

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
GREATER MANCHESTER TRANSPORT COMMITTEE
HELD ON FRIDAY 15 OCTOBER 2021 AT EXCHANGE HALL,
MANCHESTER CENTRAL CONFERENCE CENTRE**

PRESENT:

Councillor Mark Aldred (in the Chair)	Wigan Council
Councillor Mohammed Ayub	Bolton Council
Councillor Stuart Hartigan	Bolton Council
Councillor Jackie Harris	Bury Council
Councillor Kevin Peel	Bury Council
Councillor Naeem Hassan	Manchester City Council
Councillor John Leech	Manchester City Council
Councillor Howard Sykes	Oldham Council
Councillor Norman Briggs	Oldham Council
Councillor Phil Burke	Rochdale MBC
Councillor Shah Wazir	Rochdale MBC
Councillor Roger Jones	Salford Council
Councillor Tom McGee	Stockport MBC
Councillor David Mellor	Stockport MBC
Councillor Warren Bray	Tameside MBC
Councillor Doreen Dickenson	Tameside MBC
Councillor Steve Adshead	Trafford Council
Councillor Paul Prescott	Wigan Council

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Bob Morris	TfGM
Peter Boulton	TfGM
Ian Palmer	TfGM
Stephen Rhodes	TfGM
Lucy Kennon	TfGM
Emma Flinn	TfGM
Eamonn Boylan	Chief Executive, GMCA/TfGM
Gwynne Williams	Deputy Monitoring Officer, GMCA
Chief Inspector Ronnie Neilson	GMP Safer Transport Team
Lee Teasdale	Senior Governance Officer, GMCA

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillor Susan Emmott	Rochdale Council
Guillaume Chanussot	KeolisAmey Metrolink
Owain Roberts	Northern

GMTC 46/21 APOLOGIES

That apologies be received and noted from Councillors Barry Warner, Emma Taylor, Dzidra Noor, Stuart Haslam, Nathan Evans, Joanne Marshall and Andrew Western. Apologies were also received from GM Mayor Andy Burnham, Daniel Coles (Network Rail), Chris

Jackson (Northern) and Nicola Ward (GMCA).

GMTC 47/21 CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair advised that unfortunately the GM Transport Commissioner was unable to attend the meeting but did wish to update the Committee through the Chair on activities that had taken place around the Conservative Party Conference.

The Conference had provided the opportunity to put a spotlight on plans to deliver the Bee Network. The GM Mayor held an event showcasing the vision for the Network and how it would connect all modes for a seamless customer experience. An example Bee Network bus was on-site at St Peters Square and provided a multi-functional meeting space and following the Conference, would be used to tour GM and communicate the vision of Destination Bee Network around the region.

Over the course of the conference, the GM Transport Commissioner was involved in meetings with officials and ministers from Number 10 and the Department for Transport (DfT) on how the vision could be delivered at a greater pace with the right backing.

However, the vision for HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail was not being matched by government, and work would take place to continue to press for changes as the legislation developed.

Big changes could also be expected in terms of how roads were used, with road pricing on the table and prohibition of pavement parking under serious consideration within government. GM showed it was leading the way for enhanced priority for pedestrians with the visionary side road zebra crossing project nearly completed, with DfT ministers showing a lot of interest in this initiative.

Resolved /-

That the update provided by the GM Transport Commissioner on activities that had taken place around the Conservative Party Conference be received by the Committee.

GMTC 48/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Resolved /-

That it be noted that Councillor Phil Burke declared a personal interest by virtue of being an employee of Metrolink.

GMTC 49/21 MINUTES OF THE GM TRANSPORT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 20 AUGUST 2021

Resolved /-

That the minutes of the GM Transport Committee meeting held 20 August 2021 be approved as a correct record.

GMTC 50/21 MINUTES OF THE GM TRANSPORT COMMITTEE SUB COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Resolved /-

That the minutes of the GMTC Sub Committees as below be noted.

- Metrolink & Rail Sub Committee – 17 September 2021
- Bus Services Sub Committee – 1 October 2021

GMTC 51/21 NETWORK PERFORMANCE

Bob Morris (Chief Operating Officer, TfGM) provided the Committee with an update on transport network performance within Greater Manchester.

The last week in September had seen an estimated total of 52.7m trips taken. This was significant as it was 2% up on pre-pandemic averages. Returns to education and an increasing return to the workplace were considered to have played a significant role in the numbers being seen. There had also been a large number of events that had been deferred from the summer to take place in September.

Over the last seven days, in comparison with pre-pandemic numbers, buses were experiencing patronage levels of 92%, Metrolink at 60%, rail 63%, highways 97%, cycling 95%, and walking was at 116%, which was particularly good news in terms of the encouragement of active travel.

Members referenced ASB issues across the network. Questions were raised around the possibility of GMP's Transport Unit having a constant monitoring presence across the whole Metrolink network. It was advised that a short-term action plan had been prepared to address some of the immediate items of concern. In the meantime, meetings had also taken place with the GM Mayor, the new Chief Constable & Deputy Chief Constable of GMP and the Transport Commissioner, about the restructure of the GMP Transport Unit, both for road policing and for public transport. The GM Mayor had set a deadline of six weeks for the Deputy Chief Constable to come back with a proposal on this.

Members noted the significant decrease in Network Rail delay minutes and asked how much the decrease was expected to relate to the reductions in services being run. It was advised that in the main the reductions in delays did relate to the reduced network offer. It was agreed that officers would look to produce train network performance figures that were normalised in percentage terms to allow like for like comparisons with pre-pandemic network performance.

Resolved /-

1. That the Network Performance update be noted; and
2. That TfGM Officers be asked to provide train network performance figures normalised in percentage terms to allow like for like comparisons with pre-pandemic network performance.

GMTC 52/21 GMP TRANSPORT UNIT UPDATE

Chief Inspector Ronnie Neilson (Head of the GMP Transport Unit Safer Transport Team) was invited to give a presentation to the Committee highlighting recent issues faced on the network and the next steps being taken. Points highlighted included:

- The Unit covered all aspects of the full transport network, including road, tram, bus, walking and cycling. It also provided assistance to Operation Custodian (the weekend night-time economy operation).
- Throughout the pandemic, staff within the Unit had also been required to support the management of excess community deaths and supporting the Operational Communications Branch with call handling demand. There had also been reduced resources due to staff sickness and isolation requirements.
- Further challenges faced by the Unit included relatively small staff numbers for a significant area of responsibility; emerging issues around the usage of e-scooters; balancing the competing needs of each transport mode; the need to traverse a wide network, with Metrolink for example accounting for 10% of mode usage but requiring 60% of patrols; and dealing with the perceptions of post-covid activity.
- 12 months of outcomes were highlighted. These included 150 drug driver arrests which was seen as an increasing problem across the network. 2135 incidents in total had been attended, with 450 arrests having taken place.
- Project Servator was referenced. This involved Transport Unit staff being trained to better detect and combat adverse behaviours as part of deterrent work on the network. Also referenced was Operation Sycamore, for which Home Office funding had been secured for directed patrols in violence hotspots.
- Anecdotally it had been found that there were high levels of public satisfaction with the Unit's work and presence.
- The issues of acute and chronic demand in relation to youth ASB were highlighted. This accounted for 50% of all ASB on the networks. Therefore, considerable work had been put into understanding this as part of a GM wide issue so that it could be approached in a holistic and collaborative way.
- Next steps being taken included the development of a Road Danger Reduction Plan to support the growth in active travel; increasing staffing on the Roads Policing Unit to allow the Transport Unit to focus more on ASB/Crime on other modes; continued working with the TravelSafe Partnership; further development and improvement of relationships with district teams; supporting the roll-out of LiveChat to encourage incidence reporting; and the development and investigation of resources to allow for more complex issues to be dealt with in a more timely manner.

Lucy Kennon (Head of Resilience & Business Continuity, TfGM) then updated the Committee on the TravelSafe Forward Plan. Reference was made to the weekly 'TravelSafe Specialist Operations' – which would be ramped up with a refreshed menu of tactics – and would be complemented by a raft of other wraparound work, such as prevention, intervention, deterrents and providing information. Local based plans for each of the 'hotspot' areas were also being developed.

Members highlighted a number of concerns around the increasing usage of e-scooters. Members were aware that accident figures were known to be high on this mode of transport and asked if figures were available for this. It was noted that a consultation on e-scooters was taking place in relation to trials in various parts of GM. Would GMP be feeding into this consultation? And would it be possible for the Committee to receive a report following the conclusion of the trial to be able to take a view on the pros and cons of this mode of transport.

It was confirmed that figures available around accidents on e-scooters would be made available to the Committee. GMP would be willing to provide information it had collated with national colleagues to any consultation work. Members agreed that they wished to see a further report brought to the Committee on e-scooters once the information accrued from the trial was completed.

Members also referenced the need to ensure that young people were educated on the potential dangers of e-scooters. Was it possible to incorporate this into school educational programmes?

It was advised that during 2019 the TravelSafe Partnership had delivered educational engagement programmes to schools, covering around 30,000 of the region's children. During 2020 and its pandemic related issues, the Partnership was unable to deliver programmes on such a scale. However, the educational engagement programme had now been fully re-established and also now included a virtual offer to complement it. Officers would look at the incorporation of e-scooter safety messages within the package.

Members asked if breakdowns of the outcomes such as arrests were available broken down by each GM district. It was advised that these figures could be made available.

Members expressed concern about the level of criminal damage being seen across the network and enquired about the number of arrests made in relation to this, and the numbers who subsequently faced criminal damage charges. Equally, there were concerns about assaults on staff across the Metrolink network, about which Councillor Burke had received a promise he would be kept personally informed. Were the assaults being fully investigated by the TravelSafe Partnership?

It was advised that numbers around criminal damage arrests and charging would be fed back to the Committee. Arrangements would be made for Inspector Griffin to contact Councillor Burke.

Members expressed concern about the levels of anti-social behaviour impacting the commuter confidence of local residents right now – and whilst the plans being shaped by the Deputy Chief Constable and the GM Mayor were welcomed, there needed to be some immediate actions taken to reassure residents.

Members noted that the GM Transport Unit was referenced as a relatively small team. How short of human resource were they to deal with the scale of the problem with confidence? It was advised that an exact number could not be provided, but it was hoped that a doubling of numbers currently in the Road Policing Unit would allow the Transport Unit freedom to commit more to other modes.

Further queries were raised on staffing numbers. Were shortages in staff tied to the pandemic or was there a general shortage of officers available to the Unit. It was advised

that more 'boots on the ground' would always be welcome, however, current issues such as youth ASB levels would not be solved by the number of officers within the GM Transport Unit. These were deep rooted issues that had built up and therefore it was vital to prioritise work on early interventions. Helping young people into gainful employment for example, had been proven as one of the best ways to combat ASB.

Members noted that 150 drug drivers had been convicted, a question was raised about the level of testing undertaken to reach that figure. It was advised that the testing numbers had increased, and were revealing what was an increasing, and concerning issue. Testing numbers would be fed back to the Committee.

Concerns were raised around the growing push for removal of A-Frames on cycle pathways. Whilst the removal was understandable from the point of view of equalities legislation issues, these had originally been put in place due to issues with the paths being used by mopeds/motocross bikes and the inability of pedestrians to use the pathways safely. If this was to become an issue again, it was hoped that resourcing would be in place to deal with it.

Members referenced Community Speed Watch schemes – and how these were easier to access and establish in some areas than others, was guidance available on how to organise these?

GMP was more than happy to support the inauguration of any Community Speed Watch Schemes. It had been found that this often commenced following a serious accident within an area, with an immediate groundswell of support that did tend to fade over time. GMP was in the process of looking at how Speed Watch schemes can be reenergised or relaunched when this happens.

Members noted that 23 incidents per million passengers happened on the bus network, whilst 101 incidents per million took place on the Metrolink network. Would guards on the trams help to combat this?

It was advised that the first step in combatting this issue was a diagnosis of the issues. This work had found that the journeys themselves rarely resulted in issues, but rather the bulk of the problem was at interchanges, where groups of young people were gathering following lockdown periods and causing ASB issues resulting in recordable incidents. This ASB required a holistic approach to combat at the earliest possible opportunity.

Members accepted this, and asked if that was the case, then why could there not be a police/enforcement presence at all the interchanges. Members also asked if figures specific to crimes at interchanges could be made available.

It was advised that the short-term action plan highlighted that the top four hotspot locations were all interchanges, so it was very clear that activity needed to be centred in those locations as much as possible. The work taking place to combat this was a combined effort comprising GMP, transport operators, local authorities and youth diversionary teams. Free travel was offered on Metrolink to youth detach teams to help in getting to the crux of some of the problems.

Members expressed concern about the significant rise in percentage terms of incidents on Metrolink from 2019 to 2020. It was advised that there needed to be care in directly comparing figures between those years as patronage levels had been at such record lows during parts of 2020 that this had a significant impact on incident rates when measured

against patronage levels. Overall, the number of incidents was broadly similar between 2019 and 2020, and there had been a fall in the number of serious incidents, however the level of youth ASB, as referenced, had spiked at previously unseen levels.

Members agreed that given the seriousness of some recent incidents, the TravelSafe Partnership would be asked to bring updates on a 6 monthly basis, rather than the yearly updates brought previously.

Members enquired as to the level of GMP officer deployment on the overall network, including bus and Metrolink in addition to the interchanges. It was advised that officers would look to feedback officer deployment arrangement information to the Committee. It was also confirmed that the Action Plan contained a tactical focus on both static and agile deployments, acknowledging that issues could take place when taking trams between differing interchange hotspots.

Members sought reassurance that areas within the region that did not have existing hotspots and Metrolink connections still received an appropriate level of cover from the Transport Unit. It was advised that the resource deployment of the Unit was directed where analysts dictated their presence was most required, as a general rule however, the Unit did look to ensure an equitable spread across the region.

Resolved /-

1. That the update from the GMP Transport Unit be noted;
2. That the GMP e-scooter analysis and any figures available on serious incidents involving e-scooters be fed back to the Committee;
3. That arrangements be made for Inspector Griffin to update Councillor Burke on Metrolink staff assault figures;
4. That officer deployment arrangements on the bus and Metrolink networks be fed back to the Committee;
5. That figures detailing criminal prosecutions following damage to bus and Metrolink networks be circulated to the Committee by GMP;
6. That figures on the number of drug drivers tested that resulted in 150 positive drivers be fed back to the Committee by GMP;
7. That, following the current trials taking place on e-scooters, a paper outlining the outcomes be brought to a future meeting of the Committee for consideration;
8. That member concerns regarding the removal of 'A Frames' on cycle paths be noted;
9. That the committee requests updates from the TravelSafe Partnership be moved from yearly to every six months; and
10. That e-scooter safety messages be added to the TravelSafe Partnership's educational engagement programme with schools.

GMTC 53/21 BUS REFORM AND GREATER MANCHESTER'S BUS SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

A report was presented by Eamonn Boylan (Chief Executive Officer, GMCA & TfGM), Stephen Rhodes (Customer Director and Head of Bus, TfGM) and Ian Palmer (Head of Modelling & Analysis, TfGM) that updated the Committee on the plans to implement bus reform within Greater Manchester and included a summary of the plan to franchise the bus network. The report set out the level of ambition needed to ensure the improvement of the offer to customers, how the ambition would be delivered, and the support required from others to ensure the realisation of this ambition. Points highlighted included:

- The Bus Services Improvement Plan (BSIP) had to be delivered by TfGM and all other transport authorities to central government by the end of October. These had to be produced in a very short timescale following the publication of the National Bus Strategy in the spring of 2021.
- It was important to view the BSIP as part of the wider picture of the GMCA's pitch to government for a level up deal, and as part of the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement, submitted by all mayoral authorities in September 2021.
- At the heart of this was the development of a London style public transport system as part of the Bee Network. GM was in a unique position to do this due to where it was at in terms of franchising at present.
- Nationally it had been indicated that there was a pot of £3 billion available for BSIPs. Which sounded quite a lot, but when carved up between the 79 local transport authorities it would not go quite so far.
- This was an opportunity to build upon great work that had already been taking place in relation to the improvement of the region's bus services (for example the Guided Busway and the starting of investment into electric buses to comply with clean air zone requirements).
- The ambition for bus services was summarised into seven thematic areas: Customer Experience; Services; Infrastructure; Information; Fares and Ticketing; Fleet; and Network Management.
- One of the key ambitions was Services. This required stabilising the current variable patterns of patronage and then strengthening services and routes to ensure better and consistent frequencies across all times of day.
- Another key ambition was that of Fares and Ticketing. This meant more affordable journeys, attractively priced and a simplified structure echoing that of Transport for London.
- The third ambition highlighted was Fleet. There was a big ask on reaching a target of 50% of the fleet being zero emission within the next five years.
- Members were updated on the current position in terms of Bus Franchising. Two operators had challenged the GM Mayor's decision taken in March 2021 to introduce a bus franchising scheme in the entire GMCA area via judicial review. The hearing had been held in May 2021 and the outcome of the process was still being awaited.

This risked impacting up the delivery timescales for the implementation of the Scheme. However, officers were progressing where they could, including initiating formal procurement arrangements.

Members referenced the potential delays to Bus Franchising. Following his re-election, the GM Mayor stated that he sought to accelerate the programme beyond the initial timetable as much as possible – what was being done to achieve this ambition?

It was advised that officers were working closely with the Department for Transport to push them to undertake the work required of them to allow the Mayor's ambition to be realised. The ambition being for franchising to be in place now by 2024. Within current legislation, any changes to the scheme as consulted would require a change to regulation, and this was currently under discussion with DfT.

Members asked if the outcome of the judicial review would be subject to an appeal process – and if accelerating the programme would open another possible avenue of appeal to slow down the process?

It was advised that an appeal of the judicial review would largely depend upon the judgement decision which was unknown at this stage. There was the potential for further challenges down the line, though clear grounds for this would need to be established.

Members sought assurances that smaller communities in the region were not left out of plans, and that services to schools or on residential estates would not be cut. It was advised that the wider plans went well beyond the main transport corridors, and that the services ask included local areas, town centres and feeder services. The ambition was very much about scaling up not down.

Members asked if there were alternative plans should the funding received not allow for the original ambitions. It was advised that a wide range of scenarios was not being planned for. There had been advice as to the likely direction of the bid. It was very ambitious, but if all funding hoped for was not received, then officers would come back to the Committee for advice on how to make best use of what had been granted.

Members raised that they had been receiving a lot of questions from residents as to the status of bus franchising. It was therefore requested that the report be circulated to the Chief Executives in each GM local authority, with a covering note from Eamonn Boylan summarising the points raised at this meeting. The Chief Executives could then disseminate this to their councillors.

Resolved /-

1. That the current position in respect to Bus Franchising in Greater Manchester be noted by the Committee;
2. That the Committee endorses the level of ambition and proposals being put forward as part of Greater Manchester's Bus Service Improvement Plan which will be presented to GMCA on 29th October 2021 and submitted to government shortly thereafter; and
3. That the chief executives in each GM local authority be asked to circulate the report to all their councillors together with a covering note from Eamonn Boylan.

GMTC 54/21 ROAD SAFETY UPDATE

Peter Boulton (Head of Highways, TfGM) was invited to provide a road safety update to Members. Points highlighted included:

- Firm figures had now been produced on the numbers killed or serious injured on the roads in GM. There had been a decrease of around 25% - down from 683 in 2019 to 512 in 2020. This compared to an overall 22% decrease nationally. This was largely as a result of pandemic related reductions in traffic during 2020, with an estimated 21% less traffic on the roads during the year as a whole.
- Unfortunately, the number of fatalities alone had risen by 6% (67 in 2020, 63 in 2019), this was even more disappointing when accounting for the already high numbers seen in 2019, which had resulted in a 26% rise on 2018 numbers.
- Because traffic had been more free flowing during 2020, it had been found that instances of speeding had notably increased. With speeding being a key risk factor in serious injuries in the event of a collision.
- A new system (The DfT Collision Reporting and Sharing System (CRaSH)) had been introduced by GMP that could have an impact of improving the identification of serious injury collisions.
- The Fatal Collision Research Project had commenced. This would form an in-depth study into the root causes of fatal road traffic collisions in GM using the full police investigation files.
- The Road Danger Reduction Action Plan was highlighted. The Plan reflected all concerns raised about road safety and the perceptions/actualities of road safety that formed barriers for some people engaging in active travel. It also reflected and complemented the 2040 Transport Strategy intentions around safety.
- A number of current safety and speed management initiatives were highlighted, such as Safe Drive Stay Alive, Older Drivers – Safer Driving for Longer, and GMP BikeSafe.
- There were also a number of important initiatives at the national level, such as a DfT review of the documentation used to assess new safety camera requests, and TfGM had made a representation to government on the next stages for DfT's Road Safety Strategy.

Members expressed concerns about the number of speed cameras in the region that were currently non-functional. Was a programme in place for the digitalisation of all existing speed cameras?

It was confirmed that funding had been received for the digitalisation of the speed camera estate. The procurement process was about to commence, and ongoing conversations were taking place with district colleagues on how best to maintain the cameras during the period before digitalisation takes effect. It was hoped that the procurement process would conclude by April 2022 with a 12-month process for full rollout.

Members sought further information about the discussions with district colleagues. Would

the full burden of maintenance be placed upon the districts?

It was explained that presently the districts owned the housings of the cameras and Safer Roads GM maintained them. The intention was that these would be fully owned and maintained by Safer Roads GM going forward. The discussions with districts were centred on the removal of the assets they own and about putting new assets in place.

Members highlighted their increasing concerns around speeding, expressing the need for more cameras in the region. Who had responsibility for these decisions and how were they paid for?

It was advised that there was a specific criterion that determined the instalment, which was currently under review by DfT. Statistics had to show a high number of injuries/casualties, and before the installing of a camera the relevant local authority had to look at the possibilities around other traffic calming measures. The cost of instalment of the cameras had to be covered by the local authority.

Reference was made to legacy partnership road safety schemes. There was concern that where the most money had been invested, had often resulted in the least impactful results – however there were also some particularly impressive results seen at locations such as Sevenways Roundabout in Stretford. Was information on the most successful/least successful schemes being shared amongst all the GM LA's?

It was advised that the only place that the whole picture was shared at present was through the Transport Committee. It would therefore be best to share these schemes through the Road Safety Partnership with the ask that they be explicitly shared with all authorities.

Concerns were raised about the burden placed upon smaller authorities, and the inability to fund cameras for speeding/bus lanes.

In relation to bus lane cameras, it was advised that there were traffic regulation violations that had been decriminalised, and so local authorities were able to take fines from this as an income stream. In terms of speeding cameras, TfGM did not receive funding either to help support the installation of these.

Resolved /-

1. That the contents of the Road Safety Update be noted by the Committee; and
2. That information pertaining to successful road safety schemes throughout the totality of Greater Manchester be shared with all local authorities via the Road Safety Partnership.

GMTC 55/21 DESTINATION BEE NETWORK

Emma Flinn (Head of Consultations & Engagement, TfGM) and Stephen Rhodes (Customer Director & Head of Bus, TfGM) were invited to introduce a report which provided an overview of the development of the Bee Network, including how customer experience, brand, inclusion and social value would underpin the delivery of GM's integrated transport network.

For the Bee Network to be inclusive, TfGM needed to develop and deliver on a network that put people and places at its heart – informed by a deep understanding of communities and

their differing transport needs.

Activities currently underway included the GM Inequalities Audit; ongoing delivery of social value and the exploration of further approaches to building upon and strengthening this; the Destination Bee Network Customer Journey Map that would utilise customer insight and feedback; and the Destination Bee Network Conversation, that would gather views and feedback from residents, communities, businesses and other stakeholders throughout the autumn.

The supporting work by the Centre for Local Economic Strategy (CLES) in developing an independent review of social value was highlighted. Members welcomed the report and emphasised the good work of CLES in developing plans around social value.

Resolved /-

1. That the Committee notes the approach outlined to public engagement, customer experience and social value activities; and
2. That the Committee notes the recommendations made by the Centre of Local Economic Strategies (CLES) on how Transport for Greater Manchester can further embed delivery of social value.

GMTC 56/21 GM TRANSPORT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

Members were given the opportunity to review the forthcoming work programme for the Committee.

Resolved /-

That the Committee's Work Programme be noted.

GMTC 57/21 DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Resolved /-

That the Committee notes that it next meet on 10th December 2021.