

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BEE NETWORK COMMITTEE
HELD THURSDAY, 23RD NOVEMBER, 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 John Walsh	Bolton
Councillor James Gartside	Rochdale
Councillor Sean Fielding	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 John Vickers	Wigan

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Michael Parker	GMP
Vernon Everitt	GMCA
Dame Sarah Storey	GMCA
Eamonn Boylan	GMCA
Gwynne Williams	GMCA
Ninoshka Martins	GMCA
Alex Cropper	TfGM
Steve Warrner	TfGM
Lucy Prince	TfGM
James Baldwin	TfGM
Martin Lax	TfGM
Peter Boulton	TfGM

BOLTON

MANCHESTER

ROCHDALE

STOCKPORT

TRAFFORD

BURY

OLDHAM

SALFORD

TAMESIDE

WIGAN

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Alison Chew	TfGM
Jonathan Marsh	TfGM
Rosalind O'Driscoll	TfGM
Chris Barnes	TfGM

BNC/38/23 Apologies

The Chair welcomed Dame Sarah Storey, Active Travel Commissioner, Vernon Everitt, Transport Commissioner and Michael Parker, Chief Inspector for Road Safety to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Paul Prescott, Dan Costello, Elaine Taylor, Aidan Williams, Paul Dennett and Hamid Khurram.

BNC/39/23 Declarations of Interest

None received.

BNC/40/23 Chair's announcements and Urgent Business

- **Proposed Rail Ticket Office Closures Decision**

At the July meeting of the Bee Network Committee, members unanimously supported the action of the Mayor of Greater Manchester and other Mayors in opposing the proposal to close ticket offices in rail stations. Members were informed that on 31 October, proposals to close or reduce staffed hours of rail station ticket offices across the country had been rejected in full by Transport Focus, following a public consultation which attracted 750,000 responses. Consequently, the transport secretary has asked all train operators to withdraw their proposals to close ticket offices.

- **Avanti West Coast**

It was reported that Avanti continued to have performance issues which have resulted in them removing 1 train per hour from their London-Manchester route from December, at one of the busiest times of the year on the railway.

While Avanti's performance had been impacted by problems with Network Rail's infrastructure, this does not explain the persistence of problems which are within its control to fix, many of which are long-term issues.

This ongoing poor performance calls into question the rationale for Avanti being awarded a new long-term contract in September. A further performance update was therefore requested under the rail programme item that was currently scheduled for January 2024.

- **Tranche 1 Performance Update**

The GM Mayor provided an update on the performance of Tranche 1 services and advised members that the latest information on punctuality would be shared with the Committee following the meeting.

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.

It was noted that increasing patronage was essential to maintaining services. Members were therefore urged to continue promoting the network given that success of bus franchising was dependant on patronage levels.

Members were advised that work was underway to improve bus tracking feature and was being prioritised as an important function. 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 had been planned and would soon be available as part of future updates to the Bee Network application.

Through Bus Franchising GM was able to improve the quality of data being captured to allow greater insight into what can be done to improve services and to share learning with Tranche 2 areas. It was also noted that the management of roadworks was essential to reducing delays on the network therefore introduction of the Lane Rental Scheme was welcomed.

Considerable amount of work had been undertaken jointly with Highways England to improve punctuality on the network. Officers were thankful for the support received and were keen to get the same level of engagement in Tranche 2 areas.

To improve timekeeping, it was suggested that GM could explore introducing a tap on feature to the likes of London which doesn't require a ticket purchase and if feasible consider the option of introducing middle doors on buses.

Additional comments were made around the need to establish an overtime contract to prevent any potential issues that might arise due to driver shortages.

Further suggestions were made to introduce a V1 & V2 express service to manage demand during peak hours and to re-instate the 167-bus service. It was felt that there was a need to provide assistance to non-franchised areas to ensure existing concerns were picked up and addressed through franchising. Officers noted the comments raised and assured members that the comments made would be picked up through the network review process whilst alluding to the benefits of having Local Bee Network forums as a channel to directly report such issues and recommend changes. With regards to any specific issues facing non franchised areas, members were requested to contact TfGM directly.

RESOLVED/-

1. That it be noted that following a public consultation which attracted 750,000 responses the Transport Secretary has asked all train operators to withdraw their proposals to close ticket offices.
2. In noting the concerns raised around the decision taken by Avanti West Coast to remove 1 train per hour from their London-Manchester route from December, it was

agreed that a further performance update be provided under the rail programme item that was currently scheduled for January 2024.

3. That the update in relation to the performance of Tranche 1 services be noted and that the relevant data in relation to punctuality of services be circulated to members following the meeting.
4. That it be noted that to improve customer experience further improvements to the Bee Network application including the added functionality of journey planning including apple and google pay functionality would be included within future updates of the Bee Network application.

BNC/41/23 Minutes of the meeting held on 26 October 2023

RESOLVED/-

That the minutes of the meeting held on 26 October 2023 be approved as a correct record.

BNC/42/23 Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040: Progress Report

Consideration was given to a report that provided an update on progress made on delivering the Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040 and the Five-Year Transport Delivery Plan, from March 2022 and November 2023. Included within the report was an overview of GM's major commitments as well as a measured review of evidence to inform detailed discussions in GM for the refresh of the Local Transport Plan.

In response to the question raised arounds plans to extend Metrolink to Stockport, Wigan and Middleton, officers advised that future Metrolink extensions were currently being explored and would be outlined in more detail in the forthcoming refresh of the GM Transport Strategy 2040. Members were assured that that TfGM were closely working with districts officers to ensure the completion of individual Strategic Outline Cases (SOC).

The Rapid Transit Strategy, that would also include an update on the position around Tram-Train schemes and long-term rapid transit options would be brought to a future meeting of the Committee.

It was highlighted that improving safety was essential to building patronage on the network. Officers advised members that TfGM had launched #IsThisOK? campaign to encourage men travelling on public transport to consider their behaviour towards women and girls.

Further to that TfGM had also received funding following a successful joint bid with the British Transport Police and have since procured the headsets and the VR software needed for the delivery of the VR Headset Scheme. These virtual reality headsets would be used to give youngsters insight into the real impact missile attacks on trains, trams and buses have on passengers and drivers which is anticipated to deter antisocial behaviour on the network.

In discussing the importance of engagement, it was felt that engagement prior and post the launch of the strategy was essential to ensure the success of any scheme. Officers acknowledged the comments and advised that plans were underway to monitor the network with the view to improving punctuality of services. If members had any areas of particular concern, they were urged to flag them directly with officers at TfGM.

It was felt that further engagement with education facilities would also be beneficial to encourage take up and make young people aware of products on offer.

The need to engage with Highways England to deliver in a coordinated manner was seen essential to better managing the road network.

With regards to the question raised around the position of funding to improve step free access, it was clarified that no additional funding had been announced as part of the Autumn budget. Members were assured that should funding be made available TfGM would work to develop a list of prioritised schemes in conjunction with Network Rail.

It was noted that there was a huge opportunity through manufacturing to create further employment opportunities.

In discussing the position around rail, it was noted that further work was needed to be done to move the plan for rail forward within Greater Manchester and to address any capacity issues with government.

With regards to the suggestion to streamline the guided bus way service to reduce journey time, members were thanked for their suggestion and advised that it would be considered as part of the Local Transport Plan refresh.

In terms of the re-allocated funds for road resurfacing, it was explained that allocations for Greater Manchester were to be provided over an 11-year period. However, the issue with providing funding for this year at this late stage in the year making it extremely difficult to commit and spend therefore further sessions had been planned with the Highways Group and Transport Strategy Group to better understand how to take this piece forward.

Further details on the merger of A560 Stockport Road scheme with Tameside - Hattersley Viaduct scheme would be provided to Councillor Bray following the meeting.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the progress on Greater Manchester's committed transport delivery programme be noted.
2. That progress against the existing Right Mix vision and established 2040 Transport Strategy key performance indicators be noted.
3. That it be agreed that the implications of KPI monitoring, and delivery progress should be considered carefully to shape the refresh of the Local Transport Plan.
4. That it be noted that the Rapid Transit Strategy, that would also include an update on the position around Tram-Train schemes and long-term rapid transit options would be brought to a future meeting of the Committee.
5. That the measures that have been deployed to improve safety on the network, including the launch of the #IsThisOK? campaign to encourage men travelling on public transport to consider their behaviour towards women and girls be noted.

6. That it be noted that TfGM had received funding following a successful joint bid with the British Transport Police and have since procured the headsets and the VR software needed for the delivery of VR Headset Scheme. Virtual reality headsets will be used to give youngsters an insight into the real impact missile attacks on trains, trams and buses have on passengers and drivers which will potentially deter antisocial behaviour on the network.
7. That further details on the merger of A560 Stockport Road scheme with Tameside - Hattersley Viaduct scheme be provided to Councillor Bray following the meeting.

BNC/43/23 Greater Manchester Streets for All Design Guide

Consideration was given to a report that provided an overview of the Greater Manchester Streets for All Design Guide (Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040 sub strategy). The Guide would be supported by Supplementary Technical Guidance, co-developed by TfGM and local authorities, which would provide additional technical detail. The GM Model of Community Engagement would be embedded within the approach in order to successfully deliver schemes.

With regard to the query raised around the progress of the redevelopment of narrow the railway bridges, officers explained the constraints around funding and highlighted that work with Network Rail and TfGM was underway to plan for the replacement of both Greek Street and Stockholm Road bridges in 2025, ensuring these plans safeguard any future Tram Train / Metrolink schemes.

It was noted that the Streets for All Design Guide brought together existing multidisciplinary national standards and national and local guidance, however it was felt that there was a need for a pragmatic approach through advanced co-design given the conditionality around funding to be able to deliver what is most important for Greater Manchester.

Members sought to understand whether there was any progress made on enforcing pavement parking. Officer acknowledged that tackling pavement parking would be

beneficial for maintaining good pavement condition, however GM were yet to receive powers to enforce pavement parking.

In response to the comments raised around operation Park Safe and whether it was possible for this operation to be replicated in GM. It was reported that GMP had received details of the operation which was currently being reviewed to understand what could be implemented across GM.

To ensure that the guidance remains current core references would be periodically reviewed and updated. Minor updates to the design guide would be agreed by TfGM and local authorities via the GM Transport Strategy Group, GM Highways Group and GM Delivery Group. Any substantive changes would be brought to Committee for consideration.

RESOLVED/-

1. That it be noted that the key role the Greater Manchester Streets for All Design Guide will have in helping the region achieve the ambition set out in the Streets for All Strategy, GMTS 2040, and in building the Bee Network.
2. That the Greater Manchester Streets for All Design Guide V1.1; be adopted.
3. That it be noted that all schemes funded through the GMCA should be developed and designed following the approach and requirements set out in the Streets for All Design Guidance.
4. That it be noted that Supplementary Technical Guidance and any minor updates to the Design Guide be agreed by TfGM and local authorities using the GM Transport Strategy, GM Highways and GM Delivery Groups.
5. That it be noted that the commitment to return to this Committee in the event of substantive revision and update.

BNC/44/23 Road Safety Update

The report provides an annual update on Greater Manchester (GM) road casualty figures for 2022 (published on 28 September 2023), an update on GM wide road safety initiatives and reports on the progress to adopt the ambition of Vision Zero for GM.

In response to the concerns raised around the criteria for the installation of speed camera, officers advised that this criterion was set by the Department for Transport and TfGM had requested that the criteria be reviewed. DfT have since responded to an enquiry from TfGM stating that this refresh was within their pipeline of ongoing work, however no date for completion had been confirmed. It was therefore felt appropriate that on behalf of the Committee, a letter be sent to the Department of Transport outlining the concerns of members alongside recommending that a review of the existing criteria for the installation of speed cameras be undertaken as a matter of urgency. In the meantime, it was felt appropriate that a meeting be arranged with the Chief Constable to explore the options available to Greater Manchester.

It was clarified that through the Safer Roads Greater Manchester Partnership, funding, and coordination of the ongoing day to-day maintenance of 236 roadside safety camera would be provided with no additional costs to Local Authorities.

The need to work with local district policing teams was noted therefore it was agreed that details of neighbourhood policing inspectors would be shared with the Committee to allow members to share road safety concerns directly with GMP.

Concerns were raised around the use e-scooters and bikes involved in accidents and therefore members sought to understand whether there were any measures being put in place. Members were advised of plans to reduce road casualty figures through engagement with business owners to encourage the adoption of accountability standards through operation AVRO be noted.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the contents of the report be noted.

2. That plans to reduce road casualty figures through engagement with business owners to encourage the adoption of accountability standards through operation AVRO be noted.
3. That it be agreed that details of neighbourhood policing inspectors be shared with the Committee to allow members to share road safety issues directly with GMP.
4. That it be agreed that on behalf of the Committee a letter be sent to the Department of Transport outlining the concerns of members alongside recommending that a review of the existing criteria for the installation of speed cameras be undertaken.
5. That be agreed that a meeting be arranged with the Chief Constable to explore the options available to Greater Manchester until a response from Government is received.

BNC/45/23 Transport Capital Programme

Members are requested to note the current position on the Greater Manchester Transport Capital Programme and consider a number of City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) and Active Travel funding draw-down requests in order to support the continued development and delivery of the programme.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the current position in relation to CRSTS1 and the recent announcement of indicative funding for CRSTS2 be noted.
2. That it be noted that the Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) in relation to the £53.6m Active Travel allocation within CRSTS1 has been submitted and approved in line with the previously agreed CRSTS assurance process. The drawdown of specific financial releases in relation to individual schemes within this overall allocation would be progressed through the previously agreed Mayoral Challenge Fund (MCF) governance process, as detailed within this report.

3. That the proposed reallocation of £6.8m CRSTS funding from the A577 Complementary Works scheme to the Golborne Station scheme be noted.
4. That in line with previously adopted practice, the draw-down of Active Travel funding as be approved as follows:
 - £1m of ATF3 funding for delivery of the Salford Irwell Street Phase 1 scheme;
 - £0.25m of ATF4 funding for the development of the Manchester Cycleway, Yellow Brick Road scheme;
 - £0.35m of ATF4 funding for the development of the Manchester Cycleway, CYCLOPS scheme
 - £0.17m of ATF4 funding for the development of the Bury Parkhills Road, Heywood Street Junctions scheme; and
 - £0.12m of ATF4 funding for the development of the Bury Radcliffe Metrolink Active Travel Access Package.
5. That it be agreed that the consideration and approval of the bid to the second round of funding for the DfT's Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas (ZEBRA) Scheme to the Chief Executive, GMCA and TfGM for submission to Government by 15th December.

BNC/46/23 Dates and Times of Future Meetings

- 14 December; 2 – 4 PM
- 25 January; 2 – 4 PM
- 22 February; 2 – 4 PM
- 21 March; 2 – 4 PM