

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY
HELD ON MONDAY, 7TH OCTOBER, 2019**

PRESENT:

Bolton	Councillor David Greenhalgh
Bury	Councilor David Jones
Manchester	Councillor Sue Murphy
Oldham	Councillor Sean Fielding
Rochdale	Councillor Sara Rowbotham
Salford	Councillor John Merry
Stockport	Councillor Elise Wilson
Tameside	Councillor Brenda Warrington (In the Chair)
Trafford	Councillor Andrew Western
Wigan	Councillor David Molyneux

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

GMCA – Chief Executive	Eamonn Boylan
GMCA - Deputy Chief Executive	Andrew Lightfoot
GMCA – Monitoring Officer	Liz Treacy
GMCA – Treasurer	Richard Paver
Bolton	Tony Oakman
Oldham	Carolyn Wilkins
Manchester	Joanne Roney
Rochdale	Steve Rumbelow
Stockport	Pam Smith
Tameside	Jayne Traverse
Trafford	Richard Roe
Office of the GM Mayor	Kevin Lee
GMCA	Julie Connor
GMCA	Sylvia Welsh

GMCA/209/19

APOLOGIES

That apologies for absence were received and noted from GM Mayor Andy Burnham, Deputy Mayor Bev Hughes, Deputy Mayor Councillor Richard Leese (Councillor Sue Murphy attending), City Mayor Paul Dennett (Councillor John Merry attending) and Councillor Allen Brett (Councillor Sara Rowbotham attending).

BOLTON
BURY

MANCHESTER
OLDHAM

ROCHDALE
SALFORD

STOCKPORT
TAMESIDE

TRAFFORD
WIGAN

GMCA/210/19

CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS

There were no Chairs announcements or items of urgent business

GMCA/211/19

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

That it be noted that there were no declarations of interest in any item for discussion at the meeting.

GMCA/212/19

BUS REFORM - AUDIT AND CONSULTATION

In introducing the report the Chair of the meeting, Councillor Brenda Warrington, reminded the meeting that bus reform was high on the national political agenda and was currently prominent in the news. GM was at the forefront of delivery change and continued to lead the way nationally. The GMCA will consider the next stage in GM' Bus Reform journey. She went on to make the following comments:

Buses play a pivotal role in delivering GM's 'Our Network' ambition to create an integrated modern and accessible public transport system for Greater Manchester. One which brings together different modes of transport into a joined up easy to use system with seamless connections, simple ticketing and an aspiration for capped fares.

The aim of 'Our Network' was to create a public transport system that supports GM's aspiration to be one of the best places to grow up, get on and grow old. A system which:

- provided people with the option of leaving the car at home
 - helps reduce harmful emissions to create cleaner greener neighbourhoods
 - supports residents to get where and when they need to be, including schools and other places of education, access to work and training, culture and leisure opportunities and important services such as health care
- Upon approval of the report GM intended to launch the first ever national public consultation seeking the views of the community on the proposal to introduce bus franchising in GM.

It was important to ensure that every avenue was exploited to engage with the community and organisations of GM, providing the opportunity to participate in the reform of GM's bus market.

Eamonn Boylan, Chief Executive Officer, GMCA & TFGM, introduced the report and explained the recommendation to the GMCA was seeking approval to proceed to the next stage in the consideration of a proposed franchising scheme, following on from the work undertaken in connection with bus reform. The proposed recommendations and associated next steps in accordance with the Transport Act 2000 (as amended by Bus Services Act 2017) ("the Act") were also set out in the report.

The meeting was made aware that the reference to paragraph 6.16 in recommendation 9 should reference paragraph 7.16 and that it was proposed to add an additional recommendation seeking approval to delegate authority to the Chief Executive, GMCA & TfGM to make any final minor amendments to the Proposed Franchising Scheme and the Notice of the Proposed Scheme appended to the report, prior to publication.

The following comments were made by members in discussion:

Members acknowledged the long term work on bus reform and welcomed the reference in the report to additional Government funding. It was felt important to acknowledge that GM needed a transport system which was fit for purpose and was in receipt of Government funding comparable to the funding received for the London transport system.

Attention was also drawn to the precept levy of up to £18.20 for a Band D property transitioning over a number of years, recognising that over 80% of properties within GM were beneath Band D in their council tax level and therefore the costs to residents would be for the most part actually lower.

Bus reform was a significant step towards transforming public transport across GM. There was now an opportunity presented to move towards being able to make the changes required. Resident participation in the 12 week consultation was important, in particular, the proposals to reach those residents who were hard to reach across all demographics in GM, especially those who may not have access to the internet was welcomed. Consultation was important to ensure and inform decisions, with all residents encouraged to participate.

The availability of all relevant information was stressed, given there was a lot of incorrect information available regarding the cost of franchising and lack of benefits to residents. The current bus system was felt to be fractured and chaotic and the franchising system had the ability to provide a degree of stability and order and provide a service which enabled residents to plan journeys.

Members also welcomed the positive comments and commitments from the Prime Minister around funding, specifically for buses and public transport generally for GM and the North. Funding from Government would have a significant impact on what could be achieved.

The good connectivity of the London transport system was referenced, which was understood to be well funded and reliable and consistent. GM should be on a par with London. Bus reform provided an opportunity to create an affordable, well connected public transport system. The Prime Minister, as a previous Mayor of London, does understand the importance of a well connected affordable transport system.

Politicians struggled to hold operators to account for the poor service provision within the current system, with residents feeling they have less opportunity for recourse.

The current public transport system does not provide residents with the right options to get where they need to go with insufficient options to prevent the use of cars.

Bus reform was a major driver for the Devolution Agreement, with the public being fully supportive of the approach. The proposed consultation provided residents with the

opportunity to influence the next steps of the process to help create a better transport system.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the contents of the report be received and noted.
2. That the contents of the report from the independent auditor dated 26th September which was prepared in accordance with section 123D of the Act be noted.
3. That it be noted that the independent auditor's report was an opinion on the assessment of a proposed franchising scheme previously reviewed by Members in June 2019.
4. That the independent auditor's report and the assessment supplied to the independent auditor be approved for publication.
5. That it be noted that minor typographical amendments will be attached to the assessment.
6. That the amended Proposed Franchising Scheme, as set out in Appendix 1.2, be approved.
7. That the preferred funding scenario for the proposed franchising scheme be approved.
8. That the mitigating responses to a downside risk scenario, as set out in Section 6, be noted.
9. That it be agreed to proceed with the proposed franchising scheme by undertaking a consultation in accordance with section 123E of the Act, which would commence on 14 October 2019 and end on 8 January 2020, and to agree the funding for the consultation as set out in paragraph 7.16 of this report.
10. That the publication of a notice of the proposed scheme, in accordance with section 123E(2)(d) of the Act, be approved.
11. That TfGM be instructed to carry out all tasks necessary to carry out that consultation on its behalf.
12. That authority be delegated to the Chief Executive, GMCA & TfGM to make any final minor amendments to the Proposed Franchising Scheme and the Notice of the Proposed Scheme appended to the report, prior to publication.
13. That it be noted that a further report will be submitted to the GMCA on the outcome of the consultation.