Introductions

Time	Title	Facilitation Instructions / Moderator discussion questions
10 mins	Welcome and introduction	<p>Moderator to introduce self, Ipsos MORI and notetaker</p> <p>Thank you very much for agreeing to take part in tonight’s group.</p> <p>Just a little bit about why we have asked you to take part tonight. My name is and I work for a company that does research called, Ipsos MORI. I will be leading this discussion, which is taking place on behalf of Greater Manchester Combined Authority and Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM), who coordinate a lot of the public transport, but do not control buses. When we talk about public transport, we mean buses, trams and trains in Greater Manchester.</p> <p>They’re interested in getting the views of young people about how the buses are run in Greater Manchester at the moment and in the future.</p> <p>Explain what a focus group is</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o You may have heard this being called a focus group which is basically a group discussion about a particular topic to hear people’s opinions- in this case the change in the way buses are run. <p>2. Explain that the topic of the group is bus reform:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Greater Manchester Combined Authority is an organisation which oversees the 10 Councils that make up Greater Manchester. You live in one of those Councils (check understand what a Council is). The GMCA wants to make a change to the way buses are run, which we will go on to discuss. <p>Explain the structure of the discussion:</p> <p>Role of Ipsos MORI – independent research organisation, here to listen and ask questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everything you say is confidential – MRS rules. <p>Explain tone and nature of discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relaxed • No right or wrong questions or answers • We are keen to hear about everyone’s views • Please feel free to disagree with one another; just keep it polite • I will make sure everyone gets a chance to share their opinion • Please try to avoid talking over one another • Emphasise no phones • Plenty to get through, so I might have to move people on from time to time <p>Any other housekeeping – fire alarms, facilities, etc.</p>

Time	Title	Moderator discussion questions
10 mins	Introductions	<p>Ice breaker discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I just want to go around the table to get your names what you'd normally be doing if you weren't here today/ when was the last time you used a bus and where did it take you
15 mins	How do they use buses and feel about them currently	<p>Let's talk about the buses in Greater Manchester at the moment. So, we'd like to talk to you about how you use buses in Greater Manchester for now.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What type of journeys do you make on the bus? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School bus Leisure- to where/to do what- Long/short journeys Do you use them at night? Do you use the bus as part of a longer journey (e.g. you also use a train or tram, Do you ever have to get two buses to get where you need to go? WHY do you use the bus? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convenience School run service Independence Only transport option Follow-up questions- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do they choose to travel that way/is it their decision or parents' decision? Do you use a bus pass or pay full fare? What do you like/dislike about buses? PROBE ON <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Network and frequency</u>: take you where you want to go, run at suitable times, ticket prices, works well with other types of public transport such as the tram <u>Service quality</u>: safety, ASB, cleanliness, comfort, drivers who are friendly/helpful, quality of fleet, frequency of service, information available about fares/routes (including real time <u>Social aspect</u>: Friends use them, independence. <p>MODERATOR – TAKE EACH OF THE THREE BULLETS AND ASK THEM TO USE AN EMOJI TO SUMMARISE WHAT THEY THINK OF EACH AND EXPLAIN WHY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What, if anything, do you think needs changing about the buses and the service they provide?

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Why do you say this?
10 mins	Introduction of Proposed Franchising Scheme	<p>Explain that Greater Manchester Combined Authority is going through a process to talk to everyone about the future of buses and get their opinion. The final decision will be made by the Mayor of Greater Manchester Andy Burnham.</p> <p>3 options were looked at and the Proposed Franchising Scheme has been chosen as the best option.</p> <p><i>I'm going to play a video now that explains what franchising is, and how it's going to change the way buses work in Greater Manchester.</i></p> <p>Encourage participants to make notes about anything that they either don't understand or things that jump out at them and place any questions on post-its</p> <p>Play video about bus reform (c.1:40)</p> <p>Moderator to instruct to come up and place post its on flip chart. <i>What did everyone write down and what questions do you have after watching that video?</i></p> <p>Age dependent on how this is approached. If group is quite open, select question and ask what an individual doesn't understand. If closed read out questions to group as a whole.</p> <p>Can anybody name some of the different bus companies which operate at the moment? Show images of some of the different bus operators.</p> <p>Do you think based on what you have seen that there is a need to change the way the buses are run?</p>

Time	Title	Moderator discussion questions
15 mins	Prioritising the benefits of Proposed Franchising Scheme	<p>Moderator to handout showcards (from the video)</p> <p>Each of these cards represents something from the video that Greater Manchester Combined Authority says will be a benefit of the Proposed Franchising Scheme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GM would decide and set the routes • GM would set the timetables • GM would decide on the ticket prices and types • GM would set the standards for bus operators to work to (e.g. quality of vehicle used, buses arriving on time etc)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buses work together with other forms of transport such as Metrolink • All buses would be uniform (look the same/have the same colour) <p>For each ask</p> <p>Why do you think this is important to GMCA? If they don't think it's important, why not?</p> <p>In pairs, ask the participants to rank the benefits in terms of priority. Imagine you're the Mayor of Greater Manchester - I want you to rank these benefits from what would be the most important benefit to the least important benefit.</p> <p>Feedback to the full group</p> <p>Each pair with blu-tac stick their showcards up in order, and talk through the order, explaining why they ranked them in that order.</p>
<p>15-20 mins</p>	<p>Discussion of three important issues to young people</p>	<p>Probe a little on three particular areas which are most relevant to young people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ticketing (5 mins) • Pricing (5 mins) • Routes and timetables (5 mins) <p>Moderator to make sure that anything that has stood out so far from previous discussion is added here using the same prompts as below but be mindful of time</p> <p>We're going to spend some time now thinking about the things you've seen that will change that might affect you and you might have some thoughts/opinions about.</p> <p><u>Ticketing</u> So if we did what the video said and went ahead with the Proposed Franchising Scheme, there wouldn't be over 150 types of ticket to choose from. You could use your one ticket (e.g. daily/weekly) on all franchised buses in Greater Manchester.</p> <p>PROBE ON:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think about this proposed change? Why? • What advantages can you think of for people like you? • What disadvantages can you think of for people like you? • Would these changes solve any issues you currently have? (or previously mentioned in likes/dislikes section) Why/why not? • Would these changes encourage you to use the bus/use the bus more? <p><u>Prices</u></p>

		<p><i>Again, if we did what the video said and went ahead with the Proposed Franchising Scheme, prices for bus tickets would be the same on all buses across the whole of Greater Manchester. At the moment, you pay different fares with different operators.</i></p> <p>PROBE ON:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think about this proposed change? Why? • What advantages can you think of for people like you? • What disadvantages can you think of for people like you? • Would these changes solve any issues you currently have? (or previously mentioned in likes/dislikes section) Why/why not? • Would these changes encourage you to use the bus/use the bus more? <p><u>Routes and timetables</u></p> <p><i>If we did what the video said and went ahead with the Proposed Franchising Scheme, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority/TfGM would be able to decide what the timetables should be and also the routes the buses should take. At the moment, the different bus companies decide both of these things.</i></p> <p>PROBE ON:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think about this proposed change? Why? • What advantages can you think of for people like you? • What disadvantages can you think of for people like you? • Would these changes solve any issues you currently have? (or previously mentioned in likes/dislikes section) Why/why not? • Would these changes encourage you to use the bus/use the bus more?
5 mins	Replay the video	<p>Moderator to explain they're going to play the video one final time to see what everyone has learned</p> <p>Play video about bus reform (c.1:40)</p> <p><i>Does anyone have any other questions after that or is anything not clear?</i></p>
5 mins	Wrap up exercise	<p>Moderator ask participants to write down on a post-it note one thing they've learned today that they're going to go home and tell their family/friends. Then read it out to the group.</p> <p>Moderator collect and feedback or ask them to read out.</p>

Thanks and leave/incentives

Close down

- Collect in digis
- Collect in used post its/flipchart paper

16-18 year olds focus group discussion guide

'Doing Buses Differently' Bus Reform Consultation: Focus Groups

16– 18 years age group – Wednesday 4th December

Ipsos MORI North, Piccadilly House, 49 Piccadilly, Manchester, M1 2AP

Timings

Guide Key:

General Instructions
Discussion questions asked to participants
Other moderator instructions

Arrival and Introductions

Time	Title	Facilitation Instructions / Moderator discussion questions
10 mins	Welcome and introduction	<p>Moderator to introduce self, Ipsos MORI and notetaker</p> <p>Thank you very much for agreeing to take part in tonight’s group.</p> <p>Just a little bit about why we have asked you to take part tonight. My name is and I work for a company that does research called, Ipsos MORI. I will be leading this discussion, which is taking place on behalf of Greater Manchester Combined Authority and Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM), who coordinate a lot of the public transport, but do not control buses. When we talk about public transport, we mean buses, trams and trains in Greater Manchester.</p> <p>They’re interested in getting the views of young people about how the buses are run in Greater Manchester at the moment and in the future.</p> <p>Explain what a focus group is</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ You may have heard this being called a focus group which is basically a group discussion about a particular topic to hear people’s opinions- in this case the change in the way buses are run. <p>5. Explain that the topic of the group is bus reform:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Greater Manchester Combined Authority is an organisation which oversees the 10 Councils that make up Greater Manchester. You live in one of those Councils (check understand what a Council is). The GMCA wants to make a change to the way buses are run, which we will go on to discuss. <p>Explain the structure of the discussion:</p> <p>Role of Ipsos MORI – independent research organisation, here to listen and ask questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everything you say is confidential – MRS rules. <p>Explain tone and nature of discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relaxed • No right or wrong questions or answers • We are keen to hear about everyone’s views • Please feel free to disagree with one another; just keep it polite • I will make sure everyone gets a chance to share their opinion • Please try to avoid talking over one another • Emphasise no phones • Plenty to get through, so I might have to move people on from time to time <p>Any other housekeeping – fire alarms, facilities, etc.</p>

Time	Title	Moderator discussion questions
10 mins	Introductions	<p>Ice breaker discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I just want to go around the table to get your names what you'd normally be doing if you weren't here today/ when was the last time you used a bus and where did it take you <p>FOR 16-18- THEY COULD INTRODUCE THEIR PARTNER</p>
15 mins	How do they use buses and feel about them currently	<p>Let's talk about the buses in Greater Manchester at the moment. So, we'd like to talk to you about how you use buses in Greater Manchester for now.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What type of journeys do you make on the bus? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bus to college/further education Bus to training/jobs/apprenticeships Leisure- to where/to do what- Long/short journeys Do you use them mostly at peak times or off-peak? Do you use them at night/early in the morning? Do you use the bus as part of a longer/ multi-modal journey (e.g. bus to get a tram) Do you ever have to get two buses to get where you need to go? Why do you use the bus? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convenience College run service Independence Only transport option Follow-up questions- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do they choose to travel that way/is it their decision or parents' decision? <p>FOR 16-18</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What type of ticket do you tend to use when travelling by bus? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have you ever used a concessionary pass? If so, what was this? Have you ever heard of an 'Our Pass'? How many have got an 'Our Pass'? (launched earlier this year as free travel bus pass for all 16-18 year olds + half price Metrolink travel and offers/discounts/tickets). What do you think of the Our Pass? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PROBE ON <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has it/would it influence your travel habits? Has it changed your view of the bus network? How?

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who do you think runs the buses now? By that I mean who plans the routes and timetables and who sets the fares and standards? <p>FOR 16-18</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the positives/negatives about buses and the way they are run at the moment? <p>PROBE ON</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Network and frequency</u>: take you where you want to go (reach of the network), can you access employment and education centres, do they run at suitable times (late enough/early enough), ticket prices, works well with other types of public transport such as the tram, ○ <u>Service quality</u>: safety, ASB, cleanliness, comfort, drivers who are friendly/helpful, quality of fleet, frequency of service, information available about fares/routes (including real time), where to get off, disruption ○ <u>Social aspect</u>: Friends use them, independence, freedom to travel further, travelling at night/early hours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thinking about the future, do you think your bus travel habits might change? If so, in what way/how? • What will make you use buses more/less in the future? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ PROBE ON: role of buses in FE/training/jobs, access to wider opportunities (looking further afield – ‘horizon scanning’), multi-modal • What, if anything, do you think needs changing about the buses and the service they provide? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Why do you say this? ○ What would you do to improve or change these things?
<p>10 mins</p>	<p>Introduction of Proposed Franchising Scheme</p>	<p>Explain that Greater Manchester Combined Authority is going through a process to talk to everyone about the future of buses and get their opinion. The final decision will be made by the Mayor of Greater Manchester Andy Burnham.</p> <p>3 options were looked at and a Proposed Franchising Scheme has been chosen as the best option.</p> <p><i>I’m going to play a video now that explains what the Proposed Franchising Scheme is, and how it’s going to change the way buses work in Greater Manchester.</i></p>

		<p>Encourage participants to make notes about anything that they either don't understand or things that jump out at them and place any questions on post-its</p> <p>Play video about bus reform (c.1:40)</p> <p>Moderator to instruct to come up and place post its on flip chart. What did everyone write down and what questions do you have after watching that video?</p> <p>Thinking back to what you said earlier about who runs the buses – did the information contained in the video surprise you? In what way?</p> <p>Age dependent on how this is approached. If group is quite open, select question and ask what an individual doesn't understand. If closed read out questions to group as a whole.</p> <p>Can anybody name some of the different bus companies which operate at the moment? Show images of some of the different bus operators.</p> <p>Do you think based on what you have seen that there is a need to change the way the buses are run?</p>
Time	Title	Moderator discussion questions
15 mins	Prioritising the benefits of the Proposed Franchising Scheme	<p>Moderator to handout showcards (from the video) Each of these cards represents something from the video that Greater Manchester Combined Authority says will be a benefit of the Proposed Franchising Scheme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GM would decide and set the routes • GM would set the timetables • GM would decide on the ticket prices and types • GM would set the standards for bus operators to work to (e.g. quality of vehicle used, buses arriving on time etc) • Buses work together with other forms of transport such as Metrolink • All buses would be uniform (look the same/have the same colour) <p>For each ask Why do you think this is important to GMCA? If they don't think it's important, why not?</p> <p>In pairs, ask the participants to rank the benefits in terms of priority. Imagine you're the Mayor of Greater Manchester - I want you to rank these benefits from what would be the most important benefit to the least important benefit.</p>

		<p>Feedback to the full group</p> <p>Each pair with blu-tac stick their showcards up in order, and talk through the order, explaining why they ranked them in that order.</p>
15-20 mins	Discussion of three important issues to young people	<p>Probe a little on three particular areas which are most relevant to young people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ticketing (5 mins) • Pricing (5 mins) • Routes and timetables (5 mins) <p>Moderator to make sure that anything that has stood out so far from previous discussion is added here using the same prompts as below but be mindful of time</p> <p><i>We're going to spend some time now thinking about the things you've seen that will change that might affect you and you might have some thoughts/opinions about.</i></p> <p><u>Ticketing</u> <i>So if we did what the video said and went ahead with the Proposed Franchising Scheme, there wouldn't be over 150 types of ticket to choose from. You could use your one ticket (e.g daily/weekly) on all franchised buses in Greater Manchester.</i> PROBE ON:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think about this proposed change? Why? • What advantages can you think of for people like you? • What disadvantages can you think of for people like you? • Would these changes solve any issues you currently have? Why/why not? • Would these changes encourage you to use the bus more? • 16-18 – the need to make multi-modal journeys <p><u>Prices</u> <i>Again, if we did what the video said and went ahead with the Proposed Franchising Scheme, prices for bus tickets would be the same on all buses across the whole of Greater Manchester for the same sort of journeys. At the moment, you pay different fares with different operators.</i> PROBE ON:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think about this proposed change? Why? • What advantages can you think of for people like you? • What disadvantages can you think of for people like you? • Would these changes solve any issues you currently have? Why/why not? • Would these changes encourage you to use the bus/use the bus more?

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 16-18 – the need to make multi-modal journeys, cost, affordability (potential wage earners), concessionary prices/passes <p><u>Routes and timetables</u> <i>If we did what the video said and went ahead with the Proposed Franchising Scheme, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority/TfGM would be able to decide what the timetables should be and also the routes the buses should take. At the moment, the different bus companies decide both of these things.</i></p> <p>PROBE ON:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What do you think about this proposed change? Why? What advantages can you think of for people like you? What disadvantages can you think of for people like you? Would these changes solve any issues you currently have? Why/why not? Would these changes encourage you to use the bus/use the bus more?
5 mins	Replay the video	<p>Moderator to explain they're going to play the video one final time to see what everyone has learned</p> <p>Play video about bus reform (c.1:40)</p> <p><i>Does anyone have any other questions after that or is anything not clear?</i></p>
5 mins	Wrap up exercise	<p>Moderator ask participants to write down on a post-it note one thing they've learned today that they're going to go home and tell their family/friends. Then read it out to the group.</p> <p>Moderator collect and feedback or ask them to read out.</p>

Thanks and leave/incentives

Close down

- Collect in digis
- Collect in used post its/flipchart paper

19-20 year olds focus group discussion guide

'Doing Buses Differently' Bus Reform Consultation: Focus Groups

19-20 years age group –Thursday 5th December

Ipsos MORI North, Piccadilly House, 49 Piccadilly, Manchester, M1 2AP

Timings

Guide Key:

General Instructions
Discussion questions asked to participants
Other moderator instructions

Arrival and Introductions

Time	Title	Facilitation Instructions / Moderator discussion questions
10 mins	Welcome and introduction	<p><i>Moderator to introduce self, Ipsos MORI and notetaker</i></p> <p>Thank you very much for agreeing to take part in tonight’s group.</p> <p>Just a little bit about why we have asked you to take part tonight. My name is and I work for a company that does research called, Ipsos MORI. I will be leading this discussion, which is taking place on behalf of Greater Manchester Combined Authority and Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM), who coordinate a lot of the public transport, but do not control buses. When we talk about public transport, we mean buses, trams and trains in Greater Manchester.</p> <p>They’re interested in getting the views of young people about how the buses are run in Greater Manchester at the moment and in the future.</p> <p><i>Explain what a focus group is</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>You may have heard this being called a focus group which is basically a group discussion about a particular topic to hear people’s opinions- in this case the change in the way buses are run.</i> <p>6. Explain that the topic of the group is bus reform:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Greater Manchester Combined Authority is an organisation which oversees the 10 Councils that make up Greater Manchester. You live in one of those Councils (check understand what a Council is). The GMCA wants to make a change to the way buses are run, which we will go on to discuss. <p><i>Explain the structure of the discussion:</i></p> <p><i>Role of Ipsos MORI – independent research organisation, here to listen and ask questions.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Everything you say is confidential – MRS rules.</i> <p><i>Explain tone and nature of discussion</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Relaxed</i> • <i>No right or wrong questions or answers</i> • <i>We are keen to hear about everyone’s views</i> • <i>Please feel free to disagree with one another; just keep it polite</i> • <i>I will make sure everyone gets a chance to share their opinion</i> • <i>Please try to avoid talking over one another</i> • <i>Emphasise no phones</i> • <i>Plenty to get through, so I might have to move people on from time to time</i> <p><i>Any other housekeeping – fire alarms, facilities, etc.</i></p>

Time	Title	Moderator discussion questions
10 mins	Introductions	<p>Ice breaker discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I just want to go around the table to get your names what you'd normally be doing if you weren't here today/ when was the last time you used a bus and where did it take you <p>FOR 19-20- INTRODUCE THEIR PARTNER</p>
15 mins	How do they use buses and feel about them currently	<p>Let's talk about the buses in Greater Manchester at the moment. So, we'd like to talk to you about how you use buses in Greater Manchester for now.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What type of journeys do you make on the bus? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bus to work/university ○ Bus to training/jobs/apprenticeships ○ Leisure- to where/to do what ○ Long/short journeys ○ Do you travel much at peak times? ○ Do you use them at night/early in the morning? ○ Do you use the bus as part of a longer/ multi-modal journey (e.g. bus to get a tram) ○ Do you ever have to get two buses to get where you need to go? • Why do you use the bus? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Convenience- most direct? ○ Independence ○ Only transport option ○ Price (compared to other modes?) ○ Quickest <p>FOR 19-20</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What type of ticket do you tend to use when travelling by bus? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Day/weekly/monthly/term/annual ○ Have you ever used a concessionary pass? If so, what was this? (probe on student discounted pass or any discounts through employment/training) ○ Have you ever heard of an 'Our Pass' (launched earlier this year as free travel bus pass for all 16-18 year olds + half price Metrolink travel and offers/discounts/tickets). ○ What do you think of the Our Pass? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ PROBE ON ▪ Do you think it would it have changed how you travelled around Greater Manchester when you were 16-18? <p>FOR 19-20</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the positives/negatives about buses and the way they are run at the moment? (Ask them to give examples of routes/numbers throughout) PROBE ON <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Network and frequency</u>: take you where you want to go (reach of the network), can you access employment, education and training, do they run at suitable times (late enough/early enough), ticket prices, works well with other types of public transport such as the tram, too many/too few buses at certain times and to certain places ○ <u>Service quality</u>: safety, ASB, cleanliness, comfort, drivers who are friendly/helpful, quality of fleet, frequency of service, information available about fares/routes (including real time) ○ <u>Social aspect</u>: Friends use them, independence, freedom to travel further, travelling at night/early hours <p>FOR 19-20: Focus on changes in how they've used buses since leaving school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thinking about how you previously travelled, how do you think your use of buses has changed in the past 5 years since you left school? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Do you use them more or less frequently? ○ What are the reasons for this? If less what mode of transport are they using instead ○ Do you use them for different types of journeys now than you did before? • What will make you use buses more/less in the future? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ PROBE ON: role of buses in FE/training/jobs, access to wider opportunities (looking further afield – 'horizon scanning'), multi-modal • What, if anything, do you think needs changing about the buses and the service they provide? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Why do you say this? ○ What would <u>you</u> do to improve or change these things?
<p>10 mins</p>	<p>Introduction of the Proposed Franchising</p>	<p>Explain that Greater Manchester Combined Authority is going through a process to talk to everyone about the future of buses and get their opinion through a public consultation. The final decision will be made by the Mayor of Greater Manchester Andy Burnham.</p> <p>3 options were looked at and a Proposed Franchising Scheme has been chosen as the best option.</p>

		<p><i>I'm going to play a video in a moment, that explains what the Proposed Franchising Scheme is, and how it would change the way buses work in Greater Manchester.</i></p> <p><i>Just before we do, at the moment, who do you think plans the bus network, sets the routes and timetables and determines fares and standards for buses?</i></p> <p>Encourage participants to make notes about anything that they either don't understand or things that jump out at them and place any questions on post-its</p> <p>Play video about bus reform (c.1:40)</p> <p><i>Now you've watched the video, what do you think about how the system currently works- with bus operators planning the networks, setting routes and timetables and determining fares and standards?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Are you surprised?</i> <p><i>What did everyone write down and what questions do you have after watching that video?</i></p> <p>Can you name some of the different bus companies which operate at the moment? (to illustrate the number of operators)</p> <p>To what extent do you agree or disagree with the conclusion that reforming the bus market is the right thing to do to address the challenges facing the local bus market? (want to capture whether or not they think it makes sense to make these changes)</p>
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Time	Title	Moderator discussion questions
20-25 mins	Discussion of the Proposed Franchising Scheme in more depth	<p>FOR 19-20</p> <p>Explanation of the vision for bus and the process so far</p> <p>Introduce the slide on the legislative process to outline how we got to this point.</p> <p><i>In November 2014, a devolution deal was agreed between the national government and Greater Manchester which included transferring powers to reform the bus market.</i></p> <p><i>In 2017, the Bus Services Act became law and GMCA decided to use those powers to prepare an assessment of proposals including the Proposed Franchising Scheme which is the proposal you just saw in the video.</i></p>

Other options were considered including staying as we are now (do minimum) and partnership options- but we're going to focus on the proposal that was decided as the best option as shown in the video.

The final decision at the end of the consultation will be Andy Burnham's who will decide whether to go ahead with the Proposed Franchising Scheme or not.

Does anyone have any questions about this so far?

Introduce vision for bus slide

There are 4 key parts to GMCA's vision for bus. We're going to talk about each one in turn and discuss how the Proposed Franchising Scheme aims to deliver it So let's start with the network.

Take each of these four in turn and discuss what the Scheme will offer and ask for opinions, how achievable they think these things are and what problems they think it will solve/how would it impact them.

Network

Through the Proposed Franchising Scheme, GMCA/TfGM would be responsible for planning the bus network. They would set the routes, decide the timetables and be able to plan these things alongside other public transport like the tram. At the moment, bus companies decide these things.

- **What are your thoughts on these changes (Both positive and negative). Why do you think that?**
- **How would this impact how you travel at the moment?**
- **How do you think this would impact people across GM more widely?**
- **Do you think this is necessary? Why/why not?**

Fares and ticketing

Simpler fares and tickets would be introduced so you would be able to use your one ticket (daily/weekly etc) on all franchised buses across GM instead of having to buy different tickets for different operators as you do now (unless you buy a premium ticket that allows you to do this).

The fares would also be competitively priced at the lowest current single operator fare. Tickets could also offer travel on other modes of transport such as Metrolink.

- **What are your thoughts on these changes (Both positive and negative). Why do you think that?**

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How would this impact how <u>you</u> travel at the moment? • How do you think this would impact people across GM more widely? • Do you think this is necessary? Why/why not? <p><u>Customer experience</u></p> <p>GMCA would provide comprehensive and real time information about bus services and ticketing on a single website and app.</p> <p>Customer service standards would be set by GMCA within contracts which providers would have to meet on things such as levels of customer service and the quality of the buses.</p> <p>Also, there will be a single unified brand (all look the same).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are your thoughts on these changes (Both positive and negative). Why do you think that? • How would this impact how <u>you</u> travel at the moment? • How do you think this would impact people across GM more widely? • Do you think this is necessary? Why/why not? <p><u>Value for money</u></p> <p>The assessment has concluded that the Proposed Franchising Scheme delivers the most benefits of all the options and is affordable and deliverable. All income from bus services (including fares and from taxpayers) would be reinvested by GMCA to provide the best possible service or used to reduce fares. (Reiterate that currently, bus operators receive the money from fares and choose how to use that money).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are your thoughts on these changes (Both positive and negative). Why do you think that? • How would this impact how <u>you</u> travel at the moment? (would you be more inclined to pay the fares if you knew they were going to a GM pot that was ringfenced for reinvestment in those services). • How do you think this would impact people across GM more widely? • Do you think this is necessary? Why/why not?
<p>10-15 mins</p>	<p>Ranking exercise</p>	<p>Moderator to handout showcards (from the video)</p> <p>Each of these cards represents something from the video that Greater Manchester Combined Authority says will be a benefit of the Proposed Franchising Scheme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GM would decide and set the routes

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GM would set the timetables • GM would decide on the ticket prices and types • GM would set the standards for bus operators to work to (e.g. quality of vehicle used, buses arriving on time etc) • Buses work together with other forms of transport such as Metrolink • All buses would be uniform (look the same/have the same colour) <p>In pairs, ask the participants to rank the benefits in terms of priority. Having discussed what has been proposed in each of these areas, I want you to rank these benefits from what would be the most important benefit to the least important benefit in your opinion?</p> <p>Reiterate no right or wrong answers</p> <p>Feedback to the full group</p> <p>Each pair with blu-tac stick their showcards up in order, and talk through the order, explaining why they ranked them in that order.</p>
10 mins	Introduction of cost	<p>So, we talked earlier about value for money and if the Proposed Franchising Scheme were to go ahead, it would cost money to change the system.</p> <p>In the assessment, GMCA have considered the Financial Case which basically looks at what they expect to make, the costs and the risks of implementing the Proposed Franchising Scheme</p> <p>The Proposed Franchising Scheme would require £134.5m additional funding whilst Greater Manchester transitions to a franchising model over a five-year period.</p> <p>Show them the slide with pie chart Explain pie chart:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority (£78m) would come from the government who give money to GM through devolution • A one- off payment from the ten GM authorities of £17.8m • £5m from business rates • £11m, from existing precept raised as part of the Mayor’s 2019/20 budget for bus reform purposes • £22.7m, in total, of Mayoral precept required from future years’ budgets phased over a four-year period commencing in 2021/22. GMCA would need to consider whether this was additional funding or to be met from savings elsewhere in the budget.

		<p>This £22.7m, could be required through an increase in Council Tax if additional savings can't be made. For Band B properties (the GM average), that would mean a cost of up to £14.20 per year or 27p per week</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>First of all, what questions do you have about this?</i> • <i>Do any of you pay Council tax at the moment?</i> • <i>What are your thoughts either as a Council Tax payer or future Council Tax payer?</i> <p><i>This would be paid for by all GM tax payers- including people who don't use buses.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What do you think about this?</i> <p><i>Now you know more about it, to what extent do you support or oppose the introduction of the Proposed Franchising Scheme ?</i></p>
5 mins	Replay the video	<p>Moderator to explain they're going to play the video one final time to see what everyone has learned</p> <p>Play video about bus reform (c.1:40)</p> <p><i>Does anyone have any other questions after that or is anything not clear?</i></p>
5 mins	Wrap up exercise	<p>Moderator ask participants to write down on a post-it note one thing they've learned today that they're going to go home and tell their family/friends. Then read it out to the group.</p> <p>Moderator collect and feedback or ask them to read out.</p>

Thanks and leave/incentives

Close down

- Collect in digis
- Collect in used post its/flipchart paper

19-20 year olds focus group – Supporting slides

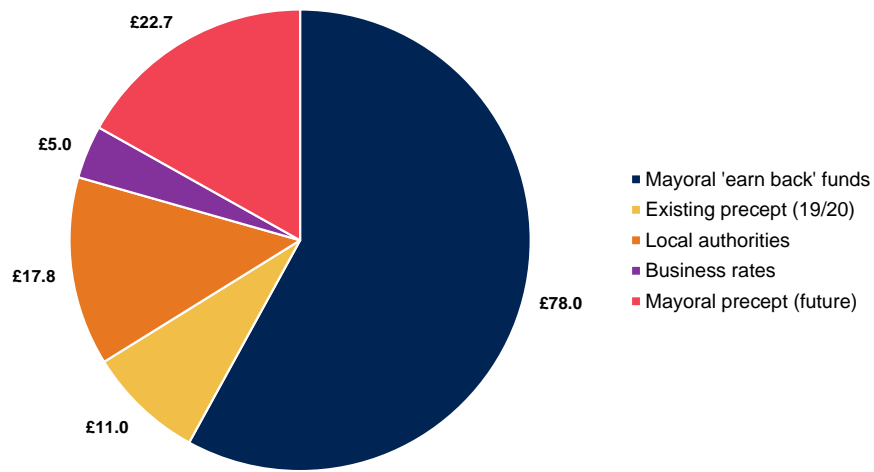
Legislative process

- **November 2014:** Devolution Deal between GM and government includes promise of powers to reform the bus market
- **April 2017:** Bus Services Act received Royal Assent
- **June 2017:** GMCA decided to use the powers in the Bus Services Act and prepare an assessment of a proposed bus franchising scheme
- The Bus Services Act requires an assessment, an audit and for the scheme to be consulted on
- The outcome of the consultation will go to the GM Mayor who will decide whether or not to implement the scheme

Delivering the Vision for Bus

- **Network:** GMCA can plan the bus network and better integrate with other forms of public transport and more scope to make changes
- **Fares and ticketing:** simpler ticketing, more competitively priced fares across buses and other forms of public transport
- **Customer experience:** GMCA to set consistent standards, one 'brand', joined up travel information
- **Value for money:** the proposed franchising scheme delivers more benefits and is affordable, commercially viable and deliverable

Approved proposal for transition funding



Outside GM discussion guide

'Doing Buses Differently' Bus Reform Consultation: Non-GM Residents Focus Group

Monday 9th December 2019

Online

Timings

Guide Key:

General Instructions
<i>Discussion questions asked to participants</i>
Other moderator instructions

Time	Facilitation Instructions / Moderator discussion questions
Welcome and Introduction	
10 mins	<p>Thank you very much for agreeing to take part in today's group.</p> <p>My name is and I work for a research company called, Ipsos MORI. I will be leading this discussion, which is taking place on behalf of Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM), who coordinate a lot of the public transport, but do not control buses. When we talk about public transport, we mean buses, trams and trains in Greater Manchester.</p> <p>The aim of the session is to get views of people from outside of Greater Manchester as to the introduction of a proposed Bus Franchising Scheme .</p> <p>During the discussion we will be making reference to two organisations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Transport for Greater Manchester is the public body responsible for coordinating Greater Manchester's transport strategy and delivering its objectives. It owns the Metrolink system, as well as interchanges, bus shelters and bus stops and is accountable to and directed by the GMCA, the ten Greater Manchester Councils and the GM Mayor. 2. The Greater Manchester Combined Authority is made up of the 10 Greater Manchester local authorities and the GM Mayor. Its powers include public transport, skills, housing, regeneration, waste management and the environment as well as fire services. It also makes decisions about transport as set out in Local Transport Act 2008. <p>The Greater Manchester Mayor, Andy Burnham, chairs the GMCA and has specific executive powers, including some related to transport. He has the power to decide whether to introduce the Proposed Franchising Scheme .</p> <p>Just some key points to make you aware of before we start the discussion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The discussion will last up to an hour and a half. • It's more an informal chat than a 'survey' or 'interview'. Please feel free to chip in with whatever you think, whenever you think it. • I won't judge you on your spelling if you promise not to judge me on mine! • There are no right or wrong answers. • You can choose to not answer a question if you have nothing to contribute – please don't feel compelled to respond! • Everything you say is completely confidential and information collected is anonymised. • Only your [screen name] can be seen by the others in the chat, never your real name or email address. • We will write a report at the end of this research project. We might use quotes, but we won't name anyone, identify you personally, or say who has said what.

Time	Moderator discussion questions
Ice breaker discussion	
10 mins	<p>Ice breaker discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Firstly, if you can just briefly introduce yourself, where you're from and when was the last time you used a bus to travel into Greater Manchester and what was the purpose of your travel.
Current view of buses	
15-20 mins	<p>Let's talk about the buses in Greater Manchester at the moment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How often do you travel into Greater Manchester by bus? • Which days of the week do you tend to travel into Greater Manchester? • What time of day do you travel? • What's the purpose of your journeys into and wholly within Greater Manchester? • Why do you choose to make this journey by bus? • When you travel into Greater Manchester do you also travel around within the city region? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If yes – how do you do travel - bus, tram, cycle or walk? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If you do use the bus for your onward journeys, why? ○ If you don't use the bus for your onward journeys, why not? • Are there journeys that you take by car into Greater Manchester that you could take by bus? • Why do you use the car for these journeys? <p>Ok, thank you. I just want to ask you a couple of questions about what you think of the bus service which you use to travel into Greater Manchester</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is good about the service which you use? • What is not so good about the service which you use? <p>USE PROBES AS APPROPRIATE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think of the routes and the frequency? • Do they take you where you want to go? • Do they run at suitable times (late enough/early enough)? • What about the ticket prices? • Do the buses work well with other types of public transport such as the tram? • What about the service quality, by which I mean the safety aspects, cleanliness, comfort, attitude of the drivers, quality of the fleet and access to wi-fi? • What about the information available about fares/routes (including real time info)?

The Proposed Bus Franchising Scheme

20 mins

Greater Manchester Combined Authority is going through a process to talk to everyone about the future of buses and get their opinion. The final decision will be made by the Mayor of Greater Manchester Andy Burnham.

- **Firstly, how do you think buses are run at the moment? By that I mean who do you think plans the routes and timetables and who sets the fares and standards?**
- **How do you think the buses are funded at the moment?**

3 options were looked at including the Do Minimum (stay as we are), a partnership approach and a Proposed Bus Franchising Scheme, which has been chosen as the best option.

I'm going to play a video now that explains what the Proposed Franchising Scheme is, and how it's going to change the way buses work in Greater Manchester.

Please make notes about anything that you either don't understand or things that surprise you.

Play video about bus reform (c.1:40)

Now you've watched the video, what do you think about how the system currently works- with bus operators planning the networks, setting routes and timetables and determining fares and standards?

- **Are you surprised?**
- **What questions or thoughts do you have after watching that video?**
- **To what extent do you agree or disagree with the conclusion that reforming the bus market IN Greater Manchester is the right thing to do to address the challenges facing the local bus market?**

15 mins

There were a number of benefits presented in the video which the GMCA says will be a benefit of the Proposed Franchising Scheme. We will discuss some of these in turn:

- GM would decide and set the routes
- GM would set the timetables
- **Do you have any questions or comments on these benefits? I should add, if I don't know the answer or I miss your question, we will review the transcripts and get back to you as a collective via email with the answers**
- GM would decide on the ticket prices and types
- Buses work together with other forms of transport such as Metrolink
- **Do you have any questions or comments on these benefits?**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GM would set the standards for bus operators to work to (e.g. quality of vehicle used, buses arriving on time etc) • All buses would be uniform (look the same/have the same colour) • Do you have any questions or comments on these benefits? <p>Here is the list again</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GM would decide and set the routes • GM would set the timetables • GM would decide on the ticket prices and types • Buses work together with other forms of transport such as Metrolink • GM would set the standards for bus operators to work to (e.g. quality of vehicle used, buses arriving on time etc) • All buses would be uniform (look the same/have the same colour) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having seen what has been proposed what do you consider to be the most important benefit and why? • What do you think is the least important benefit and why?
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Cross-boundary services under the Proposed Franchising Scheme

<p>15 mins</p>	<p>I would like to move on now to talk about cross-boundary services. By cross-boundary we mean bus services that cross into or back out of the Greater Manchester boundary into surrounding areas such West Yorkshire, Lancashire and Cheshire.</p> <p>Currently buses in GM and in the areas outside GM are deregulated and operators are entitled to run whatever services they like (so long as they inform the Traffic Commissioner).</p> <p>If GM goes ahead with the Proposed Franchising Scheme, all buses within GM would need to meet certain standards and would only accept tickets that could be used on all buses, not tickets that were specific to particular bus companies.</p> <p>Some specific bus routes would continue to operate both within and outside GM so they would need to comply with GM standards within GM but not once they crossed the GM boundary into Cheshire, Lancashire etc.</p> <p>There are currently 116 such services and the assessment has concluded that 24 of these <u>may</u> need to change in some way in order to pass two statutory tests.</p> <p>Permits would need to be issued to allow some of these services to operate within GM and certain conditions would be attached to these permits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you think that cross-boundary routes could be affected by the Proposed Franchising Scheme ? <p>In order for these services to run, GMCA/TfGM would provide permits based upon two conditions being met:</p> <p>1. the proposed service will benefit those making journeys in the franchised area, and</p>
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2. the proposed service will not have an adverse effect on local franchised services.

The assessment identifies a number of potential benefits and negative effects through the changes of the Proposed Franchising Scheme option which we will now discuss.

First, the potential benefits. For each of them, I want you to let me know your opinion and what impact it might have on cross-boundary travellers like yourself:

- **Bringing more people into Greater Manchester on public transport rather than in private vehicles- reducing congestion.**
What are your thoughts? Would you potentially make more journeys on the bus, or fewer?
- **Once in Greater Manchester, cross-boundary travellers may use other Franchised services- creating revenue for the franchised services.**
Do you have any thoughts on this? The money you spend will go back into the bus service
- **Permits would set out requirements for customer standards, vehicle standards, customer service standards and basic fare conditions.**
Any comments?

And finally

- **There may be potential for multi-operator ticketing Schemes with neighbouring authorities to make travel choices simpler for passengers.**
Any comments?

There are also some potential limitations:

- **The assessment concludes that cross boundary service vehicles may not necessarily be of the same standard in terms of fleet quality and customer service as those under the Proposed Franchising Scheme as they would not be under the direct control of TfGM.**
Do you have any thoughts on this?
- **There may not be joined up information available about other connecting bus services**
- **Cross-boundary services wouldn't be required to accept GMCA period tickets. i.e. similar to the current service.**
Does this concern you?
- **If you travelled into Greater Manchester on a permitted service and then also used franchised services within Greater Manchester, your journey would be more expensive than just a permitted service.**
What are your thoughts about this?

And finally

- **Services that do not meet the two key tests mentioned earlier would not be granted permits and therefore would not be permitted to run services within the Greater Manchester boundary.**
Do you have any comments on this?

Close	
5-10 mins	<p>I now want to wrap up with a couple of general questions about your thoughts now that you know more about the Proposed Franchising Scheme .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In what ways do you think that cross-boundary services will be affected by the proposed Bus Franchising Scheme for Greater Manchester? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Do you think services will be affected in a positive or negative way? Why do you think that? • Would this proposal be likely to affect the way you travel into Greater Manchester at the moment? • To what extent do you agree or disagree with the conclusion that reforming the bus market is the right thing to do to address the challenges facing the local bus market? <p>Moderator to explain they're going to play the video one final time to see if anybody has any final questions</p> <p>Play video about bus reform (c.1:40)</p> <p><i>Does anyone have any other questions after that or is anything not clear?</i></p>

Thank you once again for your time, we will be in touch with the answers to any unanswered questions which were raised during this discussion and to confirm transfer of your monetary incentives as a thank you for taking part.

Enjoy the rest of your evening.

Business groups discussion guide

'Doing Buses Differently' Bus Reform Consultation: Business Focus Group

Tuesday 10 December and Thursday 12 December 2019

Online

Timings

Guide Key:

General Instructions
Discussion questions asked to participants
Other moderator instructions

Time	Facilitation Instructions / Moderator discussion questions
Welcome and Introduction	
10 mins	<p>Thank you very much for agreeing to take part in today's group.</p> <p>My name is ___ and I work for a research company called, Ipsos MORI. I will be leading this discussion, which is taking place on behalf of Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM), who coordinate a lot of the public transport, but do not control buses. When we talk about public transport, we mean buses, trams and trains in Greater Manchester.</p> <p>The aim of the session is to get views of businesses within Greater Manchester as to the introduction of a Proposed Bus Franchising Scheme . When responding, please think about your business rather than you as an individual.</p> <p>During the discussion we will be making reference to two organisations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Transport for Greater Manchester is the public body responsible for coordinating Greater Manchester's transport strategy and delivering its objectives. It owns the Metrolink system, as well as interchanges, bus shelters and bus stops and is accountable to and directed by the GMCA, the ten Greater Manchester Councils and the GM Mayor. 4. The Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) is made up of the 10 Greater Manchester local authorities and the GM Mayor. Its powers include public transport, skills, housing, regeneration, waste management and the environment as well as fire services. It also makes decisions about transport as set out in Local Transport Act 2008. <p>The Greater Manchester Mayor, Andy Burnham, chairs the GMCA and has specific executive powers, including some related to transport. He has the power to decide whether to introduce the Proposed Franchising Scheme .</p> <p>Just some key points to make you aware of before we start the discussion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The discussion will last up to an hour and a half. • It's more an informal chat than a 'survey' or 'interview'. Please feel free to chip in with whatever you think, whenever you think it. • I won't judge you on your spelling if you promise not to judge me on mine! • There are no right or wrong answers. • You can choose to not answer a question if you have nothing to contribute – please don't feel compelled to respond! • Everything you say is completely confidential and information collected is anonymised. • Only your [screen name] can be seen by the others in the chat, never your real name or email address. • We will write a report at the end of this research project. We might use quotes, but we won't name anyone, identify you personally, or say who has said what.

Time	Moderator discussion questions
Ice breaker discussion	
10 mins 1.10	<p>Ice breaker discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Firstly, if you can just briefly introduce yourself, the name of your company, the industry in which you trade and where your main company premises are located?
Current view of buses	
15 mins 1.25	<p>Let's talk about the buses in Greater Manchester at the moment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In what way does your company rely on the bus network in Greater Manchester? <p>Focus on employees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Let's think about your work colleagues and employees....do many use the bus? ○ Why do the employees who use the bus choose to use that particular type of transport? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What are its advantages? ○ What are the disadvantages? ○ Thinking of those employees who <u>do not</u> use the bus, why do they not choose to use it? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What form of transport do they use instead? ○ Do any of you employ shift workers as part of your staff? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ IF YES: Do buses meet the needs of shift workers? ○ Do they run at suitable times (late enough/early enough) ○ What about the cost? Do any of you subsidise the cost of travel? ○ Do the buses work well with other types of public transport such as the tram? ○ What about the social aspect, do buses run when people want them to? <p>Focus on customers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Some of you have customers which need to visit your business premises/outlets etc. How do customers tend to travel to your business premises/outlets? ○ What role do buses play for those customers who visit in person? ○ How easy is it for your customers to reach your premises by bus? <p>If no: Would it have any impact on your business if they could use public transport to visit?</p>
The Proposed Bus Franchising Scheme	
15 mins 1.50	<p>Greater Manchester Combined Authority is going through a process to talk to everyone about the future of buses and get their opinion on the proposals to introduce a Proposed Franchising Scheme in Greater Manchester. The final decision will be made by the Mayor of Greater Manchester Andy Burnham.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Firstly, how do you think buses are run at the moment? By that I mean who plans the routes and timetables and who sets the fares and standards? ● How are the buses funded at the moment?

	<p>3 options were looked at including the Do Minimum (stay as we are), a partnership approach and a Proposed Franchising Scheme, which has been chosen as the best option on which to consult.</p> <p>I'm going to play a video now that explains what a Proposed Franchising Scheme is, and how it would change the way buses work in Greater Manchester.</p> <p>Please make notes about anything that you either don't understand or things that surprise you.</p> <p>Play video about bus reform (c.1:40)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What did everyone write down and what questions do you have after watching that video? ○ Do you think based on what you have seen, and from our earlier discussion, that there is a need to change the way the buses are run?
<p>20 mins 2.10</p>	<p>There were a number of benefits presented in the video which the GMCA says will be a benefit of the Proposed Franchising Scheme. We will discuss some of these in turn</p> <p>Currently routes and frequencies are set by individual operators, meaning some routes have too many buses causing congestion, and others have too few buses meaning long waiting times. These decisions are driven by profit rather than social need.</p> <p>Under the Proposed Franchising Scheme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GM would decide and set the routes • GM would set the frequencies <p>Do you have any questions or comments on these benefits? I should add, if I don't know the answer or I miss your question, we will review the transcripts and get back to you as a collective via email with the answers</p> <p>Currently, decisions around ticket types and prices are made by individual operators. There are over 150 types of bus ticket across Greater Manchester and passengers often can't use their ticket on the first bus that arrives. Also, bus companies are often in competition for passengers with the Metrolink, rather than working in an integrated fashion. Under the Proposed Franchising Scheme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GM would decide on the ticket prices and types- which would be set at the lowest currently available period fare and usable across all franchised GM buses. • Buses would work together with other forms of transport such as Metrolink – supporting GM's desire for economic growth through sustainable public transport <p>Do you have any questions or comments on these benefits?</p> <p>Currently, operators are responsible for the quality of their buses including customer service and cleanliness standards. Also, individual bus operators have their own branding. Under the Proposed Franchising Scheme:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GM would set the standards for bus operators to work to (e.g. quality of vehicle used, buses arriving on time, wifi, cleanliness and customer service requirements etc). These things would form part of a contract and performance would be monitored and reported • All buses would be uniform (look the same/have the same colour) and there would be one point of contact for information and complaints via a website/app. <p>Do you have any questions or comments on these benefits?</p> <p>Here is the list again</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GM would decide and set the routes • GM would set the frequencies • GM would decide on the ticket prices and types • Buses work together with other forms of transport such as Metrolink • GM would set the standards for bus operators to work to (e.g. quality of vehicle used, buses arriving on time etc) • All buses would be uniform (look the same/have the same colour) <p>Which one benefit would be the most important in relation to your business and why?</p>
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The financial and economic cases

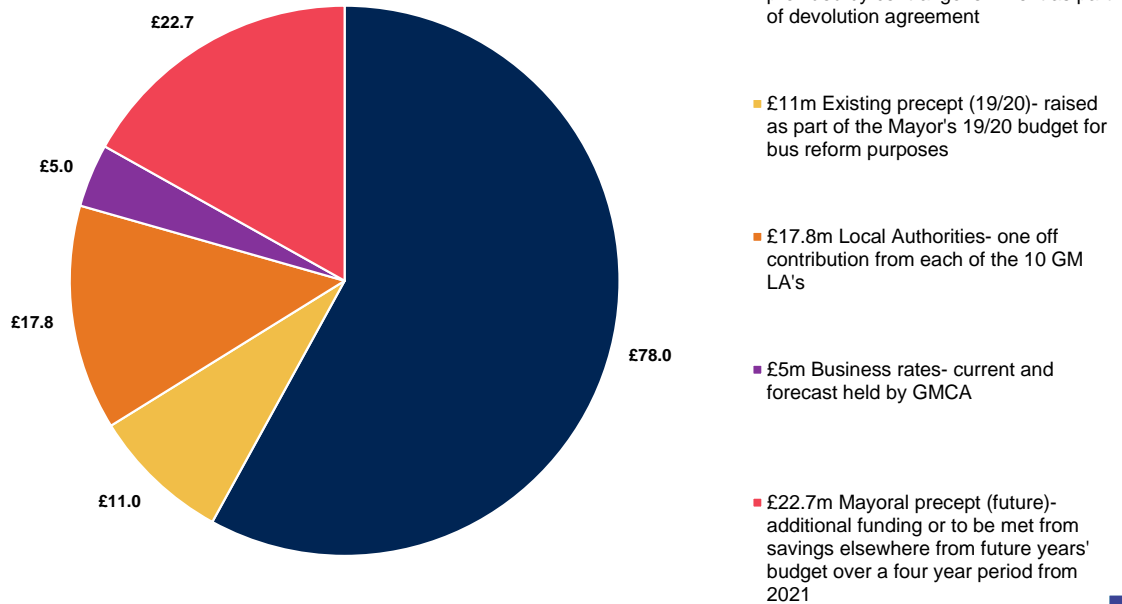
<p>20 mins 2.30</p>	<p>We are now going to briefly discuss one of the cases upon which it has been assessed that a Proposed Bus Franchising Scheme is the best solution for Greater Manchester. The financial case sets out whether GMCA would be able to afford the transition to, and to operate, any of the options. The financial case considers the forecast income, costs and risks of each reform option and the associated funding requirements.</p> <p>The Proposed Franchising Scheme would require £134.5m in additional funding over a five year period whilst Greater Manchester transitions to franchising. Please note, – there would also be costs associated with other options, such as the partnership option which would have a net deficit over the 30-year appraisal period of between £94.7m and £112.5m. The Proposed Franchising Scheme would have a cumulative surplus of £94m after the initial five year transition period.</p> <p>Both the Proposed Franchising Scheme and partnership options would deliver financial benefits to Greater Manchester – there is a full economic case, which has been independently audited, which sets out this case. The economic benefits of franchising are significantly greater than those of partnership. Both the Proposed Franchising Scheme option and the partnership option deliver similar 3.1 and 3.5 NPV (benefits to cost). Also, the Proposed Bus Franchising Scheme provides a better platform for phase 2 interventions in the future to further improve the bus services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have any comments on these conclusions of the economic case? <p>To fund the transition to the Proposed Franchising Scheme there has been a funding proposal approved by GMCA. The pie chart I am about to show details how the Proposed Franchising Scheme would be funded.</p>
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	<p>Show funding pie chart and explain each element:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority would come from ‘earn back’ funding provided by central government as part of Greater Manchester’s Devolution Agreement (£78m in total); • A one-off contribution from the ten Greater Manchester Local Authorities (£17.8m in total); • Current and forecast business rates pooling receipts held by GMCA (£5m in total); • £11.0m, in total, from existing precept raised as part of the Mayor’s 2019/20 budget for bus reform purposes; and • £22.7m, in total, of Mayoral precept required from future years’ budgets phased over a four-year period commencing in 2021/22. GMCA would need to consider whether this was additional funding or to be met from savings elsewhere in the budget. <p>Firstly, are there are questions or points of clarification? Again, please forgive me if I am unable to answer your question or miss a question, we will review the transcript and get back to you as a collective via email with the answers to any unanswered questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are you views as to how the Proposed Franchising Scheme would be funded? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Are there any funding sources which surprised you? Why/why not? • The Financial Case concludes that GMCA could afford to introduce and operate the Proposed Franchising Scheme. Do you have any comments on this? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What do you think about the mix of funding sources? • What do you think about the proposal for GMCA to use some of its revenue from business rates to fund the Proposed Franchising Scheme? • Do you think this is a worthwhile use of business rates? • Do you think any elements of the proposed transition funding should not be used to fund the Proposed Franchising Scheme ? • Are there any alternative sources of funding which you think should have been identified?
<p>Close</p>	
	<p>I am going to play the video one final time to see if it raises any more questions Play video about bus reform (c.1:40)</p> <p><i>Does anyone have any other questions after that or is anything not clear?</i></p>

Thank you once again for your time, we will be in touch with the answers to any unanswered questions which were raised during this discussion and to confirm transfer of your monetary incentives as a thank you for taking part. Enjoy the rest of your day

Business groups financial case slide

Approved proposal for transition funding



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Appendix D – Voting during deliberative events

During the deliberative events, several votes took place to enable moderators to probe any changes in opinion and the reasons which informed such changes. The table below summarises the votes as recorded.

Table D1 – Summary of votes during deliberative events

To what extent do you support or oppose the introduction of the Proposed Franchising Scheme?					
	Strongly Support	Tend to support	Neither nor	Tend to oppose	Strongly oppose
Vote 1 (80)	34	34	11	1	0
Vote 2 (80)	30	30	14	4	2
Vote 3 (76)	36	29	6	2	3

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