

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BEE NETWORK COMMITTEE
HELD THURSDAY, 28TH SEPTEMBER, 2023 AT GMCA OFFICES,
56 OXFORD STREET, M1 6EU**

PRESENT:

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| Councillor Eamonn O'Brien (Chair) | Bury |
| Councillor John Walsh | Bolton |
| Councillor David Meller | Stockport |
| Councillor James Gartside | Rochdale |
| Councillor Hamid Khurram | Bolton |
| Councillor Alan Quinn | Bury |
| Councillor Tracey Rawlins | Manchester |
| Councillor Phil Burke | Rochdale |
| Councillor Mike McCusker | Salford |
| Councillor Grace Baynham | Stockport |
| Councillor Warren Bray | Tameside |
| Councillor Aidan Williams | Trafford |
| Councillor Julian Newgrosh | Trafford |
| Councillor John Vickers | Wigan |

OTHER MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

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| Councillor Noel Bayley | Bury |
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OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

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| Eamonn Boylan | GMCA |
| Gwynne Williams | GMCA |
| Ninoshka Martins | GMCA |
| Alex Cropper | TfGM |
| James Baldwin | TfGM |
| Martin Lax | TfGM |
| Steve Warrener | TfGM |
| Peter Boulton | TfGM |
| Nick Roberts | TfGM |

BOLTON

MANCHESTER

ROCHDALE

STOCKPORT

TRAFFORD

BURY

OLDHAM

SALFORD

TAMESIDE

WIGAN

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

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| Chris Barnes | TfGM |
| Anne Marie-Purcell | TfGM |
| Daniel Vaughan | TfGM |

BNC/18/23 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received and noted from Andy Burnham (GM Mayor) and Councillors Howard Sykes (Oldham), Paul Prescott (Wigan), Paul Dennett (Salford), Elaine Taylor (Oldham) and Dan Costello (Tameside).

BNC/19/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

RESOLVED/-

That it be noted that as an employee of Keolis Amey Metrolink (KAM), Councillor Phil Burke declared a personal interest in item 6: Tackling Fare Evasion.

BNC/20/23 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS

1. Bee Network - Launch of Bus Franchising (Tranche 1)

The Chair advised of the start of bus franchising and thanked officers for the huge amount of work to get to this point. There had been challenges during the transition however members were assured that these issues were being monitored with the view to being resolved in the near future.

2. HS2

In noting the current speculation about HS2, it was felt that a committee discussion at this stage would be premature without clarity on the Government's position. The Chair added that Greater Manchester (GM) remained committed to making the case for HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail to be delivered in GM.

3. Acquisition of Bus Depots to support Bus Franchising

Members were advised that a report on the acquisition of bus depots was due to be received by the GMCA in September with the recommendation to endorse the simplification of the process relating to the acquisition of depots. If endorsed, this change would allow TfGM to buy depots directly, rather than through the GMCA who would then need to lease to TfGM who in turn would need to lease to operators.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the start of bus franchising and the significant work to get to that point be noted.
2. That in relation to HS2, it be noted that without clarity on Government's position a discussion at this stage would be premature and that GM remained committed to making the case for HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail to be delivered in Greater Manchester.
3. That it be noted that a report on the acquisition of bus depots was due to be received by the GMCA with the recommendation to endorse the simplification of the process relating to the acquisition of depots. This would allow TfGM to buy depots directly, rather than by the GMCA who would then need to lease to TfGM who in turn would need to lease to operators.

BNC/21/23 THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 27 JULY 2023

RESOLVED/-

1. That the minutes of the Bee Network Committee held on 27 July 2023 be approved as a correct record.
2. That officers develop a set of guidelines for districts considering the establishment of local Bee Network forums.

BNC/22/23 CONGESTION INTERVENTION PLAN

Consideration was given to a report that provided an overview of the changing nature of Greater Manchester's (GM) highways network, the impact of congestion and identified areas where improvements could be made to ease congestion and in particular support the reliability of the bus network as GM entered a new era with bus franchising.

Members welcomed the report and noted the need to introduce measures to improve punctuality of services on the network.

In noting the impact to business, it was queried whether there was any provision for red routes to accommodate loading bay. Officers advised that where loading bays could not be accommodated either off the highway or on adjacent roads, in such areas red route would have the provision of loading bays which would operate either for the full duration of the control period or for shorter period.

Concerns were raised around the impact in terms of parking for residents living within terraced houses along the red route. Officer advised that Red Routes were intended to be used strategically to deal with traffic problems and would not be required to operate for the entire day and therefore the provision for parking space along the route would remain and if need another designated locations would be identified.

It was noted that that there was a need to work with each Local Highway Authority to understand the requirement of each area to ensure no negative impact to residents. It was felt that it would be appropriate to also have a consistent approach across the network.

With regards to the fines associated with Lane Rental Scheme, members were advised that through this scheme Local Highway Authorities could charge organisations undertaking roadworks for the time their works occupy specific streets at traffic sensitive times. A successful lane rental scheme would result in all relevant works being undertaken outside of traffic sensitive times; this would result in no charges being applied. Any proceeds gained would be reinvested by the charging Authority for the purposes intended to reduce disruption and other adverse effects caused by roadworks.

In response to a member's query regarding the protocol to emergency work carried out when Lane Rental Schemes would be in operation, officers advised that details were yet to be developed and would be included within future iterations of the report.

In noting that the success of any scheme would require buy-in from all 10 Local Authorities, it was felt appropriate that on completion both the GMRAPS and Lane Rental Scheme should be endorsed by leaders at a future GMCA meeting.

Given that residents would be unfamiliar with the proposed interventions, it was felt that it would be beneficial if a communication strategy was developed to ensure residents were informed of upcoming changes to the road network.

It was felt that as the bus network developed, dependency on personal vehicles would be reduced however this was contingent upon bus services being reliable. To improve customer experience, it would be welcomed if bus stop names/destination details were included for those following the journey on the application. A member highlighted that the tracking service on application had been providing incorrect information. Officers noted the comments and acknowledged that there had been issues with the tracking functionality and assured members that work was underway to get the issue resolved.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the change to GM's Road network and the impact this can have on congestion be noted.
2. That the commencement of franchised bus operations and the negative impact that congestion can have on bus network performance be noted.
3. That the proposed improvements to Greater Manchester Road Activity Permit Scheme (GMRAPS) and other short-term measures being implemented to improve GM's highway network be endorsed.
4. That the development of a Red Route Network on key corridors in conjunction with Local Highway Authorities be endorsed.

5. That the development of a proposal for the introduction of Lane Rental in GM be endorsed.
6. That it be noted that officers would work with each Local Highway Authority to understand the requirement of each area and to ensure a consistent approach across the network.
7. In noting that the success of any scheme would require buy-in from all 10 Local Authorities, it was felt appropriate that on completion both the GMRAPS and Lane Rental Scheme should be endorsed by leaders at a future GMCA meeting.
8. That process details relating to emergency works that would need to be carried out when Lane Rental Schemes would be in operation be included within future iterations of the report.

BNC/23/23 TACKLING FARE EVASION

Consideration was given to a report that sought approval from members on the strategy to tackle and reduce fare evasion on Metrolink.

Commuters and young people had been identified as repeat offenders therefore it was suggested that it would be beneficial to move up operations to entry points into the city centre.

Members welcomed the move to increased penalty fares from £100 to £120 as it would deter fare evaders and urged officers to develop a mechanism whereby increased fines could be issued to repeat offenders.

Concerning young people, members welcomed the provision of using the igo pass on trams with the addition of frequent targeted ticketing checks.

It was highlighted that certain Metrolink lines would benefit from increased policing activity particularly during late hours. Officers were therefore urged to continue monitoring areas and accordingly deploy staff on the network which would ultimately increase public confidence in network.

In response to a member's query on whether there were any provisions for users to appeal their fines, officers informed members of the appeals process that is currently in place and advised that if an appeal was submitted within 14 days of receiving the notice and was unsuccessful, the appellant would still have the opportunity to pay the reduced charge of £60.

In terms of the query raised around the impact to revenue, officers stated that it was anticipated that there would be positive bearing to revenue from the increase in fares with any excess generated being re-invested into the network.

As patronage on Metrolink continues to recover strongly, it was noted that further interventions were needed to close the gap between the revenue generated and the cost of running and maintaining the network. Therefore given the size of the network and associated costs, introducing conductors on trams were not seen as a feasible option.

Due to Metrolink being an open network there were challenges to managing entry points into the city centre however as part of phase 2 of the strategy it was noted that there was an opportunity to explore the introduction of ticketing gates as part of the wider solution to tackling fare evasion.

To deliver against the strategy during events, a robust operational plan had been developed looking through changes to queuing and stewarding of crowds to ensure advance ticket purchase. It was noted that further long-term measures were being developed to manage congestion and encourage the use of public transport during events.

Officers thanked members for their input and advised that regular updates on progress on the implementation of different phases of the Fare Evasion Strategy would be brought to future meetings.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the support of members to the strategy and ongoing plans to tackle fare evasion on Metrolink be noted.

2. That it be noted that the Bee Network Committee would receive regular updates on progress on the implementation of different phases of the Fare Evasion Strategy.

BNC/24/23 TRANSPORT CAPITAL PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to a report that provided an overview of the current position on the Greater Manchester Transport Capital Programme. The report also sought approval over the funding of a number of CRSTS and Active Travel schemes in order to support the continued development and delivery of the Greater Manchester Transport Capital Programme.

Members welcomed the report and further investment into rail highlighting that this would create further job opportunities for local residents. It was felt that there was an opportunity for GM to work with Government through the introduction of HS2 to develop a suitable rail network.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the current position on the capital programme and recent progress be noted.
2. That the draw-down of CRSTS funding be agreed as follows:
 - Ashton – Stockport Quality Bus Transit (QBT). £0.57m to develop the scheme to Outline Business Case;
 - Golborne Station. A further £2.0m to develop the Outline Design, including further management of key risks and issues;
 - Salford: Peel Green Active Travel Scheme City of Salford Community Stadium scheme (Cos Cos). £0.65m to develop the scheme to Full Business Case;
 - Oldham: Beal Valley & Broadbent Moss - Greenway Corridor. £0.86m to develop the scheme to Full Business Case; and
 - Integrated Ticketing and Information Measures (Customer Contact Centre). £1.56m to develop and deliver Bee Network Customer Contact Centre Improvements.
3. That the draw-down of Active Travel funding be agreed as follows:

- £0.38m of additional Mayor's Challenge Fund development funding for Trafford MBC to progress their prioritised programme to delivery; and
- That formal development cost budget variations for Trafford MBC, as set out in section 2.9 of the report be agreed.

BNC/25/23 NON-FRANCHISED BUS SERVICES - PART A

Consideration was given to a report that provided an overview of the range of issues and actions relating to non-franchised bus services and sought approval for a number of proposed changes to subsidised services.

To ensure stability of the Bee Network the frequency of a number of subsidised services had been reduced. Members were advised that usage of the service would be reviewed with a view to it being restored when the service would be taken control of in January 2025 when the route becomes part of the Bee Network. It was felt that there was a need for any changes to be communicated to members of the public to ensure and members were advised of any future changes to non-franchised/franchised bus services.

Over the years there had been a number of services changes/withdrawals and therefore it was suggested that it would be useful to review the network to understand if services were fit for purpose.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the range of issues and actions relating to non-franchised bus services as set out in the report be noted.
2. That the changes to the commercial network as set out in Appendix 1 of the report be noted.
3. That it be agreed that no action was taken in respect of changes or de-registered commercial services as noted in Appendix 1 of the report.
4. That the proposed changes to subsidised services as set out in Appendix 1 of the report be approved.

5. That the Bee Network Committee would receive early notification of any future changes to non-franchised/franchised bus services.

BNC/26/23 DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

RESOLVED/-

That the dates for the rest of the municipal year be noted as below:

- 26 October; 2 – 4 PM
- 23 November; 2 – 4 PM
- 14 December; 2 – 4 PM
- 25 January; 2 – 4 PM
- 22 February; 2 – 4 PM
- 21 March; 2 – 4 PM

BNC/27/23 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

That, under section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public should be excluded from the meeting for the following items on business on the grounds that this involved the likely disclosure of exempt information, as set out in the relevant paragraphs of Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

BNC/28/23 NON-FRANCHISED BUS SERVICES - PART B

RESOLVED/-

That the contents of the report be noted.

Clerk's Note: This item was considered in support of the report considered in Part A of the agenda (Item 9 above refers).