

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
GREATER MANCHESTER TRANSPORT COMMITTEE
HELD ON FRIDAY 20 AUGUST 2021 AT MANCHESTER TOWN HALL**

PRESENT:

Councillor Mark Aldred (in the Chair)	Wigan Council
Councillor Kevin Peel	Bury Council
Councillor Naeem Hassan	Manchester City Council
Councillor John Leech	Manchester City Council
Councillor Emma Taylor	Manchester City Council
Councillor Howard Sykes	Oldham Council
Councillor Norman Briggs	Oldham Council
Councillor Phil Burke	Rochdale MBC
Councillor Shah Wazir	Rochdale Council
Councillor Warren Bray	Tameside MBC
Councillor Barry Warner	Salford Council
Councillor Roger Jones	Salford Council
Councillor Tom McGee	Stockport MBC
Councillor Steve Adshead	Trafford Council
Councillor Paul Prescott	Wigan Council

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Peter Boulton	TfGM
Nicola Kane	TfGM
Elsie Wraighte	TfGM
Richard Nickson	TfGM
Megan Black	TfGM
Martin Key	TfGM
Gwynne Williams	Deputy Monitoring Officer, GMCA
Chris Boardman	Transport Commissioner
Eve Holt	GM Moving
Ian Tierney	Cycling Projects
Nicola Ward	Senior Governance Officer, GMCA

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillor Susan Emmott	Rochdale Council
Councillor Barrie Holland	Tameside Council
Owain Roberts	Northern
Daniel Coles	Network Rail

GMTC 33/21 APOLOGIES

That apologies be received and noted from Councillors Mohammed Ayub, Stuart Haslam, Jackie Harris, Doreen Dickinson, Nathan Evans, Joanne Marshall, Andrew Western, David Meller, the GM Mayor Andy Burnham, Bob Morris, Chief Operating Officer TfGM and Eamonn Boylan, Chief Executive Officer GMCA and TfGM.

GMTC 34/21 CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS

Resolved /-

1. That it be noted that Councillor Naeem Hassan be appointed to the GMATL Board.
2. That thanks be expressed to operators in attendance at the meeting and those observing through the livestream.

GMTC 35/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Resolved /-

That it be noted that Councillor Phil Burke declared a personal interest in relation to item 10, Transport Network Performance.

GMTC 36/21 MINUTES OF THE GM TRANSPORT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 18 JUNE 2021

Resolved /-

That the minutes of the GM Transport Committee meeting held 18 June 2021 be approved as a correct record.

GMTC 37/21 MINUTES OF THE GM TRANSPORT COMMITTEE SUB COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Resolved /-

That the minutes of the GMTC Sub Committees as below be noted.

- Metrolink & Rail Sub Committee – 16 July 2021
- Bus Services Sub Committee – 6 August 2021

GMTC 38/21 INTRODUCTION FROM THE GM TRANSPORT COMMISSIONER

Chris Boardman, explained to the Committee that his role had been expanded and he was now the Transport Commissioner for Greater Manchester, with three key elements – to implement the Bee Network, to liaise with Local Authorities and to liaise with Central Government. The Bee Network Board had also been established to oversee the delivery of the Bee Network on a weekly basis. It was recognised that the ambitions for transport in Greater Manchester were big and challenging, however they were vital to ensure that the wider ambitions of the Greater Manchester Strategy were to be achieved. The Bee Network aspired to provide an integrated, affordable, reliable and stable public transport network that people actively chose to use because it also felt safe and could provide comparable journey times to that of using a car.

The Transport Commissioner would be producing a report for the GM Mayor and Leaders to refine the definition of the Bee Network, identify where prioritisation could enable the greatest efficiency and determine what other requirements there would be to ensure success of the network. It was clear that Greater Manchester had the ability to lead the country on the transport agenda, however it would take some courageous decisions to move away from the current status quo and enable significant change.

Members were supportive of the ambitions of the Transport Commissioner but were mindful of the challenges that could continue to halt progress on this agenda. For example, recent reports had shown that although car usage was almost back at pre-covid levels, the return to public transport was still significantly behind. With more cars on the roads, and an increase in home deliveries, members were concerned that a congestion crisis would soon be reached. The Transport Commissioner recognised this approaching crisis and reported that there were now 1.7 billion extra journeys on small roads across GM resulting in a saturation of residential areas. Not making any change would result in no change to this situation, however it was impossible to penalise people without a suitable alternative. Action was also critical to support GM in reducing its carbon emissions, as currently 30% were produced by the transport sector.

Members were also fully supportive of a modal shift across GM but were concerned that the criteria for infrastructure schemes resulted in a barrier for this change. The Transport Commissioner reported that more often political will resulted in a blockage for the delivery of new infrastructure but was pleased to report that with the ability to better align Government funding, the programme would be able to be accelerated at pace. Furthermore, there had been significant work undertaken to ensure GM schemes met the required standards, and it was also positive to see that Government had now adopted the same standards which would result in shared criteria for infrastructure improvements going forward. Officers added that previously there had been significant challenge created by the required pre-scheme assessments for DfT, however they had now recognised the value of broadening the scope of benefits which has seen some reduction in assessment requirements but some increase in monitoring and evaluation.

In relation to funding, Members queried as to whether there had been any revenue expenditure included in recently approved capital schemes, as previously this had resulted in additional costings to Local Authorities and therefore schemes with minimal maintenance were much more welcomed. The Transport Commissioner explained how there was a commitment to maintenance included within each bid, including cleaning and re-painting costs, however it was possible that these costs could be reduced if Local Authorities jointly procured such services. Officers also added that sophisticated design that looks to segregate traffic modes reduced wear to road markings as cars were retained within their specific area. With more schemes akin to these, the overall maintenance costs to Local Authorities could potentially reduce, however officers urged that Local Authorities review the priorities of each winter maintenance scheme to determine whether they were inline with their active travel/public transport ambitions.

Members felt that often developing transport infrastructure in the outer lying areas of Greater Manchester proved especially challenging, however made a case to officers that these areas were not forgotten within the Bee Network proposals. It was confirmed that it was very much the intention to ensure that every resident of GM had access to a public transport service that met all the aspirations of the Bee Network and that the whole of the sub region moved forward together in this journey.

In relation to the increase of trips made by car, Members reported that there were often

external influences that resulted in cars being the only option available to people, including the current school admissions policy where frequently families were required to get children to different schools within a small time window, resulting in the need to drive and contribute further to traffic congestion around schools. The Transport Commissioner recognised the wider context around these initially transport related objectives and the need to bring other policies inline.

Resolved /-

That the presentation from the GM Transport Commissioner be noted.

GMTC 39/21 STREETS FOR ALL

Nicola Kane, Head of Strategic Planning, Insight and Innovation TfGM took Members through a report which provided an overview of the Streets for All Strategy, which formed a sub-strategy to the Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040. Its focus was as to how to create inclusive and people friendly streets that also created a better environment for walking and cycling. It was noted that through the lockdown period people has become more aware of their local areas and there had been an increase in the use of local facilities including parks, cycle paths, local shops and the strategy's vision was to encourage the continuation of these behaviours through ensuring areas were welcoming, safe and clean.

Members recognised that the ethos of the Streets for All approach had been an evolution that Greater Manchester had already been supporting over recent years, however on of the most significant barriers to people enjoying the offer within the city centre was the antisocial behaviour still experienced on some public transport. Officers reported that the City Centre Transport Strategy for Manchester and Salford looked to implement a number of streets for all schemes across the city centre with a specific focus on Piccadilly Gardens as an area with a strong place function and a key transport hub. The strategy encompassed a broader sense of personal safety, that not only included road safety interventions.

Members of the Committee reported that in some cases proposals for Streets for All schemes had proven divisive amongst communities and expressed their understanding that ensuring balance within shared spaces could prove difficult as each stakeholder often had different priorities. Officers replied that as most people were multi-modal, the Streets for All Strategy tried to bring them together to look at shared priorities. It was clear that a shared vision was imperative that looked to mitigate any negative impacts to any particular mode of travel. Members added that such conversations could be quite politically challenging as there were often quite opposing views. It was felt that further demonstration of the benefits from those schemes already delivered would help residents to see the potential benefits in other areas. Schemes should also be more connected and seen as part of a wider programme to enable greater ambitions to be reached. It was reported that often the frustration of residents in relation to such schemes was as a result of short timescales, lack of consultation and lack of awareness of the wider benefits of the proposed interventions. Officers recognised this and hoped that the work to develop ten Local Improvement Plans for GM as part of the 5 Year Transport Delivery Plan had already begun to work with communities to set out where improvements could and should be made to achieve local ambitions for clean, safe and welcoming streets.

Members urged that when posing the questions to residents, that they were approached in a creative way rather than a traditional planning consultation approach that could often be set in tone that looked for the issues rather than highlighting the potential benefits from

solutions. The support of Members was welcomed in order to have the widest level of engagement and officers recognised the need for a more 'benefits led' approach to future consultations. A shared narrative across all elements of each Local Implementation Plan was also needed to ensure that an active neighbourhood or Streets for All scheme was not seen in isolation. This proved an ideal opportunity for GM to take a different approach, to work cross boundary and remove fragmentations.

In relation to two recent schemes in Rochdale, Members reported that there had been some issues raised as parking spaces had been reduced. It was felt that there should be equal provision for all modes and an awareness that although there was great ambition for active travel, that cars would remain until a more reliable network was on offer and therefore removing provisions for car drivers would currently result in further frustrations. However, Members also recognised that every significant transport improvement to date had required courage to implement and political strength to support. Schemes such as the Guided Busway received a high number of complaints initially yet was now surpassing all expectations in relation to patronage levels and was seen as a major asset to the public transport network in GM.

Members asked for further clarity as to a reference in the report to 'Quality Bus Transit' and were informed that this was in relation to improving public transport connectivity, particularly those orbital routes, joining town centres. Providing an uplift in bus provision driven by the Streets for All ambitions and a shared set of objectives that also support the overall objectives of bus reform. Members asked for consideration to be given to an expansion of the guided busway, enabling its success to be shared with other areas of GM.

There was a clear need for more education in relation to the Streets for All approach that would inform the future generations of the benefits of creating such spaces. Members asked whether there were any initiatives with local schools in areas where consultations were being undertaken to share the potential benefits with the children who live there. Unless there was a cultural shift, the Committee were concerned that Transport would continue to be a significant issue for future generations.

Resolved /-

1. That the GM Streets for All approach and principles that will underpin the Streets for All Strategy, as set out in the report, be noted.
2. That the approach be endorsed prior to planned approval of the Streets for All Strategy by GMCA in September.

GMTC 40/21 WALKING AND CYCLING UPDATE

Richard Nickson, Programme Director Cycling and Walking, TfGM introduced a report which provided an update on GM walking and cycling activities over the last 6 months and set out key actions up to December 2021. There had been significant progress over the last 18 months on a pipeline of infrastructure schemes and a series of Made to Move priorities with thanks to the efforts of Local Authority and TfGM officers. As a result, there had now been £90m of schemes approved of the £160m budget, and a further £20m received from Government following three successful additional bids. Other highlights had included the provision of bikes to the TravelSafe team to allow wider access to the network and provision to key workers to ensure they were able to get to work during the pandemic. There had also been 37 grants awarded to communities to support walking and cycling

schemes. Key objectives for the forthcoming year included the delivery of 100km of the Bee Network, the launch of the Bike Hire Scheme in Manchester, Salford and Trafford in November 2021 and the continuation of the e-scooter trial in other areas of the conurbation. TfGM and colleagues from the Local Authorities had also been working on a Crossings Report to be presented to Government and a Road Danger Reduction Plan which had evidenced GM's approach to developing strategic policy whilst also delivering local initiatives to meet the shared Active Travel ambitions.

In relation to the Road Danger Reduction Plan, Members asked for clarification as to its publication date. Officers suggested that this report be brought to the GMTC in October, which would be further followed by a specific action plan.

Members were concerned that the deadlines for development funding and pipeline scheme preparedness was often very short and enforced by Central Government with little or no flexibility. It was therefore imperative that Local Authorities had the support to get schemes prepared for the arrival of any future development funding so that they would be ready to be delivered. Officers advised that regular information was shared across the GM Local Authorities to ensure that they are aware of what was being asked by Central Government, and why GM were required to take a particular approach. A set of FAQs had also been produced to assist with questions from local residents or support local consultation exercises. There was a wealth of additional information also available on the updated Active Travel website - <https://activetravel.tfgm.com/>

With respect to cultural change, officers reported that recent social media monitoring had enabled TfGM to identify a shift from people actively not accepting proposed schemes, to actively choosing to consider them in the future. This shift would be crucial in enabling a more active travel focussed approach to infrastructure development and other outputs.

Rochdale had been one of the areas where the e-scooter scheme had been piloted and there had been many positive outcomes realised. However there had also been some complaints in relation to their inappropriate use, and their use by young people without a provisional license. Members urged that the lessons learnt from the pilot ensured that both e-scooter drivers and other road users were kept safe and that operation practices were improved. Officers reported that the general perception of the pilots were positive, however there was a planned conversation with GMP's Chief Inspector regarding how to improve their safe use. One of the greatest challenges was in relation to private e-scooter use which was not overseen in the same way as the hire schemes, however they could be bought legally in the UK. It would be imperative to push back to Government on this legislation to remove the risk of e-scooters being used illegally in a public space and creating related anti-social behaviour issues.

Members were keen to see the introduction of the new GM Bike Hire scheme but were anxious that the failures of the previous scheme were not repeated. Officers advised that these newly procured bikes were significantly different in that they were fully smart and were fitted with GPS devices. They also had a double locking system that could only be completed in a docking station and therefore would not be able to be left in obscure locations across the city centre. They were hoped to be a key element of the Bee Network that could be rolled out across other areas of GM in time. Members suggested that electric bikes should be considered in some of the outer lying areas where routes were often of larger gradients.

In relation to road safety, Members reported that budget cuts to this agenda had been significant and therefore it still played a substantial barrier to active travel. As part of any

sustainable travel bid, Members urged that there be a road safety element to address this.

Resolved /-

1. That the progress that has taken place over the last 12 months against the 15 Made to Move steps be noted.
2. That the priorities that have been identified to take forward over the next 12 months be noted.
3. That the infrastructure, by Local Authorities that should be delivered by December 2021 be noted.
4. That the Road Danger Reduction Strategy be brought to the October meeting of the Committee for consideration by members.
5. That the data contained within the appendix table be re-issued to Members of the Committee.

GMTC 41/21 GM MOVING

Eve Holt, GM Moving introduced a report which reminded members of the Committee that they were all advocates for the ambition to ensure all residents of GM had active lives, however, to further this ambition active travel needed intention by design. It was clear that despite the well-known benefits of active travel, this question looked very different for different people at different times e.g., social and economic inclusion, mental health support and climate change improvements many of which could also be difficult to measure. However, it was now recognised that those who experienced barriers to active travel also experienced barriers to accessing all that GM had to offer. A bottom up, grass roots approach would be needed to ensure that all residents were engaged with this movement and that through local ambassadors and advocates it would be possible to see real cultural changes that could begin to close those inequalities gaps.

Members of the Committee were asked to offer their pro-active support in ensuring active travel remained on the agenda, that further work was undertaken to understand any barriers to access and that there remained a shared awareness that in order to truly be a Marmot City Region, then both universal and targeting interventions would need to be delivered.

Ian Tierney, Charity Director, Cycling Projects took Members through a presentation regarding the project's ambition and delivery. Greater Manchester was fortunate to have one inclusive cycling hub in each Local Authority, however there was room for further growth in that they were open on average 2 days per week. The pandemic had brought an opportunity to expand the offer wider than the hubs and the project had launched 'Bike Buddies' in order to support other disability services. Other Combined Authorities were delivering some innovative schemes including a bike loan scheme in the West Midlands and it was hoped that as the country came out of lockdown there would be an opportunity to raise the profile of the work of Cycling Projects and use the hubs as an inspiration to improve the GM offer.

Members urged that more work was undertaken with parents to promote active travel, not only to and from the school grounds but also to inspire their children to chose sustainable travel options. Officers agreed that this should be a key area of focus post pandemic, and

that further support on this agenda would be welcomed from the Committee.

In relation to Government's proposals to level up areas across the UK, members were keen for this to be understood as more than just from an economic perspective and that levelling up health inequalities should be one of the key objectives of the forthcoming White Paper. Funding criteria that was based on such determinants would also be welcomed to ensure that it was fully embedded into the post pandemic recovery phase. Officers agreed that now such data was available at a neighbourhood level, brave action based on this data was needed to ensure that the right interventions could be prioritised. It was hoped that one way this could be furthered would be by having GM Population Health as a key investor in the GM Moving initiative.

Resolved /-

1. That the contents of the report and the presentation by Cycling Projects be noted.
2. That it be agreed to report on increasing active travel amongst the over 50's and scheme to promote walking to school at future meetings of the Committee.
3. That the invitation for committee members to help shape future GM Moving priorities around active travel as part of the GM Moving Strategy Refresh be noted.
4. That it be noted that feedback is welcomed from members on opportunities and ways to help further grow the movement and the diversity of the movement and to usefully share the learnings to support other areas of work.

GMTC 42/21 ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING NETWORK

Megan Black, Head of Logistics & Environment, TfGM took the Committee through a report that gave Members the opportunity to endorse the Greater Manchester Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy, a sub-strategy of the Greater Manchester 2040 Transport Strategy. It was recognised that EV infrastructure could be a barrier to cultural change and therefore TfGM, in conjunction with each GM Local Authority had developed a programme of planned infrastructure growth to support the use of electric vehicles. The new website gave further details and could be used to support local consultations and engagement - <https://electrictravel.tfgm.com/>

Members of the Committee were keen to ensure that withing these infrastructure development proposals that the pedestrian remained the priority to allow them free movement across pavements etc. Concerns were raised specifically regarding high density terraced areas where road space was already at a premium and a parking space to charge your vehicle outside your property could not be guaranteed. To mitigate any impacts to local cohesion, Members suggested that the public charging infrastructure would need to be less expensive than charging at home, ensuring that chosen charging locations were sensible, flexible and proper use could be enforced. Officers confirmed that there was significant work being undertaken with Local Authorities to determine accessible points for terraced communities or other high density areas. This was ongoing in addition to the evolution of Electric Vehicle Car Clubs and the development of Community Charge Hubs, aspiring to offer a wide range of options to EV car users.

Further to this, Members felt that providing charging facilities at community facilities (ie. Leisure centres, council carparks) would be a contributing factor as to whether people

would choose to visit in the future. However, there were significant concerns as to how such facilities could be managed and their proper use enforced as this was likely to become a further cost pressure to Local Authorities.

In relation to the provision of EV charging points at fuel stations, Members felt that there should now be some legislative obligation to promote these more effectively, as most were unknown to the public, resulting in a false perception of the lack of local charging points. Any wider expansion should also be Government funded as part of their CO2 reduction aspirations, as Members felt that these additional costs should not ultimately fall to Local Authorities. Officers confirmed that this Strategy would enable a framework of charging points to be put in place once the required funding had been received and residents had the confidence to move to EV.

Members reported that there had been a recent planning application made for a depot for 650 vans in Kingsway Park which would be an ideal target market for EV, however investigations had highlighted that the local grid capacity would not be suitable to charge such a high volume of vehicles. Therefore, the energy infrastructure was creating another barrier to delivering such a change in the commercial sector. Officer informed the Committee that work was underway with Energy North West to increase their capacity through their next planning rounds as currently there were clearly limits to provision.

Resolved /-

1. That the Greater Manchester Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy be endorsed.
2. That it be noted that the programme of planned publicly funded additional Electric Vehicle Infrastructure is outlined at electrictravel.tfgm.com, a sub-site of TfGM.com.

GMTC 43/21 NETWORK PERFORMANCE REPORT

Peter Boulton, Head of Highways TfGM introduced the latest transport network performance report that showed high performance of the network throughout June 2021 despite reduced capacity across all public transport modes. There had been an increase of 5.2% on trips made compared to the previous month, which was now only 3% below levels reported in 2019.

TfGM and partners had begun to deliver their recovery campaigns to increase public confidence in returning back to the network. Metrolink would also be increasing its frequency to 6 minute services from September 2021.

Members reported their concerns regarding an increase in anti-social behaviour and assaults on the Metrolink system, including windows being smashed and drivers being assaulted. The question of providing body cams to those operatives who request one was raised, it was confirmed that the spike in assaults had been reported to GMP and the issue of bodycams would be directly raised with KAM. In respect of the increase of ASB, officers were aware of recent reports especially in relation to the use of missiles and were working with TravelSafe officers to provide targeted interventions, in addition to further work with KAM to reduce the opportunities for perpetrators to get track-side. Members urged for more reassurance work to be done to ensure passengers felt safe when using the network as police presence was perceived to be minimal.

Further to this, Members also reported and increase in ASB incidents at Bus Stations, particularly cases of harassment at Bury Interchange. Perhaps unrelated, there had been a significant increase in people walking in and out of the town centre, and a further breakdown of this data was requested. Officers confirmed that there had been some additional staff deployed to hotspot areas and a number of persistent offenders had been identified and charged in some cases.

In relation to capacity issues, Members were concerned that there had already been high levels of patronage on match days on the Altrincham Metrolink line and had noted that there had been an increase in car sales, further evidencing that some people will choose to remain away from public transport especially if capacity is perceived to be an issue. It was hoped that the reassurance campaign planned for September would allay some of these concerns and build up public confidence in returning to the network.

Resolved /-

1. That the report be noted.
2. That GMP be invited to a future meeting of the Committee to update members as to how increased levels of ASB on the public transport network, in particular on the Metrolink system will be addressed.
3. That the request for the consideration of bodycams for Metrolink drivers be raised directly with KAM.
4. That the relevant data behind the increase of walking and ASB levels in Bury be shared directly with Cllr Peel.

GMTC 44/21 GM TRANSPORT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

Members were given the opportunity to review the forthcoming work programme for the Committee.

Resolved /-

That the Committee's Work Programme be noted.

GMTC 45/21 DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Resolved /-

That the following dates and times of future meetings be approved –

Metrolink & Rail	17.09.21
Bus	01.10.21
Full	15.10.21
Metrolink & Rail	12.11.21
Bus	19.11.21
Full	10.12.21
Metrolink & Rail	14.01.22

Bus	21.01.22
Full	18.02.22
Metrolink & Rail	11.03.22
Bus	18.03.22