

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BEE NETWORK COMMITTEE
HELD THURSDAY, 26TH OCTOBER, 2023 AT GMCA OFFICES, 56 OXFORD STREET,
M1 6EU**

PRESENT:

Councillor Eamonn O'Brien (Chair)	Bury
GM Mayor Andy Burnham	GMCA
Councillor Howard Sykes	Oldham
Councillor David Meller	Stockport
Councillor Hamid Khurram	Bolton
Councillor Tracey Rawlins	Manchester
Councillor Alan Quinn	Bury
City Mayor Paul Dennett	Salford
Councillor Grace Baynham	Stockport
Councillor Warren Bray	Tameside
Councillor Aidan Williams	Trafford
Councillor John Walsh	Bolton

OTHER MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillor Noel Bayley	Bury
Councillor Mike McCusker	Salford

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Eamonn Boylan	GMCA
Gwynne Williams	GMCA
Ninoshka Martins	GMCA
Alex Cropper	TfGM
Rosalind O'Driscoll	TfGM
Lucy Prince	TfGM
James Baldwin	TfGM
Stephen Rhodes	TfGM
Martin Lax	TfGM
Steve Warrener	TfGM

BOLTON

MANCHESTER

ROCHDALE

STOCKPORT

TRAFFORD

BURY

OLDHAM

SALFORD

TAMESIDE

WIGAN

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Alison Chew

TfGM

Chris Barnes

TfGM

BNC/29/23 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Paul Prescott (Wigan), Dan Costello (Tameside), Phil Burke (Rochdale) and James Gartside (Rochdale).

BNC/30/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

BNC/31/23 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS

1. Retirement of the Chief Executive of GMCA & TfGM

The Chair advised members of the Chief Executive of GMCA & TfGM intention to retire following the May 2024 mayoral elections. The Committee took this opportunity to record their thanks, for the valuable work done by Eamonn Boylan for the betterment of the Transport network in Greater Manchester.

2. HS2

The current position around the cancellation of HS2 between Crewe and Manchester was noted and members were advised that once further details were received, a detailed report would be prepared for consideration by the Bee Network Committee. Despite the recent announcements, it was noted that Greater Manchester remained committed to making the case for the delivery of Northern Powerhouse Rail.

Members noted the importance of rail links and highlighted the negative impact to GM's economy that would result from the cancellation of the HS2 link from Birmingham to Manchester. Despite the current position, it was noted that there was an opportunity to understand what lessons could be learnt to influence future infrastructure projects of this size and significance. Therefore, it was felt that it would be appropriate to support

calls for a public inquiry into the handling of HS2, and the subsequent decision to cancel the route between Birmingham and Manchester. This resolution was supported by 14 members and was opposed by 1 member.

Members also highlighted the need for the protection of land along routes 2 A & 2 B including the immediate stoppage of any sales in progress until a complete review takes places and agreed to pass a resolution. This resolution was supported by all 15 members in attendance.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the announcement that Eamonn Boylan would be retiring as the Chief Executive of Greater Manchester Combined Authority & Transport for Greater Manchester following the May 2024 Mayoral Elections be acknowledged.
2. That the following motion be passed by the Bee Network Committee:
 - a) *That the Bee Network Committee supports a public inquiry into the handling of HS2, and subsequent decision to cancel the route between Birmingham and Manchester, with the view to understanding what lessons can be learnt about future infrastructure projects of this size and significance.*
 - b) *That the Committee supports calls for the protection of land along routes 2 A & 2 B including the immediate stoppage of any sales in progress until a complete review takes places.*

BNC/32/23 THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 28 SEPTEMBER 2023

RESOLVED/-

That the minutes of the Bee Network Committee held on 28 September 2023 be approved as a correct record.

BNC/33/23 LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN PROCESS

Consideration was given to a report that sought to inform members of the proposed process for refreshing GM's statutory Local Transport Plan (GM Transport Strategy 2040).

Members were asked to endorse the proposed process for refreshing GM's statutory Local Transport Plan (GM Transport Strategy 2040) noting that timescales may change to fully meet requirements when government guidance was released.

Given the workload and level of collaboration needed with Local Authorities to prepare a refreshed Local Transport Plan (LTP), it was felt essential that the process to refresh the plan commences as soon as possible.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the preparation of a new Local Transport Plan (LTP) and the delays to government guidance be noted.
2. That the proposed timetable for the LTP refresh, recognising that timescales may change when government guidance is released be endorsed.
3. That GM's freight and logistics strategic ambitions would be incorporated into the refresh of the LTP, rather than have a standalone sub-strategy be noted.
4. That the need for TfGM and Local Authority collaboration and staff time required to prepare, engage and consult on the LTP refresh be noted.
5. That the importance of the LTP to deliver the wider objectives of the GM Strategy and the intention to undertake an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) as part of a wider Integrated Assessment that will also include Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Health Impact Assessment (HIA) and Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) be noted.

BNC/34/23 ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING TARIFF

Consideration was given to a report that provided members with an overview of the proposal for a more agile approach to setting the Electric Vehicle charging tariff to remain competitive within the market.

Members were asked to note and consider endorsing, the recommendations to GMCA for the proposal of a more agile approach to setting the Electric Vehicle charging tariff given the significant increase in energy prices and therefore the need for GM to remain competitive within the market.

It was recommended that a floor and ceiling price cap of 30% above and below the existing EV tariff was implemented within which the tariff can fluctuate. This would prevent prices from falling below a certain point (floor) or rising above a certain point (ceiling). It was therefore being recommended to the GMCA that delegation be given to the Chief Executive of the GMCA and TfGM, to change the tariff within those limits noting that any changes outside of the floor and ceiling price cap would require further agreement by the GMCA.

Members welcomed the report and noted the need to work together to deliver and strengthen the EV Charging infrastructure in GM. In response, officers explained that TfGM were working with GM Local Authorities to access funding that had been earmarked for the development of the EV Charging infrastructure.

It had been observed that often Electric Vehicle Charging Points (EVCP) were often taken up by company vehicles and therefore members sought to understand whether there was any policy in place to ensure EVCPs were used in a responsible manner and whether there was a possibility to offer a lower price during certain hours to offset demand during peak hours. In response, officers advised that a fair usage policy was in place and that there were plans to explore introducing charges for overstaying in bays when charging points were not in use as well introducing options for dynamic pricing.

With regards to the query raised around price comparison of the EV charging network, it was agreed that this would be circulated to members following the meeting to allow members to have an understanding of the rates offered by providers.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the recommendations to be considered by the GMCA at their meeting on 27 October 2024 be noted, as comprising of as below:
 - a) Approve that a floor and a ceiling price cap of 30% above and below the current EV tariff (set out in paragraph 1.10 of the report) is introduced; and
 - b) Delegate to the Chief Executive of the GMCA and TfGM approval of tariff changes within those limits.

2. That a price comparison of the EV charging network be circulated to members following the meeting with the view to understanding the rates offered by each provider.

BNC/35/23 MAYORAL UPDATE - TRANCHE 1 PERFORMANCE UPDATE

The GM Mayor provided an update on the performance of Tranche 1 services and took members through a presentation that provided a breakdown of punctuality and patronage.

It was noted that early days of operation were difficult for passengers and staff as new arrangements bedded in. Considerable amount of work was ongoing to ensure these issues were quickly settled with visible improvements being seen, and in some cases, services have started to outperform pre-franchised services.

Highways/traffic interventions were also seen to help improve bus punctuality such as installing traffic signal technology to prioritise buses and securing bus only access to avoid lengthy diversions during roadworks. Members alluded to the recent report considered on the Congestion Intervention Plan stating the opportunity this posed to easing congestion and in particular to support the reliability of the bus network as GM entered a new era with bus franchising.

With regards to patronage, it was reported that there was a steady increase in users since the start of Tranche 1 operations with an average of almost 100,000 passengers being carried by Tranche 1 services each weekday. It was reported that there had been a strong focus on achieving operational excellence and reliability. Members were

therefore urged to continue promoting the network given that success of bus franchising was dependant on patronage levels.

It was noted that plans were underway to further improve customer experience, and as such further improvements to the Bee Network application including the added functionality of journey planning, apple and google pay functionality and the addition of a Metrolink Zonal Map had been planned and would be available as part of future updates to the Bee Network application. Members were advised that the issue with bus tracking that had previously been reported had now been resolved.

The need to provide assistance to non-franchised areas was highlighted to ensure existing concerns were picked up and addressed through franchising. The Mayor assured members that adequate training had been offered to operators to ensure that there were improvements in the quality of data being collected to allow greater insight into what can be done to improve services and to share learning with Tranche 2 areas. It was noted that officers were servicing non franchised areas and highlighted that this was an issue that could be best picked up through Local Bee Network forums.

Members noted the need for improved training and development opportunities to address any potential issues that might arise due to driver shortages. The Mayor assured members that renewed arrangements for workforce engagement were in place and that through improved links to the GM skills agenda, transport jobs were now being seen as a strong career pathway which was anticipated to improve staff retention across the network.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the update in relation to the performance of Tranche 1 services be noted.
2. That it be noted that further improvements to the Bee Network application including the added functionality of journey planning, apple and google pay functionality and the addition of a Metrolink Zonal Map had been planned and would be included within future updates of the Bee Network application.
3. That it be noted that starting in December, regular quarterly performance updates on the Bee Network would be received by the Bee Network Committee.

BNC/36/23 TRANSPORT CAPITAL PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to a report that updated members on the current position of the Greater Manchester Transport Capital Programme. The report also sought approval on a number of CRSTS, Active Travel and Growth Deal funding draw-down requests in order to support the continued development and delivery of the programme.

Members welcomed the report and noted that the transport infrastructure pipeline was a key enabler to achieving the Bee Network – Greater Manchester’s vision for an integrated ‘London-style’ transport system.

With regards to the investment agreed for Salford Central, concerns were raised in relation to the existing system nonetheless the investment into Salford was welcomed as improvements were seen as long overdue given the positive benefits to GM’s economy and local residents.

The investment into Trafford was welcomed, highlighting that poor connectivity, and geographical isolation were long-standing issues affecting communities in outskirt areas. It was therefore felt that investment into Trafford was essential to address challenges around connectivity to be able to deliver new housing allocations through places for everyone and improve opportunities for residents in the communities.

In relation to the draw down of further £3.92m of CRSTS Zero Emission Bus funding, it was felt that there was an opportunity to enhance the socio-economic benefit for GM through creation of opportunities through the manufacturing industry to support the continued development and delivery of the programme until the deployment of Bus Franchising Tranche 3.

In relation to the delegation of authority to approve draw-down from the total CRSTS fund of no more than £500,000 to the Chief Executive TfGM and GMCA, officers assured members that the Committee would be kept informed of the schemes being approved.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the current position and recent progress on the transport capital programme be noted.
2. That the recent announcement from Government on CRSTS2 be noted.
3. That the amendments to the CRSTS assurance process as set out in paragraph 3 of this report be agreed.
4. That authority be delegated to approve draw-down from the total CRSTS fund of no more than £500,000 to the Chief Executive TfGM and GMCA.
5. That the draw-down of CRSTS funding be approved as follows:
 - Trafford Bus Studies. £0.92m to develop the scheme to Outline Business Case;
 - Quality Bus Transit (Better Bus Routes). £0.09m CRSTS funding to deliver signal priority for late running buses across the QBT corridors; and
 - Zero Emission Bus (ZEB). £3.92m to enable DNO upgrades for Bus Franchising depots and to fund the continued development and delivery of the CRSTS ZEB Programme.
6. That the draw-down of Active Travel funding be approved as follows:
 - £0.17m of additional MCF funding for Salford City Council to deliver their prioritised active travel programme; and
 - That the formal MCF scheme budget variations for Salford City Council be agreed as set out in paragraph 4.6.
7. That the draw-down of Growth Deal funding be approved as follows:
 - Salford Central. £1.62m Growth Deal funding to undertake detailed design work; and
 - Salford Bolton Network Improvements (SBNI) Programme. £2.06m Growth Deal funding to deliver the remaining two delivery packages.
8. That the reallocation of Growth Deal funding be noted as follows:
Salford Bolton Network Improvements (SBNI) DP4 Pendleton Town Centre - re-allocation of previously drawn down Growth Deal funding of £1.0m.
9. That it be noted that the Bee Network Committee would be kept informed of the schemes <£500,000 that would be approved by the Chief Executive TfGM and GMCA.

BNC/37/23 DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

- 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