

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BEE NETWORK COMMITTEE
HELD THURSDAY, 25TH JANUARY, 2024 AT GMCA OFFICES, 56 OXFORD STREET,
M1 6EU**

PRESENT:

Eamonn O'Brien (in the Chair)	Bury
GM Mayor Andy Burnham	GMCA
Councillor Howard Sykes	Oldham
Councillor John Walsh	Bolton
Councillor Sean Fielding	Bolton
Councillor Alan Quinn	Bury
Councillor Phil Burke	Rochdale
Councillor Mike McCusker	Salford
Councillor Grace Baynham	Stockport
Councillor Aidan Williams	Trafford
Councillor Jan Jackson	Tameside
Councillor John Vickers	Wigan

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Eamonn Boylan	GMCA
Dame Sarah Storey	GMCA
Melinda Edwards	GMCA
Ninoshka Martins	GMCA
Lucy Prince	GMCA
Gareth Parkin	GMP
Peter Boulton	TfGM
Julie Reide	TfGM
Danny Vaughan	TfGM
Simon Elliot	TfGM
Chris Barnes	TfGM
Alison Chew	TfGM
Alex Cropper	TfGM

BOLTON

MANCHESTER

ROCHDALE

STOCKPORT

TRAFFORD

BURY

OLDHAM

SALFORD

TAMESIDE

WIGAN

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Martin Lax	TfGM
Steve Warrener	TfGM
James Baldwin	TfGM

TRAIN OPERATING COMPANIES (TOCs) IN ATTENDANCE:

Andy Mellor	Avanti West Coast
Chris Jackson	TransPennine Express
Kara Woods	Network Rail
Craig Harrop	Northern Rail

BNC/59/23 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Elaine Taylor, Dan Costello, Tracey Rawlins, James Gartside, Paul Prescott, Warren Bray and Hamid Khurram.

BNC/60/23 Declarations of Interest

RESOLVED/-

That it be noted that as an employee of Keolis Amey Metrolink, Councillor Phil Burke declared a prejudicial interest in item 6 – Bikes on Metrolink Policy.

BNC/61/23 Chair's announcements and Urgent Business

1. Metrolink Operator Contract Extension (considered by BNC in July 2023)

TfGM had finalised the contractual details with KAM and had welcomed an extension to the Metrolink Operations and Maintenance contract with KeolisAmey Metrolink Ltd (KAM), which would see the company continue to operate and maintain the UK's largest tram network from July 2024 until July 2027.

2. Letter to Mark Harper (DfT)

Following on from a recent action, a letter to Mark Harper had been issued requesting an urgent review and update to the DfT Circular 01/2007: Use of speed and red-light cameras within which GM's intention to develop a local guide, based on the updated circular, for the deployment and use of safety cameras had been highlighted.

Further to that, a meeting had been arranged with the Chief Constable to explore the options available to GM and to look at additional measures on how road safety can be improved.

3. Look ahead to 2024

Another busy year was expected with the second tranche of bus franchising due to commence on Sunday 24th March, following which successful bidders for Tranche 3 were to be announced. In addition to that improvements and new functions are expected to be added to the Bee Network app in the near future.

4. Sir Tony Lloyd MP

The Committee acknowledged the passing of Sir Tony Lloyd, MP for Rochdale and the former interim Mayor and Police and Crime Commissioner for GM and recorded their condolences.

5. Tranche 1 Performance Update

The GM Mayor provided an update on the performance of Tranche 1 services and took members through a set of slides that provided an overview of the latest information on punctuality.

During the 7 days ending Saturday 20 January journeys across the network were affected by severe weather. Tue 16 Jan saw significant snow across the region. Traffic volumes and passenger numbers fell, and average speeds slowed (as drivers adjusted to conditions). Despite the challenging weather conditions Bus performance had been stable.

The Committee was advised that going forward, data relating to the punctuality of buses on the Bee Network would be published on X (formerly twitter) on a weekly basis and would be linked to a more detailed report providing a longer-term trend and some contextual information.

In addition, members requested that a travel safe report be circulated to members, in response officers explained that a detailed report would be received by Committee next month following which a regular frequency could be established.

RESOLVED/-

1. That it be noted that TfGM has finalised the contractual details with KAM and has welcomed an extension to the Metrolink Operations and Maintenance contract with KeolisAmey Metrolink Ltd (KAM), which would see the company continue to operate and maintain the UK's largest tram network from July 2024 until July 2027.
2. That it be noted that a letter has been issued to Mark Harper, Secretary of State for Transport issued requesting an urgent update of Department for Transport (DfT) Circular 01/2007: Use of speed and red-light cameras.
3. That it be noted that a meeting has been arranged with the Chief Constable to discuss the challenges and opportunities of developing and taking forward a locally agreed approach prior to the DfT publishing a refreshed Circular and develop a plan to deliver Greater Manchester's ambition for Vision Zero.
4. That it be noted that the second tranche of bus franchising was due to commence on Sunday 24th March.
5. That the update in relation to Tranche 1 services be noted.
6. That it be noted that data relating to the punctuality of buses on the Bee Network would be published on X (formerly twitter) on a weekly basis.
7. That a Travel Safe update would be received by the Bee Network Committee in February 2024.

BNC/62/23 Minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2023

RESOLVED/-

That the minutes of the Bee Network Committee held on 14 December 2023 be approved as a correct record.

BNC/63/23 Vision Zero Draft Strategy Approval

Consideration was given to a report that provided an overview of the draft strategy for Vision Zero and endorsement was sought from members for the draft Vision Zero Strategy and for this document to be used to commence a period of engagement with stakeholders and the public.

This would be followed by a period of engagement that would take place in early spring with public and stakeholders in the form of an online questionnaire on the strategy. A draft Action Plan would help deliver the Vision Zero Strategy and engagement with the public and stakeholders on these actions would take place in May 2024 for approximately two months.

It was proposed that the finalised Vision Zero Strategy and Action Plan would be reported to Bee Network Committee and then to the GMCA for formal adoption and approval in November 2024. Aim was for the public launch to coincide with Road Safety Week (18 – 24 November 2024). The World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims takes place on 17 November 2024.

Members welcomed the strategy and noted that the overall aim of the vision was to improve road safety for road users and not to restrict cars. It was felt that there was a need for better legislation to be able to keep people safe on roads.

It was suggested that it might be beneficial to work with manufacturing companies to consider introducing inbuilt speed limiters and other suitable technology such as drones that could be utilised to improve road safety.

Depending on whether Local Authorities would implement local forums it would be then utilised to engage Councillors and increase awareness on the Vision Zero Strategy.

Members sought to understand whether there were GMP were aware of any measure being introduced to prevent phone usage whilst driving. In response, officers advised of local operations and stated that as part of Operation Snap, members of the public could report and submit digital footage showing potential moving traffic offences which has proved to be a great success.

It was felt that traditional road safety measures such as car engineering, education to encourage behavioural change and enforcement were essential to creating a Safe System. Officers commented on the role the Vision Zero Strategy could play as this would give GM a stronger voice and highlighted the role stakeholders could play in trying to influence national thinking.

With regard to vehicle manufacturers further work was being done to develop a vision Zero Group for the North akin to the South this forum strengthens GM's voice.

In discussing the speed management policy, members sought to understand what the challenges were to implement a 20-mile speed limit. Members were advised that GMP were in the process of upgrading their technology to enforce a 20-mile speed limit and were in the process of recruiting additional staff to in favour of the policy change that was expected to take effect within the next 12 months.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the contents of the strategy be noted.
2. That the draft Vision Zero Strategy and the commencement of a period of engagement with stakeholders and the public be endorsed.
3. That it be noted that a supporting Action Plan would be developed and brought to this Committee following the period of stakeholder and public engagement on the strategy.
4. That it be noted that the finalised Vision Zero Strategy and Action Plan would be reported to Bee Network Committee and then to the GMCA for formal adoption and approval in November 2024.

BNC/64/23 Bikes on Metrolink Policy

Consideration was given to a report that summarised the opportunities and challenges being considered to inform a policy on the carriage of non-folding bikes on Metrolink. The report outlined the next steps, including a guided pilot to take place from the end of February to test out the carriage of bikes, including adapted cycles, in various scenarios.

This proposed guided pilot would be undertaken during early 2024 to gain more insight into how the carriage of bikes could be accommodated safely and was scheduled to commence at the end of February 2024, with results being analysed during April and May. Following this, in summer of 2024, TfGM would bring a further report to Committee on the outcomes of the pilot, together with technical studies, and proposals regarding how to allow the safe carriage of non-folding bikes on Metrolink for consideration.

Following on from the action noted at the previous meeting, officers have been in touch with Edinburgh to learn more from their experience, and the findings were included under section 3 of the report. Officers added that the introduction of the scheme had seen a huge influx of e-bikes and delivery drivers utilising the tram during peak hours nonetheless the pilot was overall seen as successful.

Members welcomed the launch of the proposed guided pilot and noted that the complete integration of the network was essential to encouraging active travel and to increase dependency on public transport.

Members highlighted their concerns around the safety of passengers and the risk to disabled users in the case of an accident. The concerns were noted, and members were assured that no testing would take place during peak periods or events and that passenger safety would be a paramount feature of the pilot. Through the pilot GM would be able to look at the feasibility of wider roller out and would gain more insight into how bikes could be accommodated safely.

In response to a member's suggestion in relation to the possibility of dedicating a separate carriage for the storage of bikes, officers stated, that due to not having conductors on trams and having shorter platform this would not be feasible for GM.

Nevertheless, to allow the safe storage of bikes on trams a few adaptations to the existing carriages would be required.

Officers were urged to consider whether it would be cost effective to expand Metrolink over making any adaptations to the existing fleet of vehicles.

It was suggested that there was a need to invest in the infrastructure through the introduction of bike storage at high touch point areas, including near terraced houses, to encourage active travel.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the contents of the report be noted.
2. That the proposal of a guided pilot to test various scenarios for the carriage of non-folding bikes on Metrolink be endorsed.
3. That it be noted that a further report would be presented to the Bee Network Committee in summer 2024 on the outcomes of the pilot, together with ongoing technical studies, and proposals on as to how to safely enable the carriage of non-folding bikes on Metrolink.

BNC/65/23 Greater Manchester Rail Update

Consideration was given to a report that provided an update on the performance of the Greater Manchester rail network and delivery of the capital and strategic rail programmes.

Members welcomed plans for a station at Cheadle, including updates on Golborne and Daisy Hill station and saw progression as the benefits of the devolution arrangement.

It was noted that the age of the rolling stock, inadequate timetabling and driver training had added to delays on the network.

The role of rail network was seen integral to improving connectivity across the network. It was therefore felt that a better overtime agreement and a resilient system would be

able to mitigate any shortfalls. Operators were urged to consider the development of a workforce profile to understand recruitment needs that would prevent delays that would arise due to staff shortages.

Officers advised that they were closely working with operators to address the timetabling issue and welcomed engagement with Northern, particularly around some of the challenges around additional call at new station.

In relation to the issue raised around rest days, officers acknowledged that this has caused a number of performance issues and advised that TOCs were working towards developing a workforce programme with the aim to reducing reliance on rest day working.

With regards to operation challenges on Sundays, it was noted that that TOCs don't operate a seven-day railway system, in particular for Northern services, and that lend to the fact for the need for a wider workforce reform across the rail network.

Members welcomed the announcement regarding the decision of the reversal of the closure of ticket offices and highlighted the need for these to be accessible to members of the public.

In discussing ticket fares, operators were urged to consider the removal of peak rates given the recent shift in working patterns.

In addition, it was highlighted that commuters also preferred purchasing tickets online however online tickets were reported to be far more expensive than if purchased at the station therefore operators were urged to give this issue further consideration. Officers noted the comments and acknowledged that this was key enablers to unlocking modal shift to connect the wider transport network and advised of plans for contactless payment for rail that would allow GM to deliver a multimodal ticketing solution.

In response to comments made in relation to the implementation challenges of the December 2022 timetable, it was noted that had resulted in a reduction in services and connectivity. Members were assured of plans to improve services including making the case for Golborne and for uplifting services on the Wigan corridor, but also to provide connectivity between North - South Manchester.

Operators noted the comments raised and informed members of their individual service improvement plans.

Craig Harrop, Regional Director, Northern Rail advised of plans to stabilise and improve services. It was highlighted that the challenges faced, particularly over the last 12 months, had been around sickness, availability, and skills training gap. In terms of sickness management, members were advised of plans to transition to a new occupational health provider that would help assist colleagues back to work much quicker. It was noted that workforce reform was required to bring about change and advised of upcoming talks with the trade unions.

In response to the issue raised around the Bolton corridor, it was highlighted that this was due to trains being longer than the platform and members were advised of plans to improve and introduce more new trains to the fleet in the very near future which would accordingly be deployed to match infrastructure needs.

In relation to the comments raised around the impact of extreme weather on the rail network, Kara Wood, Performance Improvement Manager, Network Rail advised of the mitigation work done to prevent/minimise disruption on the network. In addition, it was highlighted that considerable amount of work had been done in relation to decision making tools and development of good digital technology to help with implementing relief measures. It was highlighted that with the recent high winds there had been a number of line failures and therefore welcomed any support that can be received in terms of working with third parties when it comes to removal of fallen trees.

Chris Jackson, Managing Director, TransPennine Express provided a progress update advising of the change in ownership and plans to fix the deep-rooted issues that were facing the business. Following discussion with the trade union, agreement rest day working had been sought in June of last year, following which performance had significantly stabilised. Members were advised that TransPennine were in active discussions with Trade Unions to extend rest day working until March 2025. The launch of the December 2023 timetable change had seen further stabilisation of the service which had improved overall performance and significantly reduced overcrowding. Plans were underway to reinstate services in June and to procure additional 29 brand-new

trains, which would involve additional service introductions across the North to meet demand.

Andy Mellor, Managing Director, Avanti West Coast, provided an update on the operational challenges and advised that further work was also being done in relation to workforce planning through the driver training programme that would deliver new drivers and would seek to improve timetable resilience. In addition, further work had been done to refine driver schedules to ensure resilience throughout the week particularly, Saturdays, which historically had been an issue. To improve punctuality, work was being done with Network Rail, and a task force had been established, looking specifically at the Manchester route in terms of its operational performance.

Members expressed their frustration regarding service performance particularly towards Avanti whose performance had been very poor. It was explained that services had declined due to historic leave agreements and alleviated level of sicknesses. Nonetheless, in noting the impact to residents an apology was issued, and members were assured that progress would be made to deliver a year-round service.

In terms of comments raised around the service quality regime and the recent leaked presentation, members were assured that an investigation of the issue was underway.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the performance of the Greater Manchester rail network be noted.
2. That the progress of the capital rail delivery programme be noted.
3. That the following updates in relation to the capital rail delivery programme be noted :
 - a) Work was underway with Stockport and Wigan Council to develop proposals for a new rail station in Cheadle and in Golborne.
 - b) The current proposal for Golborne Station, subject to a public consultation that commenced on 4th January 2024, was to build a new station near to the site of the previous Golborne Station which would have an hourly service between

Wigan and Stalybridge; and the relevant documentation required to secure Government approval of the Outline Business Case for the scheme would be submitted to the Department for Transport (DfT) for review by the end of January 2024.

- c) That the following works were noted as part of the Access for All programme:
- The commencement of detailed design works on Daisy Hill and Irlam stations with completion and handover expected in early 2025 and;
 - The conclusion of the outline design for Swinton and Next Tranche stations (Reddish North, Hindley, Bryn) with detailed design work set to commence early 2024 with overall completion expected in 2027, subject to railway possessions and access be received and;
 - In terms of minor accessibility intervention, the installation of Customer Information Systems (CIS) in 14 GM stations were underway with expected completion by the end of March 2024; the installation of the access ramp at Bredbury Station had been completed and the drop off work at Rose Hill Station was currently underway with expected completion by the end of February 2024.
- d) Following delays to the enhancement scheme for Salford Central Station, work was now planned to commence from early 2025 for 10 weeks.
- e) Heaton Chapel, Altrincham, and Trafford Park were identified as stations with buildings that could be redeveloped and brought back into use.
- f) Redevelopment masterplans were now in place for Stockport, Stalybridge and Rochdale Station.
4. That the progress of strategic rail programme be noted.
5. That the following updates in relation to the strategic rail programme be noted as below :
- a) Following the publication of the Williams Shapps Plan for Rail in 2021 and the subsequent creation of the Great British Railways Transition Team (GBRTT), a

Trailblazer partnership has been set-up between Greater Manchester and GBRTT.

- b) That work was underway to develop a prospectus for the 6 central stations within Manchester and Salford, along with proposals for an enhanced station at Stockport as part of the Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC) be noted.
- c) To support the GM-GBR's Fares, Ticketing and Retail (FTR) programme roll-out and the Trailblazer Devolution Deal commitment of integrating rail into the Bee Network by 2030, a Customer Integration Delivery Group (CIDG) consisting of industry partners (GBRTT, DfT, Network Rail, Northern and TransPennine) has been set up to support the delivery of this vision.
- d) Two main strategic rail studies 'The North of England Freight Routing study' and 'The 7-Day Railway study' were currently in progress and on completion would be utilised to understand the priority areas for rail service improvements.
- e) Further strategic and delivery programmes were being led by the rest of the rail industry, including the Hope Valley line upgrades let by Network Rail and TransPennine Route upgrades were noted.

BNC/66/23 Transport Capital Programme

This report seeks approval for CRSTS funding to upgrade existing pedestrian crossings across the Improving Journeys: Orbital Bus Route corridors and recommends that the GMCA approves the addition to and the subsequent drawdown for local Highways Maintenance from 2023 – 2024.

Members were also asked the note the current CRSTS1 and 2 position and to note the intention to submit the Outline Business Case for Golborne Station to DfT.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the current position in relation to CRSTS1 and CRSTS2 be noted.

2. That the intended submission of the Outline Business Case for the new Golborne Station project to the Department for Transport (DfT) in January 2024 be noted.
3. That the drawdown of £0.72m of CRSTS funding to enable progression of the 'Improving Journeys – Orbital Bus Routes: Pedestrian Crossing Upgrades' scheme – to upgrade existing pedestrian crossings across the Improving Journeys: Orbital Bus Route corridors be approved; and
4. That it be noted that the GMCA would be recommended to approve the addition to, and the subsequent drawdown from, the 2023/24 Capital Programme of £4.438m for local highways maintenance activities, noting the split between Local Authorities based on the previously agreed (GMCA 26 May 2023) core maintenance allocations.

BNC/67/23 Dates & Times of Future Meetings

RESOLVED/-

- 22 February; 2 - 4 PM
- 21 March; 2 - 4 PM