

GREATER MANCHESTER TRANSPORT COMMITTEE METROLINK AND RAIL NETWORKS SUB-COMMITTEE

Date: 16 July 2021
Subject: Metrolink Service Performance
Report of: Daniel Vaughan, Head of Metrolink, TfGM

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

This report provides an update on Metrolink operation and performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Members are asked to note the contents of this report.

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Equalities Implications: n/a

Climate Change Impact Assessment and Mitigation Measures – n/a

Risk Management: n/a

Legal Considerations: n/a

Financial Consequences – Revenue: n/a

Financial Consequences – Capital: n/a

Number of attachments to the report:2

- Appendix 1: Period date listing.
- Appendix 2: Face covering compliance by line.

Comments/recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Committee

BACKGROUND PAPERS: Metrolink Service Performance report of 19 March 2021

TRACKING/PROCESS		
Does this report relate to a major strategic decision, as set out in the GMCA Constitution		No
EXEMPTION FROM CALL IN		
Are there any aspects in this report which means it should be considered to be exempt from call in by the relevant Scrutiny Committee on the grounds of urgency?		n/a
GM Transport Committee	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	
n/a	n/a	

1. ABOUT METROLINK

- 1.1 Metrolink is the largest urban light rail network in the UK. It provides a fast, frequent service which is fully accessible to all, running 7 days a week, 364 days of the year.
- 1.2 The Metrolink network is owned by TfGM and is operated on TfGM's behalf through a contract with KeolisAmey Metrolink (KAM).
- 1.3 The network uses high-floor trams with raised platform stops and had reached patronage of over 45 million passengers each year, pre COVID.
- 1.4 There are currently 126 operational trams serviced from two depots.
- 1.5 Trams serve 99 stops covering routes totalling just over 100km. Metrolink is the most accessible of the public transport networks in Greater Manchester, providing step free access across the entire network.

2. PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

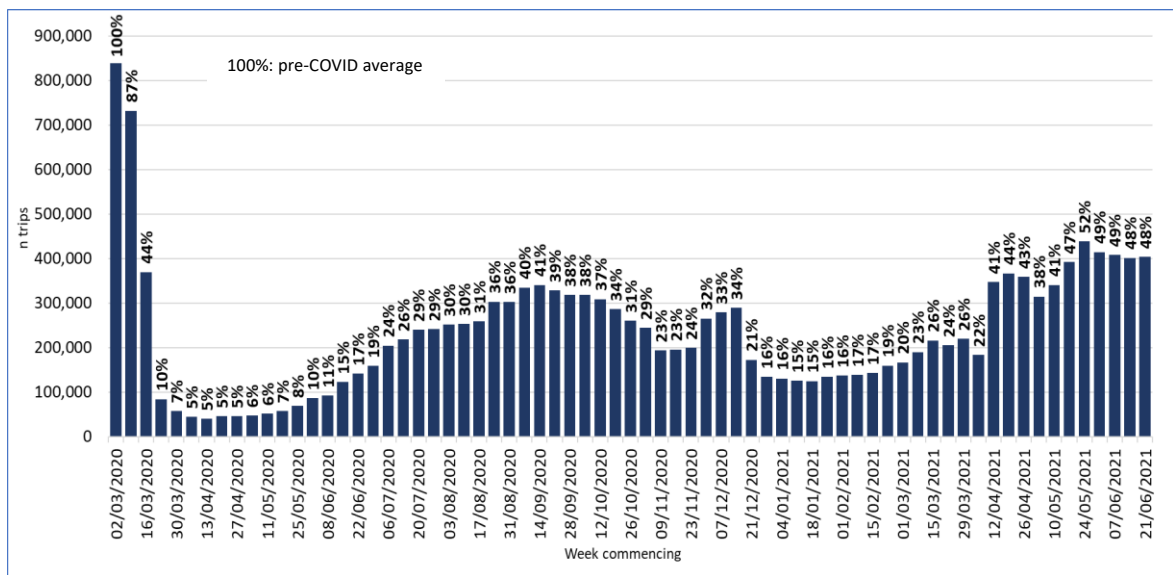
- 2.1 The Metrolink Quarterly Performance Report provides a performance summary for the rolling 12-month period.
- 2.2 Patronage has reached 48% of pre-COVID levels following the third national lockdown release on 12 April and further easing of restrictions from 17 May 2021. It is expected that patronage will increase marginally as the full lockdown release (expected on 19 July) coincides with the GM school summer holiday period and engineering works taking place on the network. Patronage is expected to increase more steadily from September 2021 as sectors of the local economy begin to recover.
- 2.3 To accommodate current patterns of demand, and allow for further growth from September, a service change will be implemented on the 5 July. This is the next step in returning Metrolink to a pre-pandemic service pattern and see a big boost in off-peak services, extended hours of operation on Fridays and Saturdays and target capacity to the busiest locations on the network at the busiest times.
- 2.4 Metrolink will be continuing the enhanced support for customers to travel safely on the network with additional cleaning, teams of Trambassadors as well as hand sanitiser units. School engagement has continued throughout 2021 with particular focus on the schools and locations where face covering compliance is lower with planned engagement through the summer ahead of the September term start.
- 2.5 97.2% of scheduled miles were operated during the 12 months to May 2021 against a performance target of 99.4%. Performance was impacted by vehicle availability issues and several significant incidents. Vehicle availability has also been impacted by the localised increase in criminal damage which has removed trams from service whilst repairs are completed.
- 2.6 There were 223 recorded incidents of anti-social behaviour on the network which is 24 more incidents reported during May 2021 than in May 2020. TravelSafe Days of

Action have continued during February, March, April and May 2021 with a continued focus on locations where anti-social behaviour has been reported and low face covering compliance noted.

Patronage

2.7 Patronage measures the number of trips that are being made on the network.

2.8 COVID has significantly impacted patronage on the Metrolink network as can be seen in the chart below.



2.9 Patronage currently stands at 48% of pre-covid levels. There is strong growth in leisure demand, with weekends between 60% to 70%. However, the pre-pandemic patterns of demand have returned, with the busiest times still the traditional morning and evening peaks, which poses problems for social distancing, especially on the busiest lines (Altrincham, Bury, Oldham, East Didsbury and MediaCity UK).

Funding

2.10 A package of support from central government has been agreed to cover operating costs in full, subject to ongoing reconciliation.

2.11 Additional support, on the same basis was announced to cover the start of the 2021/22 financial year. The current central government funding package expires on 19 July 2021. DfT acknowledges the need for continued financial support beyond this date and is working with Treasury on a package of 'Recovery Funding' beyond this date. DfT officials have accepted much of the content of TfGM's submission, using Metrolink as a case study within their bid for further funding.

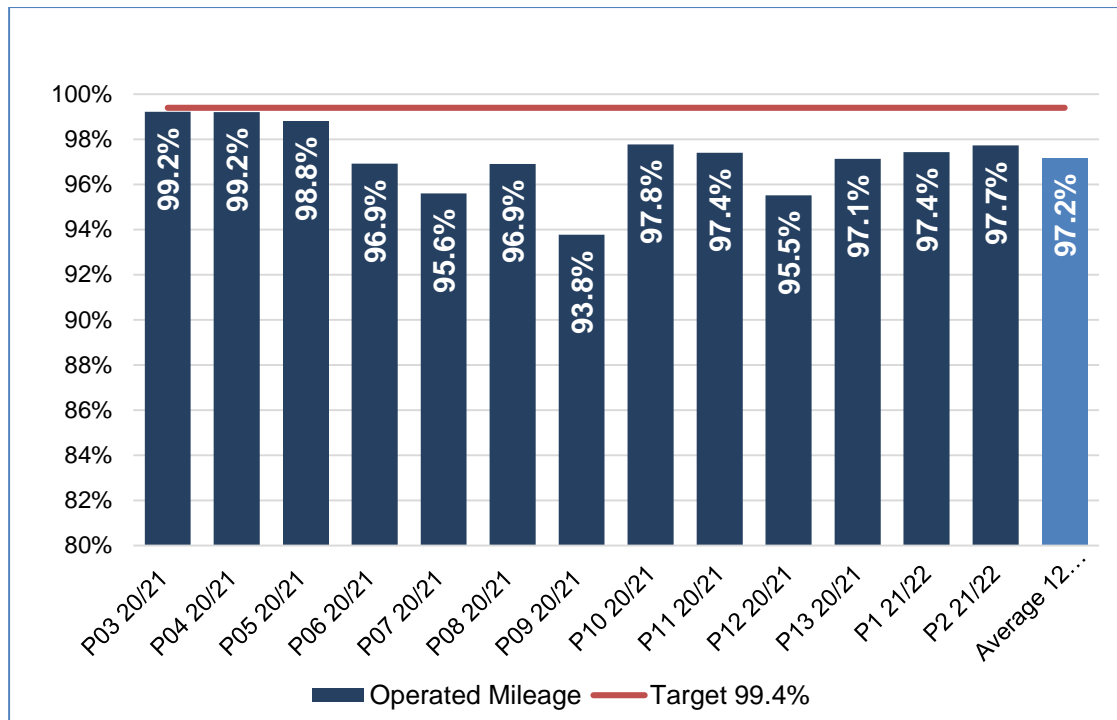
3. OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Reliability

3.1 Reliability is measured by operated mileage. Operated mileage is the number of tram vehicle miles operated verses the number of scheduled miles with an operated target of 99.4%.

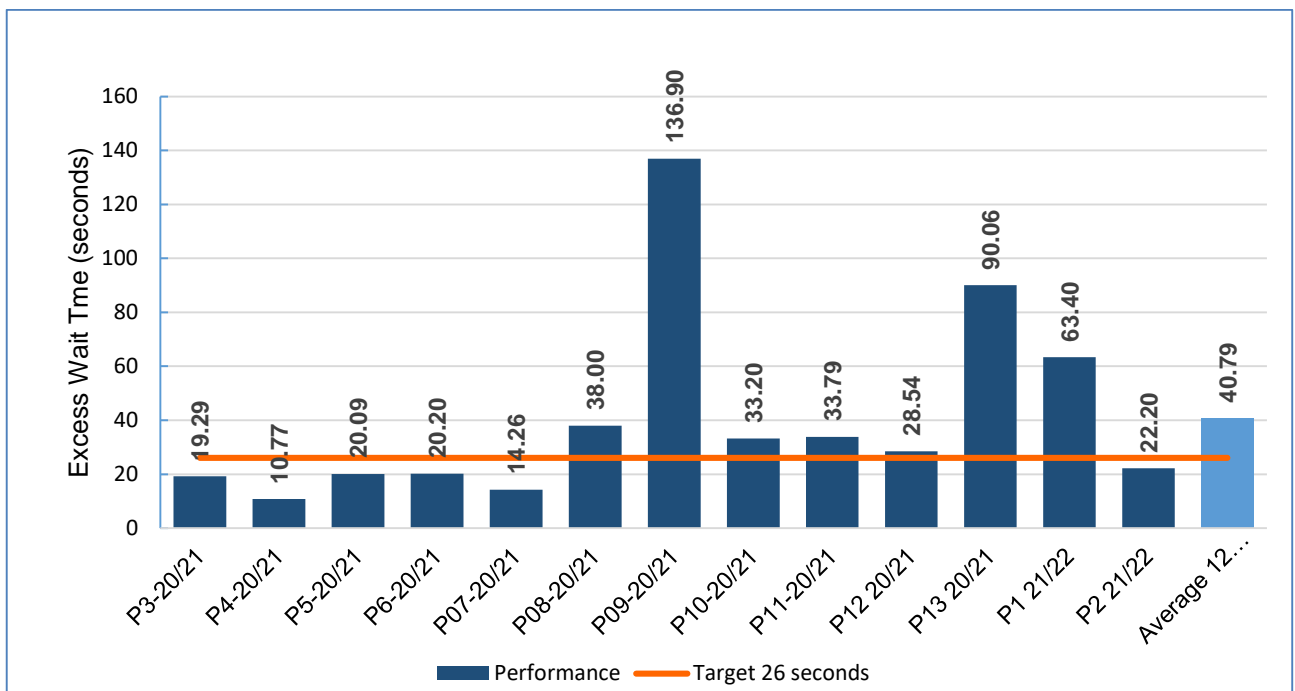
3.2 Reliability performance has been holding steady at an average of just above 97%. Although performance has been improving for the past three periods, it remains below target. Staff availability continues to be affected by self-isolation requirements and this is impacting services on occasion. In the past four periods there have also been a number of incidents which significantly impacted reliability.

- Period 12: Derailment at Deansgate-Castlefield stop.
- Period 13: Emergency engineering works at Whitefield tunnel.
- Period 1: Overhead line fault in the Collyhurst area.
- Period 2: Overrunning engineering works at Cornbrook.



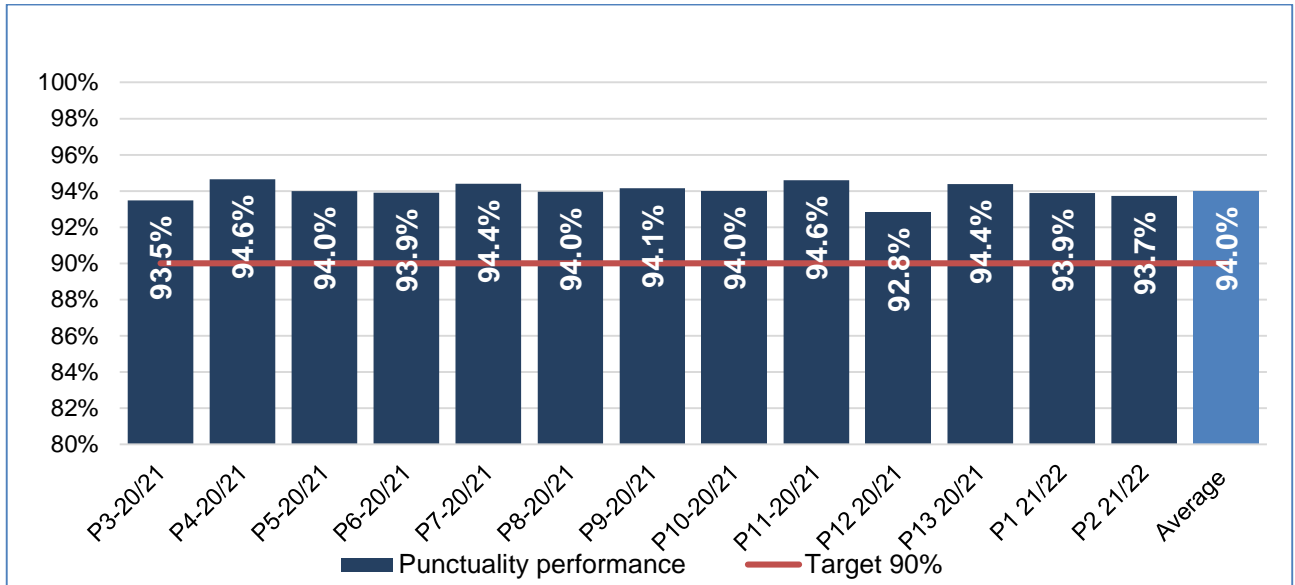
Excess Wait Time

- 3.3 Excess Wait Time (EWT) is a measure of punctuality. It is the average time passengers wait over what would have been expected if the service was running exactly as scheduled.
- 3.4 The average EWT performance for the 12 months to May 2021 was 40.79 seconds against a target of 26 seconds.
- 3.5 Performance in periods 13 and 1 was impacted by the incidents described above in 3.2. Note that Period 9 performance was affected by two significant overhead line equipment failures, as well as a significant road traffic collision where a van struck a tram on the Ashton Line as reported in the January committee paper.
- 3.6 The chart below shows EWT performance over the year. In this case a lower number is better performance for our passengers.



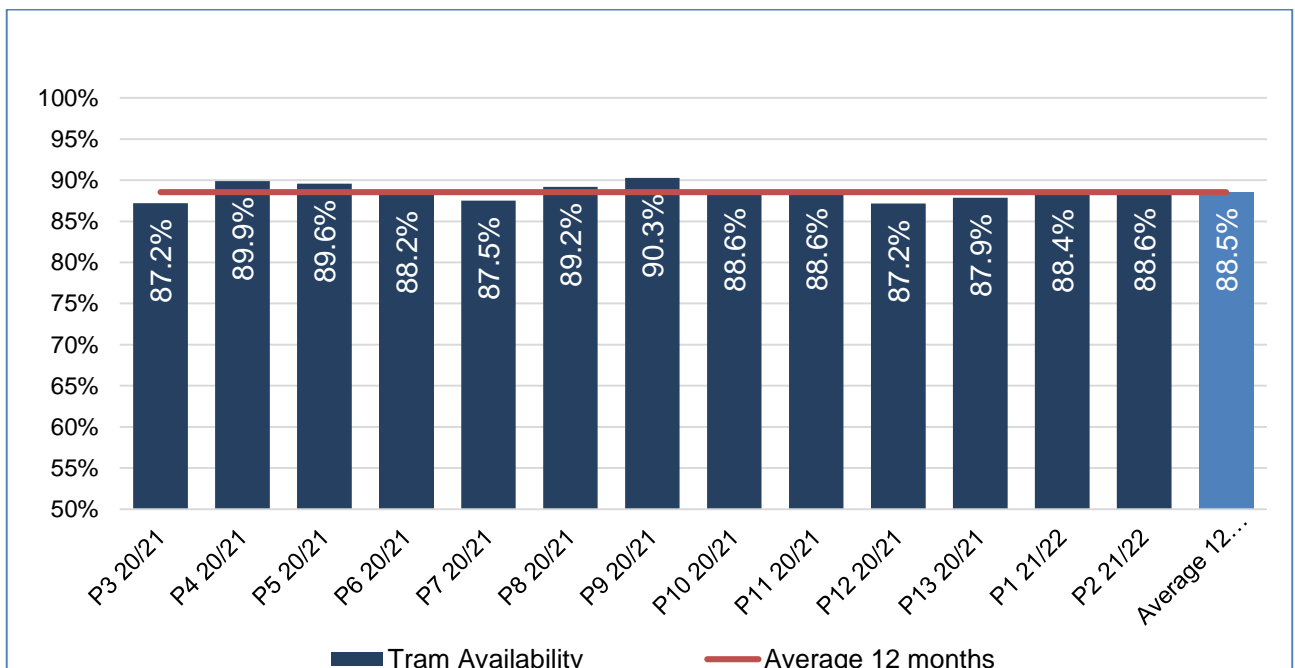
Punctuality - Percentage of services operating to time.

3.7 Punctuality performance covering the previous 12 months (13 periods) is shown below. Performance has been above target for the past 15 months.



Asset reliability - Trams

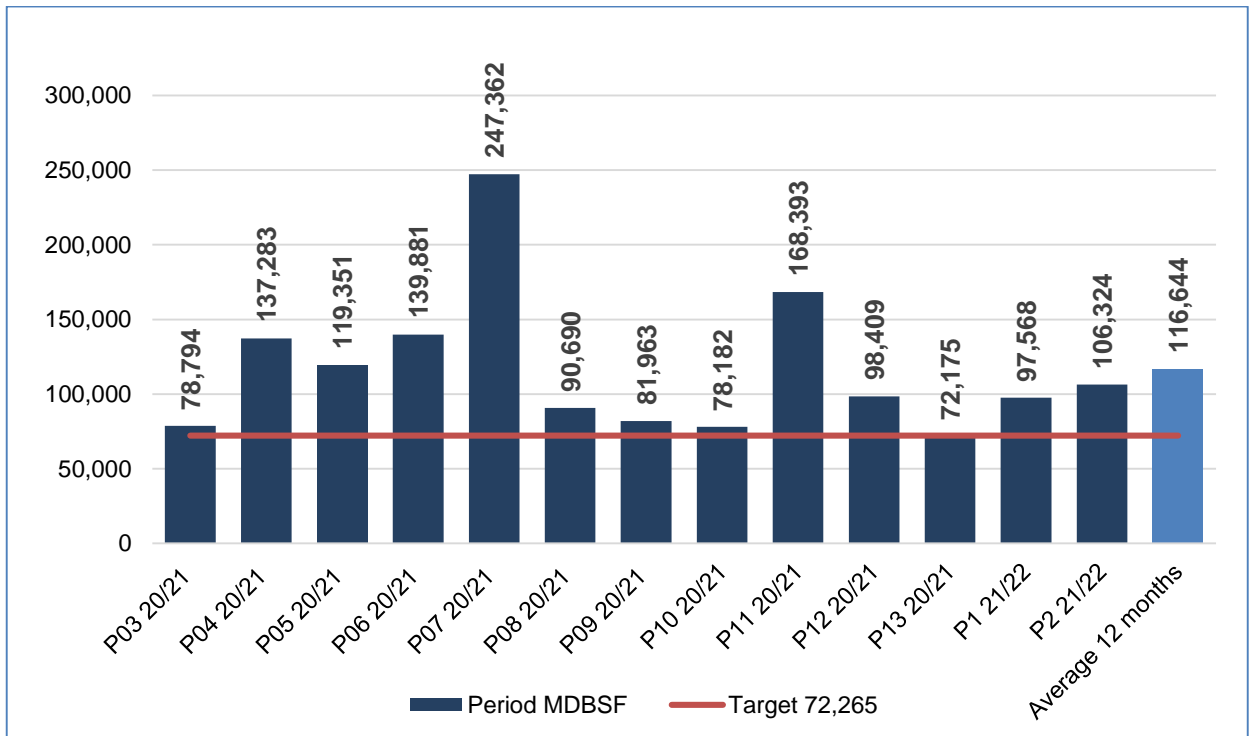
3.8 Tram availability shows percentage of the fleet that has been available during each period.



3.9 Staffing levels as a result of covid have made it difficult to reach the 90% target level for tram availability. An increase in criminal damage, particularly on the Oldham Rochdale line and the city centre, has also made recent periods more challenging.

Asset reliability – Infrastructure

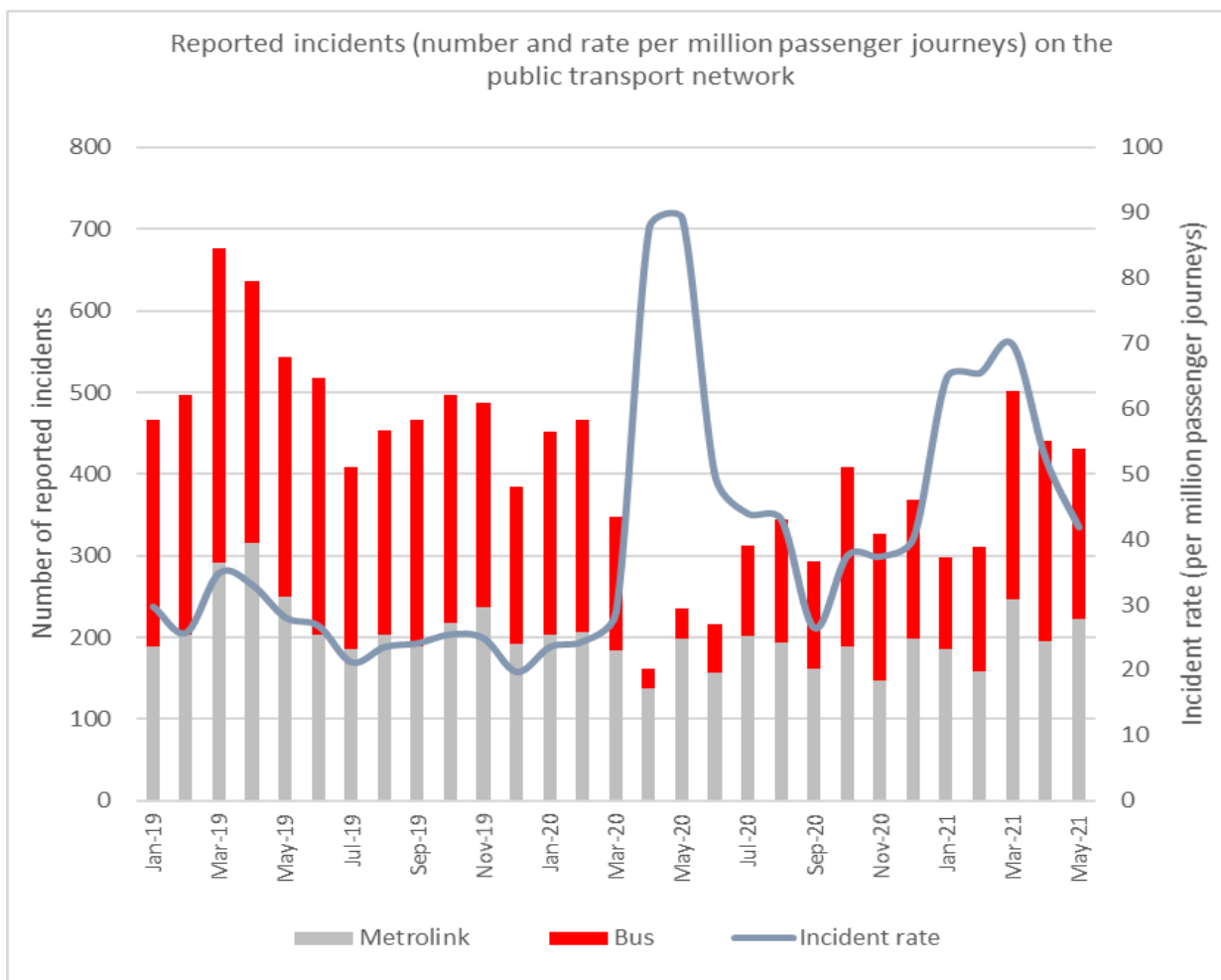
3.10 Infrastructure reliability performance, in terms of service distance travelled between failures.



3.11 Infrastructure performance was slightly below target in period 13 but has since recovered. The average 12 month rolling performance remains positive, despite the significant service affecting incidents described above.

Crime & Anti-Social Behaviour

3.12 On average, 186 incidents of crime and anti-social behaviour per month were reported to Metrolink. Reduced patronage has resulted in the substantial increase in the rate of reported incidents which is calculated per million passenger journeys in the chart below.



Crime & ASB Category	May 2020	May 2021	Change in incidents
	Reported Incidents	Reported incidents	
Anti-social behaviour	22	9	-59%
Assault	3	22	633%
Damage to property	16	25	56%
Drink and drug related incidents	27	16	-41%
Harassment and intimidation	60	46	-23%
Obstruction/ interference with network operations	61	68	11%
Other public order	9	13	44%
Robbery and thefts	0	10	-
Sexual assault	1	4	300%
Tram riding on couplers	0	6	-
Weapons Incident	0	4	-
Grand Total	199	223	12%

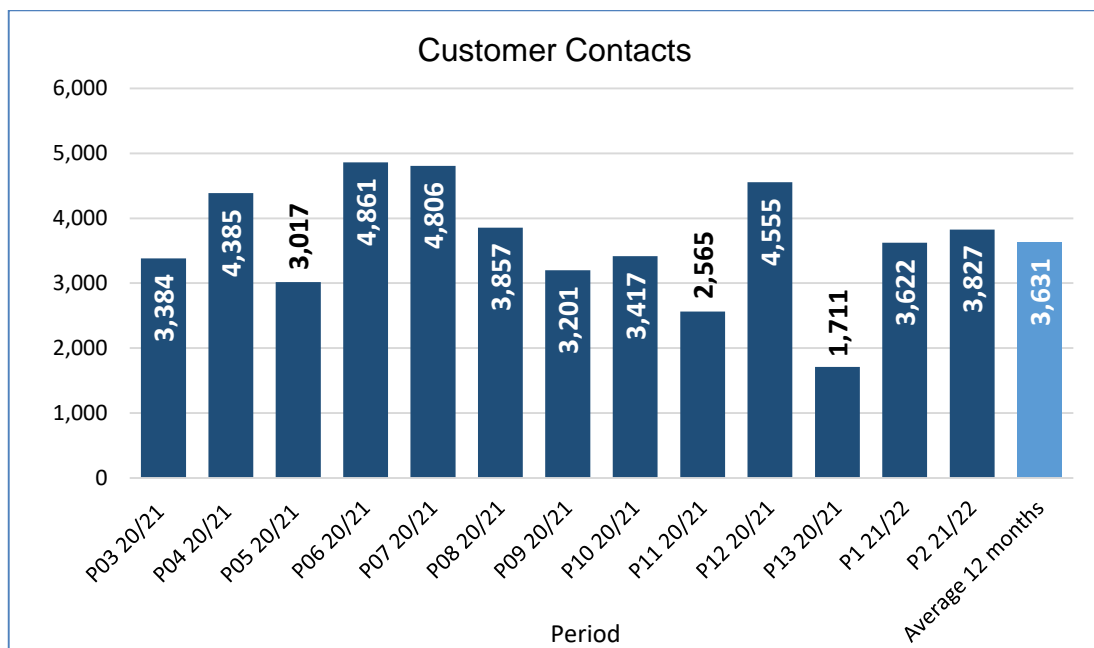
3.13 During periods 12 and 13 there was an increase in criminal damage on the network. This affected tram availability and the perception of security. Damage to trams was

mainly reported on the Ashton and Oldham and Rochdale Lines. Targeted deployment of TravelSafe officers line led to a significant decrease.

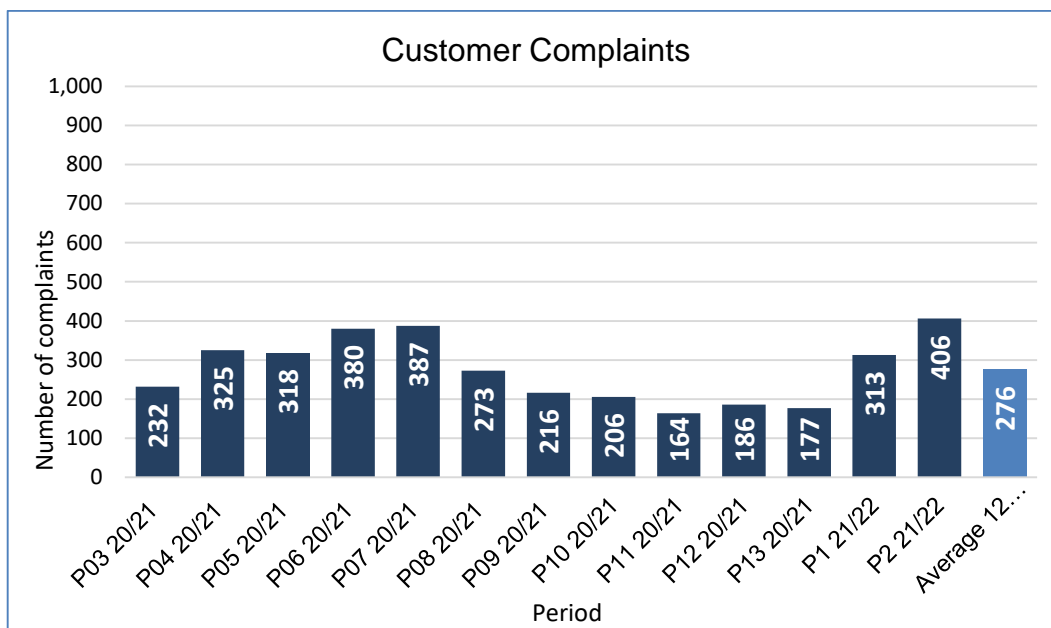
- 3.14 During period 2 there was an increase in drunk and disorderly incidents around the city centre associated with increased patronage and reopening of bars and restaurants. Deployment has therefore been targeted to city centre locations.
- 3.15 In May there were 22 reported assaults across the Metrolink network. This has increased from 13 in April and is the highest monthly total since March 2020, coinciding with the reopening of hospitality venues. Six of the assaults were against staff. Seven of the assaults during May 2021 were on the Oldham and Rochdale line with six of these in the evening between 18:00 and 23:00.
- 3.16 TravelSafe Days of Action have continued with a continued focus on locations where antisocial behaviour has been reported and low face covering compliance noted.

Customer contacts and complaints

- 3.17 Just over 47,000 customer contacts were dealt with during the year, averaging at 3,631 customer contacts per period (excludes twitter contact).



- 3.18 The number of queries and complaints has started to increase with increasing numbers of customers returning to the network.



Customer Experience

- 3.19 KAM has continued with covid-related measures across the network with additional cleaning with anti-viral products, hand sanitiser units across the city centre and a team of Trambassadors to support customers returning to the network and helping them to follow the guidelines for safe travelling. These enhancements are currently planned to remain in place for several months after the lifting of restrictions to make passengers feel more confident in returning to the network.
- 3.20 Face covering compliance remained consistently high on Metrolink at over 80% compliance up until June when the compliance levels fell below 80% for the first time and have remained around 77% on average. There is still higher compliance in the morning and slightly lower compliance in the evening due to increased leisure activity. The most recent compliance by line data can be found in Appendix 2.
- 3.21 Customer engagement commenced in advance of the planned service change on the 5 July and the works planned over July and August which are outlined in section 5 below.

4 FORWARD LOOK

Service enhancement

- 3.22 From Monday 5 July, trams commenced running at least every 12 minutes across the network all day, representing a significant enhancement to the current 20-minute off-peak frequency.
- 3.23 In a further boost, and to increase capacity in the areas where it is most needed, a six-minute service is now operating on the busiest lines at the busiest times – and later running trams will once again be in place across the weekend.
- 3.24 The changes are the next step towards returning a ‘normal’ pre-pandemic service and are being made in response to a rise in the number of leisure trips being made – which will continue throughout the summer – and to meet and support the increased demand expected from the move to step four on the government’s road map and full return of hospitality.
- 3.25 With patronage growing at different rates across the region, the changes will be closely monitored, and a flexible approach to the use of double trams will be maintained to ensure they run where they are needed most. All available trams will be put into service, including the new ones as they are commissioned.

Planned engineering works

- 3.26 Essential improvement works are taking place across our public transport networks and roads this summer. They have been planned and timed to limit any disruption to your journey – and we’ve been working closely with our partners to keep you on the move.
- 3.27 Detailed information relating to Metrolink works can be found on our dedicated travel information page [on the website \(www.tfgm.com\)](http://www.tfgm.com). As well as details of replacement bus services and alternative travel options, information available to passengers includes information on the quietest times to travel information, allowing those who can travel flexibly to avoid Metrolink’s busiest periods.

3.28 In summary, the major works, impact on services and alternative bus provision is:

WORKS	CUSTOMER IMPACT	MITIGATION
Eccles line track renewals (19 July – 1 August)	Full line closure (no trams between Cornbrook and Eccles) Will coincide with the ongoing Trafford Road major Highway Works	Bus replacement between Eccles & Piccadilly
Metrolink track renewals at Victoria (31 July – 9 August)	No trams operating through Victoria, meaning services cut short on Rochdale via Oldham and Bury lines and no Piccadilly to Victoria connection	Bus replacement from Queens Rd/Monsall to Victoria and Piccadilly as well as changes to city destinations for East Didsbury and Airport services
Metrolink track renewals at Piccadilly Gardens (31 July – 6 August)	Same service as above but with southern Metrolink services terminating at Deansgate-Castlefield and Piccadilly	As above with the addition of a bus replacement between Deansgate and Victoria/Piccadilly

3.29 Network Rail is due to carry out works between Victoria rail station and the bridge located at Queens Road. This work is to renew sections of track and upgrade a key railway bridge to improve reliability and forms part of plans to eventually electrify and re-signal the railway and renew all track between Manchester Victoria and Stalybridge.

3.30 To facilitate these works, several possessions on both the heavy rail line and Metrolink lines are required:

- Saturday 31 July to Monday 9 August
- Overnight Tuesday 10, Wednesday 11, Thursday 12 and Friday 13 August
- Saturday 14 August to Monday 16 August

3.31 The work has been programmed to coincide with other major works carried out by Network Rail to limit the overall duration of the disruption. Other maintenance work will be carried out on the Metrolink line at the same time to ensure the most efficient use of the closure.

Appendix 1 - Period date listing

This report details the highlighted Period/s

2020/21

Period	Start Date	End Date
1	01/04/2020	02/05/2020
2	03/05/2020	30/05/2020
3	31/05/2020	27/06/2020
4	28/06/2020	25/07/2020
5	26/07/2020	22/08/2020
6	23/08/2020	19/09/2020
7	20/09/2020	17/10/2020
8	18/10/2020	14/11/2020
9	15/11/2020	12/12/2020
10	13/12/2020	09/01/2021
11	10/01/2021	06/02/2021
12	07/02/2021	06/03/2021
13	07/03/2021	31/03/2021

2021/22

Period	Start Date	End Date
1	01/04/2021	01/05/2021
2	02/05/2021	29/05/2021
3	30/05/2021	26/06/2021
4	27/06/2021	24/07/2021
5	25/07/2021	21/08/2021
6	22/08/2021	18/09/2021
7	19/09/2021	16/10/2021
8	17/10/2021	13/11/2021
9	14/11/2021	11/12/2021
10	12/12/2021	08/01/2022
11	09/01/2022	05/02/2022
12	06/02/2022	05/03/2022
13	06/03/2022	31/03/2022

