

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BEE NETWORK COMMITTEE
HELD THURSDAY, 28TH NOVEMBER 2024 AT BOARDROOM, GMCA OFFICES**

PRESENT:

Councillor Eamonn O'Brien (in the Chair)	GMCA
Councillor Alan Quinn	Bury
Councillor Tracey Rawlins	Manchester
Councillor Josh Charters	Oldham
Councillor Howard Sykes	Oldham
Councillor Grace Baynham	Stockport
Councillor David Meller	Stockport
Councillor John Vickers	Wigan

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Vernon Everitt	GM Transport Commissioner
Dame Sarah Storey	GM Active Travel Commissioner
CFO Dave Russel	GMFRS
Supt. Gareth Parkin	GMP

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Chris Barnes	TfGM
Peter Boulton	TfGM
Melinda Edwards	GMCA
Martin Lax	TfGM
Adam Sedgmond	TfGM
Caroline Simpson	GMCA
Lee Teasdale	GMCA
Danny Vaughan	TfGM

BNC/41/24 Welcome & Apologies

Apologies were received and noted from Mayor Andy Burnham, Councillor Hamid Khurram (Bolton), Councillor Phil Burke (Rochdale), Councillor Mike McCusker (Salford) & Mayor Paul Dennett (Salford).

BNC/42/24 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

BNC/43/24 Chairs Announcements & Urgent Business

The Chair opened by highlighting a number of funding announcements that had taken place over recent weeks. These included a draft total of £66m of funding secured for TfGM. Budget setting processes would show this funding set out within the context of the wider budget in due course. This additional funding was welcomed and would go some way to funding a low fare/high patronage integrated public transport system.

The Chair referenced the Bee Network Safety Summit that had recently taken place. It was advised that this had been used as an opportunity to work with transport operators and GMP to agree that as part of Vision Zero there would be a specific Bee Network Safety Plan. The focus of the event had been operational safety, and a meeting would be taking place with trade unions to engage on the delivery of this safety plan.

Members were reminded that the consultation process on the GM School Travel Strategy was now open, and that this needed to be promoted widely for the highest possible levels of engagement.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the update on the £66m of Bus Funding awarded to Greater Manchester from the Government following the autumn budget be received.
2. That the feedback provided on the recent Bee Network Safety Summit be received.

3. That it be noted that the consultation process on the GM School Travel Strategy was now live.

BNC/44/24 Minutes of the Meeting of 24th October 2024

RESOLVED/-

That the minutes of the meeting of the meeting of 24 October 2024 be agreed as a true and correct record.

BNC/45/24 Highways Network Management

Peter Boulton (Network Director Highways, TfGM) presented a report that provided an overview of the changing nature of the Greater Manchester (GM) highways network. It captured the performance of the KRN (Key Route Network) and the asset maintenance condition; the measures in place to support network management and in particular support the reliability of the bus network; future developments that would support the city region Bee Network and Right Mix ambitions; and the challenges that needed to be addressed to ensure the highway network supports the changing transport needs of the growing city-region and all of Greater Manchester's people, places and businesses.

Comments and Questions

- Members sought assurances that the network management plans retained a focus on working with council officers directly in order to find the best solution for their areas. It was advised that any changes to the road network would be worked on directly with the relevant local authorities to ensure the best solutions based upon local knowledge – there was a history of strong collaboration with local councils, and this needed to be maintained.
- Members noted that roadworks remained one of the key causes of delays on the highways network – were there ways to lobby government for more powers around this, particularly in terms of companies who overran on permits? It was advised that a business case was being built up for lane rental – and this would be an important tool going forward, particularly on roads that carried the highest levels of traffic. This lane rental would mean that utility companies would have to pay for overruns on roads. TfGM would work with councils to lobby the

Department for Transport for higher fines in future for these overruns – as current penalties were insufficient and often resulted in companies ‘taking the hit’ to get the extra time.

- Members further expressed concerns about utility companies working on recently resurfaced roads and doing a ‘patchwork job’ that led to increased potholes rather than a full carriageway reinstatement. Officers stated that there needed to be more work with utility companies to better coordinate works – regular meetings were being built in as part of the Bee Network establishment.
- Members stated that they would welcome the opportunity for direct engagement with utility company operators themselves to discuss the concerns raised and explore a best way forward on roadworks management.
- Members noted that the protocols last established in 2015 were being reviewed. It was noted that this nine-year gap was quite a long time to have gone without a review – would more periodic reviews be built in? Officers agreed that this needed to take place as aged protocols did not provide the direction needed by all parties. So regular reviews would be built into the process.
- Members expressed upon how stark congestion issues in the region were becoming. With car ownership having risen 16% in the past ten years and continuing to rise, a third of the GM road network was now reaching a saturation point. However, it was noted that in school holiday periods when traffic decreased by 10%, there was a 25% improvement on congestion levels. Therefore, there was hope that a corresponding overall reduction of 10% of traffic currently on the roads, this could have a marked positive impact on the road network.
- Dame Sarah Storey commented that it was important for TfGM and council officers to lead by example. With issues cited around works vehicles from both sometimes found to be parking in disabled spaces, cycle lanes and blocking footways. To up demands on utility companies, it was also important to ensure that public service vehicles were setting the appropriate standard.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the contents of the report be noted.

2. That a review of the GM Highways Protocols as identified at Section 3.6 be endorsed.
3. That it be noted that the draft Local Transport Plan, due to be published in 2025, will build on the GM Streets for All approach, requiring change in how we plan, configure and manage our Highway Network to encourage, and provide for, more people to travel by sustainable modes - walking, wheel, cycling and bus, in line with our Transport Vision and Right Mix ambition.
4. That consideration be given to a session between Bee Network Committee members and utility company representatives to establish a best way forward on highways works.

BNC/46/24 GM Reported Road Casualties 2023 & Road Safety Update

Peter Boulton (Network Director Highways, TfGM) presented a report that provided an annual update on Greater Manchester (GM) road casualty figures for 2023 and an update on GM wide road safety initiatives and other road safety related developments supported by the Safer Roads Greater Manchester Partnership.

The road casualty figures would be used to measure progress towards the Vision Zero ambition in GM for 2040 along with an update on GM wide road safety initiatives.

In 2023 799 people had been killed or seriously injured on the roads in GM – a 6.2% reduction on the figures seen in 2022. Of the 799 figure – 45 of these resulted in fatalities – a reduction of 29.7% on 2022. Whilst these figures were going in the right direction and GM fared well statistically compared to the Great British average, it still remained an upsettingly high number – as each of these incidents had significant impacts upon people and their families.

Initiatives held with partners such as 'Safe Drive, Stay Alive' led by GMFRS were highlighted – as were publicity campaigns aimed around tackling the 'fatal 4' (mobile phone usage; seat belts; drink & drug driving; and speed).

An update was also provided on road safety cameras, with progress on the projects to upgrade safety camera housings and spot speed replacements on average speed

routes across the region. It was also highlighted that a road safety specialist had been hired to specifically review the current criteria for road safety camera installation. A draft of the revised criteria was now in place and managed by a working group. It was hoped that once approved, the criteria could be in place from early 2025 as part of the Vision Zero Action Plan – this criteria would be brought to the Committee for review in spring 2025.

Comments and Questions

- Members welcomed the revising of criteria for road safety cameras, as petitioning had been taking place on numerous hotspots for many years that did not currently meet the very high bar of the current criteria. Members recalled that the previous government were being written to on revised criteria and sought assurance that the newly installed government would also be written to on this as soon as possible. The Chair agreed that this should take place to reiterate GM's position and outline some of the actions being taken.
- Members sought a further update on the enforcement of 20mph speed limit zones. It was confirmed that GMP could enforce on these routes. However, priority was given to high-risk routes as dictated by intelligence and analysis data. With 20mph zones often being in quieter parts of towns, these were often lower priority routes for enforcement. Where multiple complaints were raised and issues highlighted, enforcement would absolutely take place within 20mph zones.
- Members welcomed the reductions in deaths on the roads seen, but noted that currently the region was not on course to meet its vision zero targets – what further could be done to get this on track? It was advised that the implementation of recommendations within the Vision Zero Strategy was crucial to getting this figure down.
- Discussion took place around the usage of dash cam footage following accidents and Operation Snap – where footage could be submitted to the police by the public. It was suggested that the government could be petitioned around new cars having dash cams installed as standard.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the contents of the report be noted.

BNC/47/24 Vision Zero Strategy & Action Plan

Peter Boulton (Network Director Highways, TfGM) introduced a report that shared the final Vision Zero Strategy and Action Plan for Greater Manchester (GM) and provided an overview of GM wide road safety initiatives, which formed part of the Action Plan. The importance of the Strategy was highlighted. This provided a vial opportunity to make fundamental changes to driving safety in GM.

The item opened with the showing of a video produced as part of road safety week. The video highlighted the impact of dangerous driving through interviews with the family of Frankie Jules-Hough, who together with her unborn daughter was killed in an incident on the M66 where the perpetrator had been found to be driving at speeds of over 120mph whilst filming his actions on a mobile phone. Thanks and condolences were expressed to the family of Frankie for their bravery in engaging with this project.

Dame Sarah Storey reflected on her work on the Strategy. The document provided a vision for how to tackle the fundamental issues that led to the sort of behaviour that resulted in the death of Frankie and many others. The Strategy had been created with the input of a wide range of stakeholders and an action plan was in place to ensure that this collaborative working continued and was further enhanced.

Chief Fire Officer Dave Russel (GMFRS) advised that he had recently taken over as the Chair of the Vision Zero Strategic Steering Group and expressed his thanks to TfGM officers for the fantastic work that had gone into the production of the Strategy and the supporting action plan. GMFRS would give its absolute commitment to the delivery of this, as the service was now in a position where it attended more road traffic accidents (RTAs) than it did fires (around 2000 RTAs per year).

Comments and Questions

- Members stated that to provide as much support as they could to this – local authorities would need access to the necessary resources. Not just monetarily but also in terms of the controls which councils could apply. An example was cited on dangerous parking incidents where no real enforcement could be

applied due to a lack of traffic regulation order powers. It was stated that Vision Zero itself was now fully funded, and that work would have to take place to identify the further funding streams required to provide additional support. It was suggested that Vision Zero requirements could be fed into conversations around CRSTS funding streams.

- Members noted that previously councils had access to larger road safety teams that had now largely been decimated, and that consideration would need to be given around the joining up of resources.
- Members stated that there needed to be an increase in coordinated campaigning to make the concept of speeding more socially unacceptable – similar to how the perceptions of drink driving have changed over time.
- Members expressed thanks to all first responders who handled road traffic accidents, and the amazing levels of dedication they had to what was an extremely emotionally demanding role.

Discussion took place around writing to government on issues relating to road safety raised throughout the three items considered so far at the meeting. It was agreed that a programme of interventions would be developed, and that these would be provided to the Committee for endorsement before publication. It was agreed that the first of these following the adoption of the Vision Zero Strategy would be the concerns previously raised around the need to change the existing criteria for road safety cameras.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the contents of the report be noted.
2. That the final Vision Zero Strategy and Action Plan and the formal adoption of a Vision Zero ambition for GM, where no one will suffer death or life changing injuries on our roads be endorsed by the Committee.
3. That there be commitment to a programme of interventions in the form of regular written submissions to government following the formal adoption of the Vision Zero Strategy.
4. That endorsement will be sought directly from the Committee before the sending of each written submission.

5. That the first of these submissions will focus on petitioning government for a change to existing speed camera criteria.
6. That the thanks of the Committee be recorded to the family of Frankie Jules-Hough for their bravery and support on the Vision Zero Strategy.
7. That thanks be recorded to all first responders at road traffic accidents for their admirable dedication to what was an extremely emotionally demanding job.

BNC/48/24 Transport Infrastructure Pipeline

Chris Barnes (Network Director Infrastructure, TfGM) presented an update on progress delivering a pipeline of transport infrastructure improvements to support the operation of the Bee Network. The report made a number of recommendations for members to support the continued development and delivery of the pipeline programme.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the current position, recent progress and key milestones on the transport infrastructure pipeline be noted.
2. That the drawdown of CRSTS funding and associated scheme progression be approved as follows:
 - Improving Journeys: £1.0m to include:
 - Rochdale-Oldham-Ashton QBT (Tameside elements): £0.4m
 - Early Interventions CCTV / ATCs: £0.4m and Full Business Case;
 - Ashton – Stockport QBT: £0.2m;
 - Development of Long-Term Rapid Transit Options – Transit-Oriented Development at Bury Interchange: £1.55m; and
 - Bury Radcliffe Central Phase 1 MCF scheme: £0.65m.

BNC/49/24 Date of the Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Bee Network Committee would take place on Thursday 12th December 2024.