

**MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE GREATER MANCHESTER TRANSPORT COMMITTEE
HELD ON FRIDAY 14 AUGUST VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS**

PRESENT:

Councillor Mark Aldred (in the Chair)	Wigan Council
Councillor Richard Gold	Bury Council
Councillor Stuart Haslam	Bolton Council
Councillor John Leech	Manchester City Council
Councillor Naeem Hassan	Manchester City Council
Councillor Shah Wazir	Rochdale Council
Councillor Phil Burke	Rochdale Council
Councillor David Meller	Stockport MBC
Councillor Doreen Dickinson	Tameside MBC
Councillor Warren Bray	Tameside MBC
Councillor Peter Robinson	Tameside MBC
Councillor Nathan Evans	Trafford Council
Councillor Steve Adshead	Trafford Council
Councillor Joanne Marshall	Wigan Council

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Eamonn Boylan	Chief Executive, GMCA & TfGM
Bob Morris	Chief Operating Officer, TfGM
Alison Chew	Interim Head of Bus Services, TfGM
Kate Brown	Director of Corporate Affairs, TfGM
Simon Elliott	Head of Rail Programme, TfGM
James Baldwin	Senior Policy Officer, TfGM
Gwynne Williams	Deputy Monitoring Officer, GMCA
Nicola Ward	Governance Officer, GMCA

GMTC 56/20 APOLOGIES

Resolved /-

That apologies be noted and received from Councillor Howard Sykes (Councillor Angie Clark substituting), Councillor Roger Jones, Councillor Angeliki Stogia, Councillor Atteque Ur-Rehman and Councillor Sean Fielding.

GMTC 57/20 CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS

Resolved /-

That there were no Chair's announcements or urgent business.

GMTC 58/20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Resolved /-

That it be noted that Councillor Phil Burke declared a personal interest in relation to item 6, Transport Network Performance as an employee of Metrolink.

GMTC 59/20 MINUTES OF THE GM TRANSPORT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 10 JULY 2020

Resolved /-

1. That the minutes of the meeting held 10 July 2020 be approved.
2. That an update on Road Safety Schemes be considered at a future meeting of the GMTC.

GMTC 60/20 GOVERNANCE REPORT

Gwynne Williams, Deputy Monitoring Officer GMCA introduced a report which gave Members the opportunity to review the governance arrangements of the Greater Manchester Transport Committee to ensure they could most effectively undertake their role and functions as set out in the Committee's Terms of Reference.

Members sought clarification as to whether they would be able to substitute for one another across sub committees, officers confirmed that the appointed substitutes would be asked to attend if a Member of the sub-committee was not available.

Resolved /-

1. That it be agreed to establish two sub committees to specifically look at Bus Services and Metrolink & Rail Services.
2. That Chairs for the sub committees be appointed as follows –
 - Bus Services – Cllr Roger Jones
 - Metrolink & Rail Services – Cllr Doreen Dickinson
3. That the following Members be appointed to each of the Sub Committees.

Bus Services

Councillor Roger Jones
Councillor Angeliki Stogia
Councillor Mark Aldred
Councillor Sean Fielding
Councillor Warren Bray
Councillor Phil Burke
Councillor David Mellor
Councillor Barry Warner

Councillor John Leech
Councillor Nathan Evans
Councillor Roy Walker

Metrolink & Rail Services

Councillor Peter Robinson
Councillor Richard Gold
Councillor Joanne Marshall
Councillor Atteque UrRehman
Councillor Dzidra Noor
Councillor Steve Adshead
Councillor Shah Wazir
Councillor Naeem Hassan
Councillor Howard Sykes
Councillor Doreen Dickinson
Councillor Stuart Haslam

GMTC 61/20 TRANSPORT NETWORK PERFORMANCE UPDATE

Bob Morris, Chief Operating Officer, TfGM took Members through a report which provided an overview of Transport Network Performance in Greater Manchester for July 2020 during the Coronavirus pandemic.

Regarding Metrolink, Government had recently confirmed funding up until 26 October which totalled £1.6m weekly and would allow the continuation of the current service pattern. Members thanked those officers who had successfully negotiated with Government for this further funding. However, concern was raised as to the illustrated spike in anti-social behaviour on Metrolink services in May 2020, officers confirmed that this was attributed to the key performance indicator being measured against the number of journeys, so as patronage levels fell but incidents of ASB remained the same, this looked like a spike but actually was nothing significant. Members further asked whether incidents of ASB could be defined clearly by location within future reports, so that potential hotspots could be identified.

It had been a steady period for rail services, however there had been a recent announcement from Northern regarding the temporary removal of the Rose Hill – Piccadilly service. TfGM had opposed this removal, and had continued to work with Northern to ensure alternative provision was available for passengers. In response to this, Northern explained the reasons for the temporary removal of this service between 14 September and 14 December, including a number of staff remaining shielding, a delayed driver training programme, significantly low patronage compared to other routes and the potential other transport links within this area. It was confirmed that if possible, the service would be reinstated before December, and that specific complaints would be dealt with as a matter of priority. Members expressed their strong dissatisfaction with the removal of this service, due to the significant impact on passengers. It was reported that TfGM had put a number of options to Northern, however, each option was not deemed possible. Therefore, it was suggested that the GMTC write to the Rail Minister to express their concerns with this proposal and Northern's overall communication with the relevant stakeholders. Members reminded the Committee that Northern was now a nationalised service, and therefore the Rail Minister needed to address this inequality for the Rose Hill/Marple area

that also impacted the whole of Greater Manchester.

Members added that the Rose Hill service has often been unfairly impacted by Northern, and that passenger numbers were substantive. Rose Hill station serves both Marple Hall High School and Marple Sixth Form and the current proposals for rail replacement services would not allow sufficient time for journeys to school and the impact of congestion on the local road work in September. Current timetables allow 10 minutes, whereas commercial services allow for 30 minutes. There was a strong local feeling against this decision, with a petition of over 5000 signatures to evidence the views of residents. Members felt that Marple already suffered from a poor local transport offer, and had recently also had bus services removed. Northern reported that there had only been a 4% increase in passenger numbers from Rose Hill in comparison to a 77% increase from Marple, and therefore capacity has been allocated where it was needed most.

Rail operators reported that there had been a slight decline in face covering compliance during the recent hot weather, but that there were a number of communications campaigns running to encourage and advise of their use, with the possibility of a fine for non-compliance. Members asked whether there were figures available in relation to the number of fines issued for non-compliance, officers confirmed that this specific data was not currently available, but that an educate and persuade approach had been used over enforcement in most instances. Members were concerned that some members of the public were aware of the guidelines but choosing not to comply, and therefore a stronger enforcement approach should be pursued.

In relation to rail stations, 25 lifts across Greater Manchester were now operational when ticket offices were closed, resulting in improved access levels for passengers with mobility issues. Members welcomed this improvement.

Northern confirmed that there would be an introduction of new trains before the end of the year on south east routes in Greater Manchester, which would also require some additional training.

In relation to bus services, patronage had continued to increase across all operators and the Bus Priority Programme early findings report had been submitted to DfT in relation to Oxford Road Scheme and Vantage Service on Leigh Guided Busway. Furthermore, bus stations and interchanges had returned to normal opening levels.

Highways levels had now reached 85% of normal levels. Members asked how many of these journeys could be attributed to people moving from public transport to their cars, as some routes seemed to be busier than they were pre-covid. Officers confirmed that the regional centre trips were on a par with other GM areas, however future travel surveys would be the only way to determine how many of those would have previously been trips made on the public transport network. Further to this, Members asked whether there would be a tipping point to congestion levels being reached. Officers confirmed that each road has an individual tipping point, and that some roads were already reaching levels of congestion.

Members questioned as to how often public transport units were cleaned, officers confirmed that cleaning regimes had been increased across all modes, with regular deep cleans and fogging having been introduced.

In relation to communications, Members were pleased to see clear messages regarding the return to use of public transport. However, urged that capacity is made available for the envisaged

increase in passengers in September once schools return. Officers confirmed that Metrolink was now operating at its maximum capacity, but that bus and rail were stepping up in increments to reach full capacity as soon as possible.

Resolved /-

1. That the report be noted.
2. That it be noted that funding for Metrolink for the period of 4 August – 26 October had been received by TfGM.
3. That it be noted that TfGM had objected to the temporary removal of rail services to Rose Hill between 14 September and 14 December 2020, and were working with Northern to ensure alternative services would be provided.
4. That a breakdown of the location of anti-social behaviour incidents on Metrolink be brought to a future meeting of GMTC.
5. That it be noted that the 85% current level on the highways are cross GM but that this does not indicate that congestion levels have been reached as each road has its own tipping point.
6. That it be noted that in relation to ensuring the highest level of face covering compliance, personal accountability was also vital to support current communications and enforcement activity.
7. That the GM Transport Committee write to the Rail Minister to urge for the re-instatement of the rail service to Rose Hill between September-December.
8. That it be noted that Northern would review the timings of the rail replacement timetable for Rose Hill/Marple – Romiley and liaise directly with Councillor Clarke.

GMTC 62/20 SCHOOL TRANSPORT: PREPARATIONS FOR SEPTEMBER

Alison Chew, Head of Bus Services, TfGM took Members through a report which provided an update on the approach to planning for the return of pupils to schools in September and the wider transport implications.

Following the publication of the report, further guidelines had been issued by Government, including confirmation of a £40m funding package for additional transport capacity to be provided for schools during the first term of 2020/21. Greater Manchester has been allocated £2.25m of this fund which would be fully auditable to DfT.

There had been further guidance published by DfE on 11 August which covered transport to places of education. It particularly focussed on key issues including managing public transport demand, promoting active travel, engaging with employers, staggered start and finish times, providing dedicated transport to schools and places of education, social distancing, appropriate ventilation and face coverings for over 11's, and how to respond to any case of infection.

Officers across GM had recently met and TfGM had provided an update on this guidance. Work was ongoing with operators regarding potential pressures on network, and additional available capacity and officers were now analysing the best places for this funding to be used to support pupils in returning to school in liaison with Local Authorities.

A back to school communication campaign had also been launched this week, which promoted advice within this guidance to parents, pupils and general members of the public.

Members asked whether there was a model DfT survey to parents across GM to ensure consistency, officers agreed to look into this, liaise with Local Authority leads, and report directly back to the Committee.

In relation to the available funding to support additional school services, Members asked whether it could be applied to train services for pupils who use this mode. Officers agreed to check this and also review rail services particularly to Knutsford school and report back to Cllr Adshead.

In respect of bus services, Members asked whether this funding would allow for pre-covid levels of patronage. Officers confirmed there would be full capacity available on school services, but that there was no available funding to increase capacity on the commercial network.

Resolved /-

1. That the report be noted.
2. That TfGM endeavour to ensure that the DfT parents' survey in relation to schools transport be coordinated across GM, and report back to the GMTC.
3. That details as to how available Government funding for additional school services is also be applied to rail be reported direct back to Councillor Adshead, specifically in relation to school travel to Knutsford.
4. That it be noted that Northern would share Government's 'Guidance for Parents' in relation to social distancing once schools re-open with Members of the GMTC.

GMTC 63/20 GM TRANSPORT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

Gwynne Williams, Deputy Monitoring Officer for the GMCA took Members through the draft Work Programme for the Greater Manchester Transport Committee and the two newly constituted sub committees.

Resolved /-

1. That the Work Programme be noted.
2. That there be an update on Road Safety Schemes be provided at a future meeting.