

Greater Manchester Transport Committee

Date: 24 March 2022
Subject: TravelSafe: 2021 End of Year Review
Report of: Bob Morris, Chief Operating Officer, TfGM

Purpose of Report

This report provides an overview of the work and achievements of the TravelSafe Partnership during 2021 and an update on the outcomes and successes of the GMP Transport Unit.

Recommendations:

Members are asked to note and comment on the contents of the report.

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Equalities Implications

Not applicable

Climate Change Impact Assessment and Mitigation Measures

Not applicable

Risk Management

Not applicable

Legal Considerations

Not applicable

Financial Consequences – Revenue

Not applicable

Financial Consequences – Capital

Not applicable

Number of attachments to the report: 0

Comments/recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Not applicable

Background Papers

Nil

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?

None

GM Transport Committee

Not applicable

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Not applicable

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The information presented in this report covers 01 January 2021 to 31 December 2021 and provides a summary of the performance of the TravelSafe Partnership¹ (TSP), as well an overview of activity and outcomes from the GMP Transport Unit.
- 1.2 It has been another extraordinary year with a continuation of some of the challenges faced by the Covid pandemic and national restrictions. The TravelSafe Partnership (TSP) has had to remain agile, delivering against both the core business of crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) and the requirements of travelling Covid-safely.
- 1.3 2021 saw significant variations in passenger numbers.
- The year commenced under national lockdown, so passenger journeys fell to 25% of the pre pandemic average.
 - With numerous events (typically held spring/summer) rescheduled for Autumn, leisure led spikes in passenger journeys were seen. With, on occasion, the network carrying more passengers than a typical pre-pandemic weekend and Metrolink setting a record for passenger journeys on a Sunday.
 - The year ended with passenger numbers impacted by the Omicron variant. With guidance to work from home re-introduced and advice to prioritise social contacts, leading to a reduction in passenger numbers.
- 1.4 Despite these challenges, TravelSafe partners have continued to deliver against the Partnership strategic aims of improving passenger perceptions of safety, deterring Crime and ASB and discouraging fare evasion.

¹ The TSP is comprised of Arriva, British Transport Police (BTP), Diamond, First Manchester, GMP, Go North West, KeolisAmey Metrolink (KAM), Northern, Stagecoach, TFGM and GMCA.

- 1.5 The most prevalent theme observed by the TSP across 2021 has been the increase in youth related ASB often perpetrated by repeat known young offenders. Compared to 2019, youth related ASB reports account for a 35% increase in incidents on bus² and a 45% increase on Metrolink.
- 1.6 In October the Partnership took the opportunity to renew its posture through a refreshed forward action plan endorsed by the then Transport Commissioner. At the close of 2021 this was demonstrating dividends through:
- A regular programme of high visibility ‘Specialist Operations’ including a push on media/social media presence via #GMTravelSafe.
 - Strengthening of relationships with local authority community safety and youth teams as well as neighbourhood policing teams; and
 - A communications campaign launching the use of the GMP LiveChat service for discreet incident reporting across public transport.
- 1.7 The results of the most recent TfGM Confidence Survey³ demonstrate the value of the increased pro-active work with results showing that from November 2021 to January 2022:
- ‘Satisfaction with personal security while travelling on the tram during the day’ has increased from 75% to 93%; and
 - ‘Satisfaction with personal security while travelling on the tram during at night’ has also increased from 61% to 66%.
- 1.8 This insight will help inform the TravelSafe Partnership plans and focus, moving into 2022.

² ‘Bus’ includes incidents reported across the Bus network, Bus Stops and also Bus Interchanges and Stations.

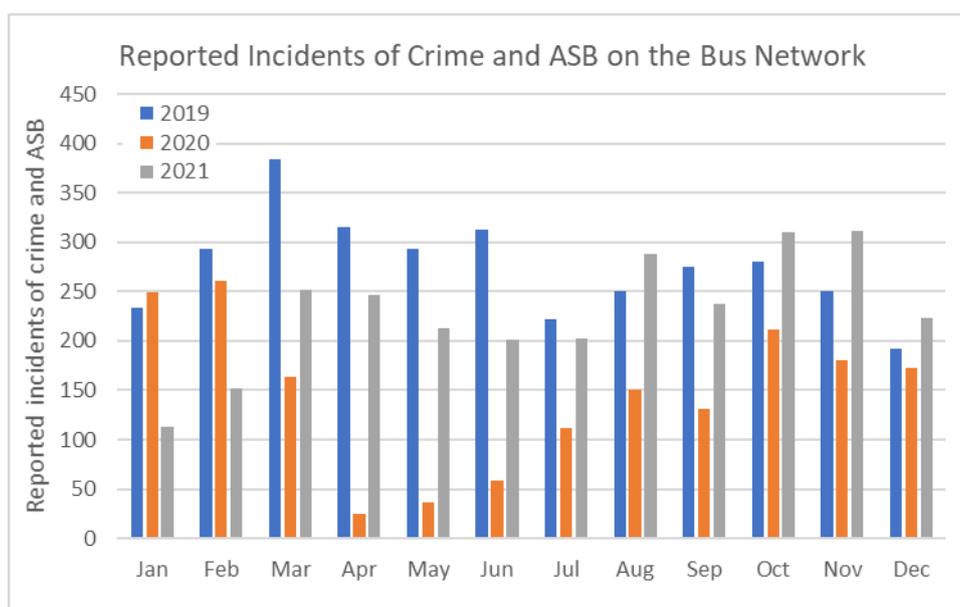
³ Results canvassed 20 Jan-14 Feb, 1100 sample size including users and non-users of public transport, representative of Greater Manchester for age, gender and working status.

2 2021 OVERVIEW

Bus Network 2021 Summary

2.1 During 2021, the number of reported incidents of Crime and ASB on the bus network was 17% below that of 2019 and 57% above 2020⁴.

Figure 1: Reported Incidents of Crime and ASB on the Bus Network



2.2 Despite the reduction in the overall number of incidents, there was an increase in reports of some types of incidents and locations. The number of reported incidents at bus stations during 2021 was 42% higher than during 2019, this is predominantly due increased youth related ASB.

2.3 The reduction in passenger journeys being made because of lockdown restrictions and changes in travel behaviour, was lower than the reduction in reported incidents on the bus network. As a result, the rate of reported incidents of Crime and ASB (per million passenger journeys) on the bus network increased during 2021 to 23.3 compared to 17.7 in 2019 and 18.1 in 2020.

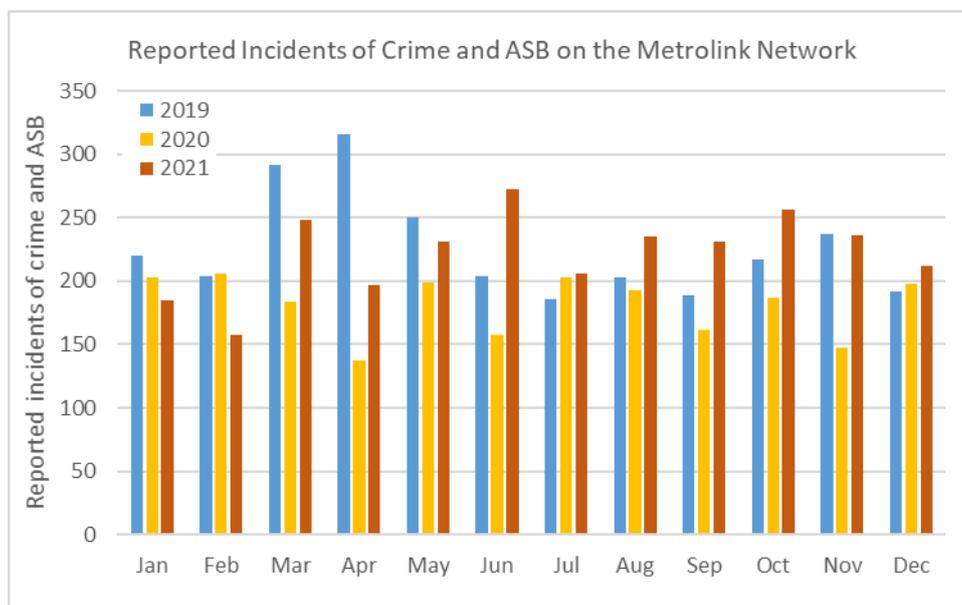
⁴ Incident numbers during 2020 and early 2021 were affected by national and local lockdowns and restrictions.

2.4 One of the main issues experienced on bus across the last 12 months has been incidents involving missiles being thrown at buses causing windows to smash. There have been over 100 incidents reported across the year. In response the Partnership developed a media clip to be used as part of educational outreach activity and also for sharing across social media. This activity is hard to tackle given it tends to be sporadic (and often opportunistic) in nature, however where hotspots have been identified patrols have been put in place and several arrests have been made.

Metrolink 2021 Summary

2.5 During 2021 the number of reported incidents of Crime and ASB on Metrolink was 2% below that of 2019 and 23% above 2020.

Figure 2: Reported incidents of Crime and ASB on the Metrolink Network



2.6 Despite some recovery in Metrolink passenger numbers during 2021, patronage remained substantially below 2019 levels. As a result, the ‘rate of incidents’ (per million passenger journeys) during 2021 increased to 134 from 60 during 2019.

2.7 Similar to the trend observed on Bus, there has been a 45% increase in youth and young person related incidents. During 2019 an estimated 24% of incidents

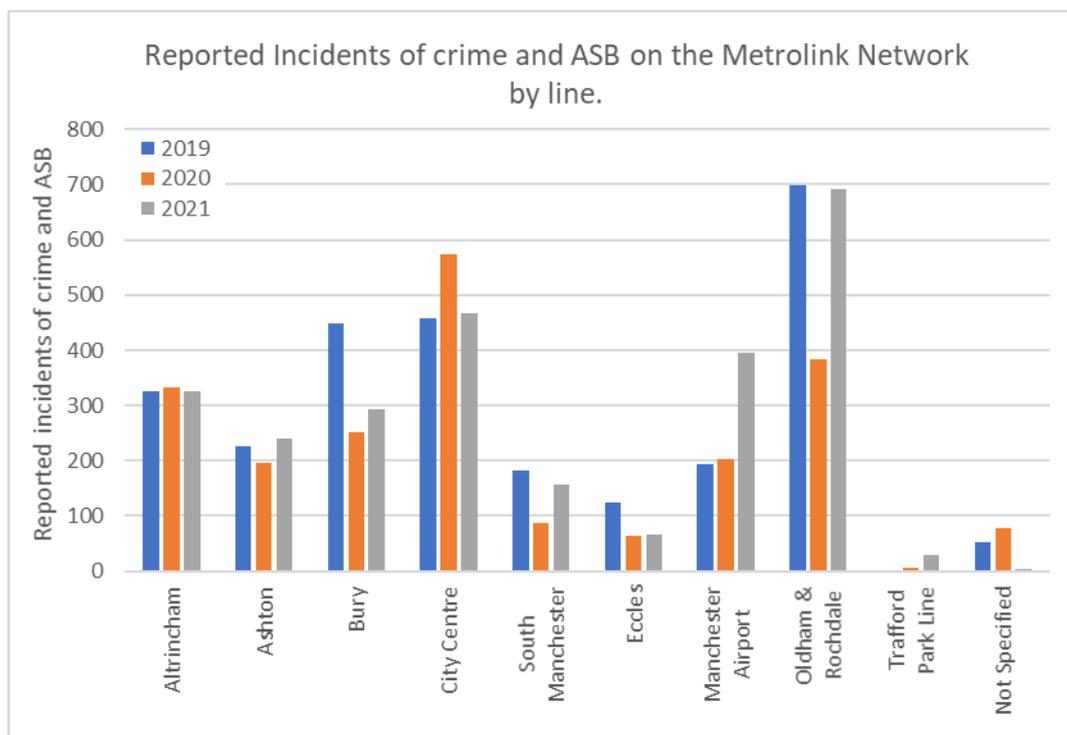
were categorised as youth or young person related. During 2021 this rose to 35% of all reported incidents.

- 2.8 The Airport line saw the largest increase in, and the highest level of, youth related incidents on the network, with an estimated 50% of all reported incidents being categorised as such compared to 33% during 2019. Incident types relate mainly to obstructing the operation of the network, e.g., emergency door handle activations (126 reported during 2021 compared with 40 in 2020) and criminal damage. In response, dedicated security has been provided at Wythenshawe Interchange, regular local partnership meetings have been established, information and intelligence is being fed through on a weekly basis to the local authority and a number of repeat offenders have been identified and served with served with exclusion orders⁵.
- 2.9 The Oldham and Rochdale line had the highest number of higher impact incidents such as assaults, robberies and thefts. Alongside this, the TfGM customer insights surveys show that the Metrolink users from Oldham and Rochdale have some of the lowest levels of satisfaction in terms of safety and security. One challenge with Oldham and Rochdale is the size and scope of the corridor and incident levels are not uniform across the line. The line is long with 19 stops covering a wide range of geographic and socio-economic areas. Along the route there are smaller pockets with higher numbers of incidents including Failsworth, Monsall, Newton Heath and Moston to the southern end and Rochdale Interchange and Newbold to the north.

⁵ Formal removal of public right of access to TfGM premises.

2.10 Metrolink line by line comparisons are shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Reported incidents of Crime and ASB on Metrolink by Line



Network 2021 Summary

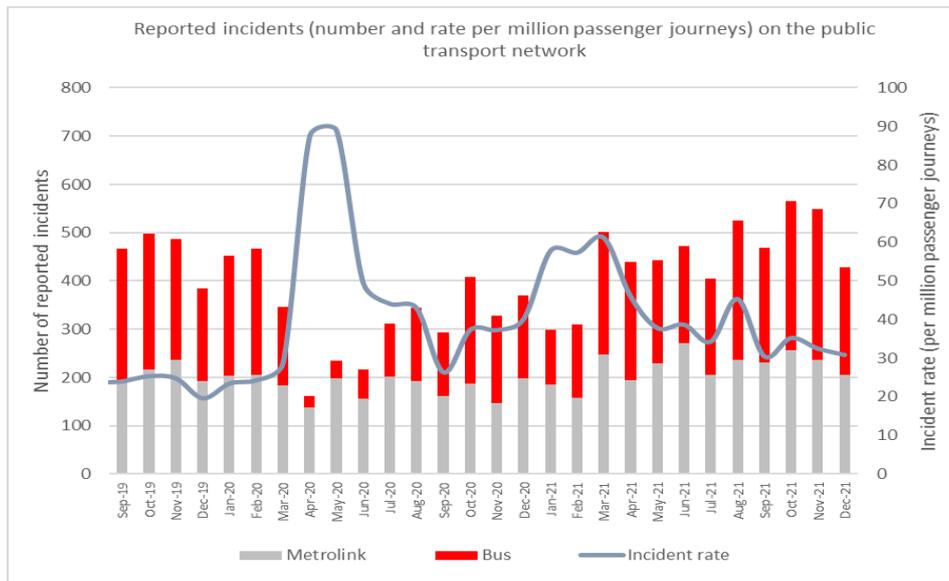
2.11 The TravelSafe KPI brings together all reported crime and incident statistics⁶ from Greater Manchester Police⁷, TfGM, Bus Operators and KAM.

2.12 The average incident rate for 2021 for Bus and Metrolink combined was 39 (up from 26 during the 12 months to December 2019). This is illustrated in Figure 4.

⁶ A number of incidents are excluded where they constitute intelligence rather than an incident, and minor byelaw offences such as smoking and vaping on the platform. Incidents are de-duplicated and categorised prior to analysis. Presenting the data in this way allows comparisons to other Transport Networks e.g., TfL who also publish statistics on the number of incidents per million journeys (albeit TfL only report Crime and not ASB.)

⁷ Gap in receipt of GMP data from 23 March-02 December 2020 as a result of Covid.

Figure 4: Reported incidents of Crime and ASB (per million journeys)

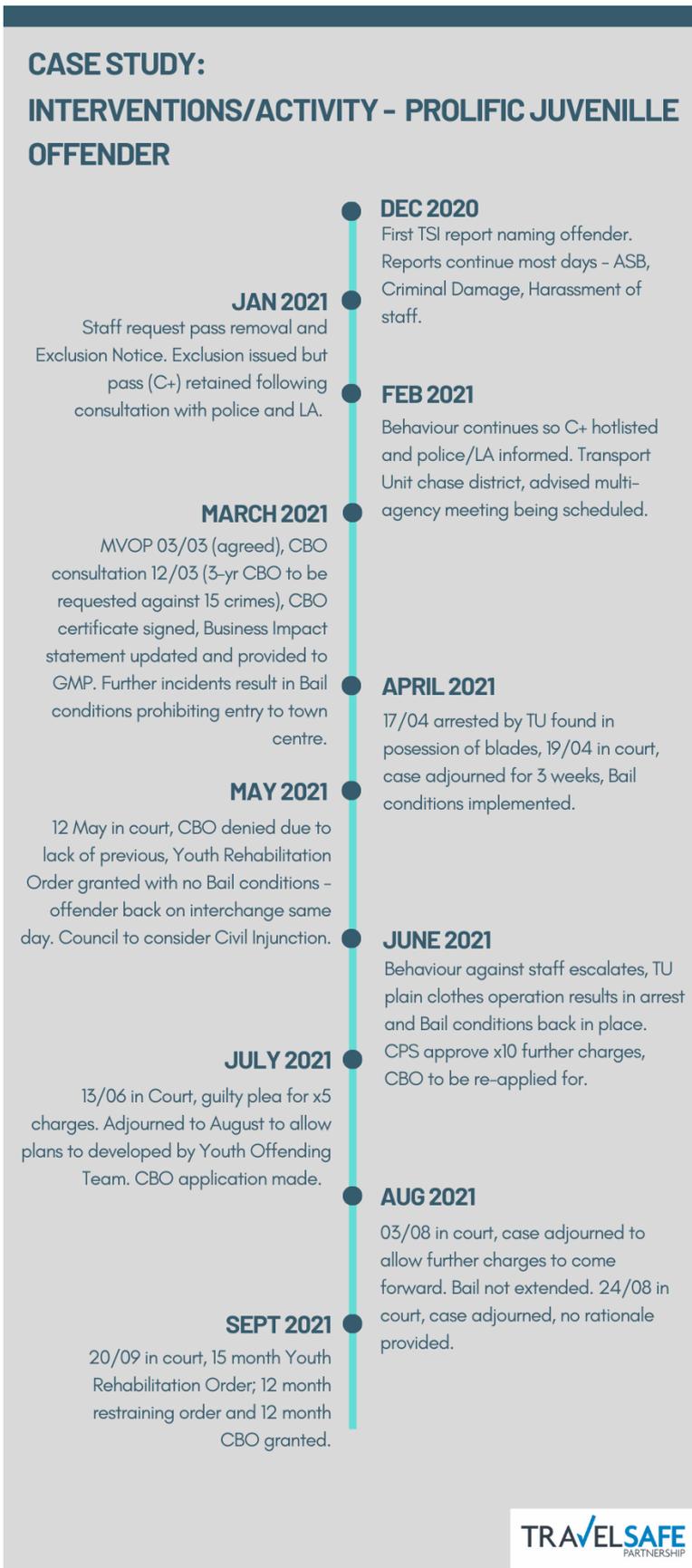


2.13 One of the themes and a significant challenge for the Partnership throughout 2021 has been known, repeat young offenders. Dealing with these cases is complex, requiring input and intervention from a variety of organisations. As a result, successful resolution takes time and places significant demands on those all of those involved, including those staff dealing with the issues on the ground.

2.14 Figure 5 below shows a timeline of activity and subsequent Partnership interventions arising from a single young person, whose activity resulted in a 325% increase in reported incidents⁸.

⁸ This figure only includes incidents in which the individual was 'named', so it is likely to be much higher.

Figure 5: Case Study of Prolific Offender Activity



3 ACHIEVEMENTS

- 3.1 Across 2021, the Partnership responded dynamically to changes in government guidance and regulation. Having managed ‘business as usual’ activities alongside face covering/Covid-safety activities including regular ‘Days of Action’ to support safe travel messages.
- 3.2 In October, the Partnership launched a refreshed forward action plan (**Appendix A**) to refresh and re-focus activity on Crime and ASB, this included a pledge to undertake weekly ‘Specialist Operations’ in key locations to tackle issues pro-actively but also increase visibility and confidence across both passengers and transport staff.
- 3.3 A summary of Specialist Operations results from October to the end of the year, is shown below:
- 23 Specialist Operations across 15 different locations;
 - Over 20,500 customers actively engaged with;
 - Over 1,100 Standard Fares issued on Metrolink; and
 - At least 17 arrests and numerous stop/search and stop/accounts.
- 3.4 Following a joint bid from the GMCA, TfGM and Oldham Council, the Home Office awarded funding of £549,744 through the Safer Streets fund. The funding is ring-fenced for initiatives to increase the safety and feelings of safety for women and girls when using public transport. The scheme covers a small pilot area of five Metrolink stops in Oldham (Freehold, Westwood, Oldham King Street, Oldham Central and Oldham Mumps) and will remain live until the end of March 2022. Projects to be delivered as part of the scheme include:
- A TravelSafe-led reporting campaign to educate passengers on reporting mechanisms and to increase reporting of incidents through the GMP LiveChat service;

- Engaging directly with women and girls to better understand what training and campaigns they would like to see, and developing a bespoke package to deliver to boys and men;
- The presence of 'trusted adults' to increase security and reassure, this includes a dedicated TravelSafe Officer resource, this is already in place;
- Adoption of the safe hub and safe places scheme to reduce vulnerability/feelings of vulnerability through advertised provision of safe, staffed locations;
- Integration and upgrades to CCTV coverage (51 cameras) so that images can be shared between TfGM and the Council in real-time;
- Training of 570 Metrolink staff to spot and appropriately respond to incidents and to encourage increased reporting; and
- A poster campaign (designed by students from Oldham College highlighting acceptable/unacceptable behaviours such as catcalling).

3.5 Linked to the Safer Streets project and the refreshed Partnership forward action plan, a communications campaign ran during November/December to reassure customers on Partnership activity and help deter Crime and ASB. The campaign saw:

- A roll-out of physical and digital assets across the network;
- Launch of GMP's LiveChat service for incident reporting (which also forms part of Safer Streets commitment); and
- Media interviews and social media videos.

3.6 Delivery of the Partnership educational outreach programme suffered due to Covid restrictions. During the 2019 academic year 30,010 young people were directly engaged with, with this dropping to 17,000 in 2020. However, by the end of 2021, this figure currently stands at over 29,000. This is a key strand of the partnerships deterrent work, albeit requires long-term and sustained commitment.

3.7 Significant improvements have been made in problem-solving approaches and links into local community safety structures. This includes weekly sharing of

information and intelligence into local authority Community Safety Partnerships, and extension of free travel provision across both bus and Metrolink for local authority youth and ASB teams to facilitate youth engagement and outreach activities.

- 3.8 Greater amplification of the #GMTravelSafe through social media has vastly increased the reach of Partnership messaging. Messages and videos re-posted through other organisations channels, particularly GMP, significantly increased this reach.
- 3.9 The persistent repeat offender (timeline illustrated at Figure 5) was eventually handed a 12-month Criminal Behaviour Order (CBO). This was supported and evidenced through the Partnership, by the development of Business Impact Statements and provision of CCTV/Body Camera footage. Conditions of the CBO prohibit the offender from entering Rochdale Town Centre, harassing transport staff and interfering with equipment and operations. Learning from this case is already being taken forward in dealing with other similar cases, to support swifter resolutions and interventions.

Greater Manchester Police (GMP) Transport Unit

- 3.10 Across 2021, the GMP Transport Unit has continued to provide a pro-active policing presence across the Greater Manchester transport system in order to reduce Crime and ASB, improve public confidence and deliver against road safety priorities across the city region.
- 3.11 The Transport Unit is not unique in that it has again faced staffing challenges across the year with staff abstracted for a time to support other force priorities and call handling operations. These abstractions ceased in October 2021 and the Unit is now operating near full capacity (with six vacancies in the process of being filled).
- 3.12 To support Mayoral ambitions of increasing active travel in Greater Manchester, the Transport Unit has increased its scope to include patrols across cycle routes and bike hire locations. This has been supported by the TSP through provision of ten bicycles for officers to use. Further work will be taken place across active travels modes during 2022.

3.13 In support of the TSP refreshed forward action plan, the Transport Unit have, and will continue to support Partnership deployments and Specialist Operations. Support also continues to be provided to the transport network during major events.

3.14 Support to the night-time economy continues through Operation Custodian deployments at major transport hubs in the city centre and Project Servator (combatting hostile reconnaissance and suspicious behaviours) also continues to take place across the network.

3.15 The Transport Unit now also have developed a small, but effective, investigative capability which means the team can take ownership of crimes from district teams which relate specifically to the transport network.

3.16 To ensure wider visibility and buy-in of transport related issues, the Transport Unit have set up and lead a district liaison group which is attended by a Chief Inspector from each force district. This allows for two-way sharing of information and intelligence and enables better problem-solving of issues faced.

3.17 The Transport Unit has an active social media presence with growing levels of engagement. To increase the overall visibility of the Transport Unit and to help reassure those travelling on the network, social media communications have been amplified and continue to be well received.

3.18 The infographic in Figure 6 highlights some of the performance highlights of 2021. The data reflects how the Transport Unit are specifically targeting the

Figure 6: Transport Unit 365 Days Infographic



criminals using our network. Data driven deployments mean that they are deployed in the most effective locations and the right times.

4 FORWARD LOOK

4.1 The nature of the TravelSafe Partnership necessitates the adoption of an agile approach to the allocation of resources and priorities throughout the year; however, a range of specific activities have been planned for 2022, these include:

- Continue to support public confidence in the recovery/return to public transport through reassurance activity;
- Review, re-launch and publicise the TSP Strategy (2022-2024);
- Development of a formal Partnership data sharing agreement to enhance opportunities to share data and intelligence and feed into problem solving plans;
- Completion and review of the Safer Streets project and identify opportunities to roll out learning across the network; and
- Develop and distribute a monthly summary dashboard.

Appendix A: Forward Action Plan to address: Perceptions of Safety | Crime and ASB | Fare Evasion



Weekly 'TravelSafe Specialist Operations'

- Roving around '**hotspot locations**'.
- Combination of **static and agile** deployments.
- Refreshed '**menu of tactics**' (overt & covert).
- Increased draw-down of **specialist resources** (dogs, drone, BDO, knife arches, Servator, Transport Unit etc.)

Prevention & Intervention

- **Site infrastructure/environmental surveys** to identify & rectify weaknesses.
- Visible uniformed 'boots on the ground' actively **engaging** with customers and **challenging** lower-level behaviours.
- Accelerate '**Educational Offer**' across GM.
- Closer working with LA Community Safety Leads.
- Provision of '**free travel**' offer to all LA YOT (across both Bus & Tram).

Deterrent

- Hard hitting **comms campaign**: highlighting impact and consequences.
- Complimentary **behaviours campaign**: to build 'social and parental responsibility'.
- **Seasonal Comms campaigns** (key events & risks).
- **Restorative Justice** including '**name & shame**' of offenders.

Information

- **#GMTravelSafe** brand promotion.
- Commitment by all partners to report all incidents and support investigations.
- Launch '**LiveChat**' as mechanism for discrete reporting on public transport.
- '**Ask TSP**': Internal (frontline staff) and external (public facing) socials.
- Development of an **EPIC** work plans to detail specific interventions/partnership working.