PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide an update to Members on recent progress made in respect of the new Interchange facility at Bolton, and the future transport facilities being developed and delivered for Stockport, Tameside, Wigan, Farnworth and Pendleton. The report provides an overview of the progress made since the last update and the work scheduled to be undertaken over the coming months.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to:

- Note the contents of this report and the achievements made in progressing these schemes since the last Interchanges Update to this Sub Committee; and

- Further note the work scheduled to be undertaken to continue to develop the schemes over the coming months, in conjunction with stakeholders.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Reports to Capital Projects and Policy Committee:

CONTACT OFFICERS

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1. **Introduction and Background**

1.1 This report provides Members with an overview in relation to the Interchange scheme which has recently been commissioned at Bolton and also provides an update on the work in relation to future facilities at Stockport, Tameside and Wigan and future bus station improvements at Farnworth and Pendleton, which are currently being undertaken in conjunction with local authority partners, as part of the wider Growth Deal Programme.

1.2 As part of the ongoing work which is taking place to progress the future Interchange schemes, TfGM is working with the relevant stakeholders to explore the opportunities for incorporating additional residential, commercial and other development infrastructure in conjunction with these schemes.

1.3 A number of photographs and images of the various schemes are included at Appendix 1 to this report.

2. **Bolton Interchange**

2.1 The Bolton Interchange project was completed in partnership with Bolton Council and involved the relocation of the previous bus station from Moor Lane to the new site adjacent to Bolton Rail Station, incorporating a direct, wholly enclosed, pedestrian Skylink footbridge linking the two facilities.

2.2 The interchange opened to the public on 3 September 2017 as a truly integrated multi-modal facility, with the Skylink bridge offering seamless transfer between bus, rail and taxis, and the Cycle Hub offering secure storage for 48 bikes. The interchange also links passengers to upgraded pedestrian facilities through the town centre with high quality new public realm and enhancements to the public highway, improving bus and private vehicle flows through the town.

2.3 Bolton Interchange includes important design features for customers with disabilities and accessibility issues. Key features include contrasting floor colours that have been provided to differentiate between walking routes and waiting areas, along with clear signage and optimised lighting; a common design for bus stands that also helps blind and partially sighted people become familiar with the interchange’s layout; step-free access and induction loops throughout the interchange; a range of accessible public toilets and TfGM’s first adult changing facility meeting the national ‘Changing Places’ standard. TfGM consulted its Design Disability Reference Group (DDRG) throughout the design and delivery of the interchange, whose members have a range of disabilities and provide valuable insights into the challenges experienced by disabled people using public transport.
2.4 Feedback since opening has been largely positive, and TfGM is continuing to work very closely with customers and other key stakeholders in order to review feedback received during the initial stages of operational use, and to identify necessary improvements which might need to be made; for example, in relation to customer information and enhanced accessibility features.

2.5 Northern Rail continue to develop proposals to enhance the existing Rail Station entrance area, with a new open plan café outlet expected to open to the public in late 2017 / early 2018.

2.6 Network Rail is delivering major improvement work at Bolton Rail Station by reinstating a fifth platform to help increase capacity, giving greater operational flexibility leading to reduced delays and speeding up journey times. Works at the station include; reinstating platform 5, rebuilding existing platforms, adjusting station canopies, remodelling tracks and signalling through the station and installing an emergency exit footbridge on platform 5. Platform 5 has now been opened and electrification works in this location remain ongoing.

3. Stockport Interchange

3.1 The new Stockport Interchange Local Growth Deal scheme involves redeveloping the existing bus station site, bounded by the railway viaduct to the west, A6 viaduct to the east, Wellington Mill to the south and the River Mersey to the north, to create a modern, high quality transport interchange with a single covered passenger concourse.

3.2 A supporting hub providing secure cycle parking facilities and improved taxi and coach facilities, located in Mersey Square and in close proximity to an enhanced Trans Pennine Trail, will ensure a fully integrated site. The existing poor connectivity to Stockport Railway Station will also be addressed as part of the project.

3.3 Access arrangements for buses will be improved by the provision of a new road bridge across the River Mersey at Astley Street, enabling bus related traffic to be removed from Mersey Square and the public realm to be improved accordingly by Stockport Council.

3.4 As previously reported a parallel initiative is being progressed to explore potential development opportunities which might be appropriate for construction in conjunction with the core transport infrastructure. A number of mixed use options, with the primary focus being on residential development, are currently under consideration, in partnership with Stockport Council. These proposals are being progressed with the aim of submitting a planning application encompassing these complementary initiatives during early 2018, subject to the demonstration of viability.
3.5 In conjunction with the work which is currently taking place to confirm the viability of any complementary initiatives, a parallel exercise has been undertaken to understand the implications which the delivery of supporting development might have on the timescales for the construction of the new interchange, and to identify appropriate opportunities to mitigate these impacts.

3.6 To this end, TfGM is now progressing the Stockport Interchange Bridge and associated highway works initiative through Stockport Council as advanced works packages for the main Interchange Scheme, in order to mitigate some of the scheduling impacts associated with the progression of development opportunities on the site. This early intervention will also support the wider Stockport Town Centre Access Plan (TCAP) Growth Deal improvements which are planned for this area.

3.7 Planning Approval for the bridge was granted in October 2016. Geoffrey Osbornes Ltd has been appointed as the design and build contractor for these works, following the undertaking of an appropriate procurement exercise, and the achievement of gateway Full Approval. Design is progressing on schedule and works are due to start onsite in 2018.

4. **Tameside Interchange (Ashton-under-Lyne)**

4.1 The new Tameside Interchange Local Growth Deal scheme will see a new interchange constructed primarily on the existing site, but with the footprint shifted slightly to the west to better integrate with the Metrolink stop in Ashton-under-Lyne town centre. The majority of stands will operate from a single concourse building, albeit that there will also be several stands immediately adjacent to the tram stop, that will all feature Electronic Passenger Information Displays and bespoke high quality shelters. The new interchange will provide a more pleasant waiting environment along with a range of amenities, a travel information and ticketing office, retail outlets, accessible public toilets and baby change facilities and a ‘Changing Places’ facility.

4.2 The project team has been working closely with Tameside Council throughout the design development process. This has allowed for a local perspective to be placed on the design and ensured that the Interchange aligns to the other highway and regeneration initiatives that are currently being proposed for Ashton town centre.

4.3 Planning Approval was granted in 2016. Designs included within the submission incorporated feedback from the public consultation that had previously taken place during the second half of 2015.

4.4 Work is ongoing with Tameside Council to finalise options for the relocation of the Ministry of Justice to facilitate the construction of the Interchange.
4.5 Advanced works to facilitate utility diversions commenced in October 2017, and are due to be completed in early 2018.

4.6 Full Approval for the scheme was granted by the Combined Authority earlier this year and, therefore, subject to finalising all necessary approvals and consents, construction of the interchange is currently planned to commence this winter.

4.7 The procurement exercise to select an appropriate design and build contractor to deliver this project is now at an advanced stage, with an appointment due to be made in the near future, subject to the resolution of all outstanding issues.

4.8 In conjunction with the current work on the main Interchange Project, ongoing dialogue with Tameside Council is taking place regarding the future development use for the area of the existing bus station, which will be released once the new interchange has become operational.

5. Wigan Bus Station

5.1 The new Wigan Bus Station Local Growth Deal scheme will utilise the existing bus station site to deliver a higher quality and more efficient facility. The new bus station will provide a more pleasant waiting environment, along with a range of amenities, a travel information and ticketing office, retail outlets, accessible public toilets and baby change facilities and a ‘Changing Places’ facility.

5.2 The scheme allows for improvements to the New Market Street and Hallgate vehicle and pedestrian entrances and exits, whilst maintaining existing walkways from Jaxons Court and the enhancement to walkways from Market Street.

5.3 The bus station proposals are being progressed in partnership with Wigan Council, which is promoting a parallel wider town centre regeneration scheme, including the comprehensive redevelopment of the Galleries Shopping Centre. The bus station development will complement this proposed commercial and economic regeneration within the town centre.

5.4 A planning application was submitted in January 2016 and was subsequently approved in April 2016. Full Approval for the scheme was granted by the Combined Authority in spring 2017.

5.5 The procurement exercise to select an appropriate design and build contractor to deliver this project is now completed with a contract having been awarded to VINCI Construction UK in July 2017.

5.6 The existing bus station closed to the public on 31 July 2017 and construction works for the new bus station commenced the following morning.
5.7 Construction work is progressing on schedule. Demolition of the old station was completed in August and the structural slab and steel work frame works have been substantially progressed.

5.8 To ensure the continuity of bus services, temporary bus stops and Travelshop facilities were constructed and brought into operation in advance of closing the existing facility. The temporary arrangements will be maintained until the completion of the new facility, which is anticipated to be brought into operational use by the end of 2018.

5.9 Alongside the current work which is being undertaken to develop the design for the scheme, a parallel initiative is being progressed to explore potential development opportunities which might be appropriate for construction adjacent to the core transport infrastructure, potentially in conjunction with the formation of a new pedestrian access.

6. **Minor Bus Station Improvement Works**

6.1 Ongoing work is also taking place with relevant local authorities and their developer partners in relation to the enhancement and / or remodelling of the existing smaller scale bus station facilities in Farnworth and Pendleton town centres, as part of the wider Salford Bolton Network Improvements (SBNI) initiative.

**Farnworth**

6.2 Planning permission for the redevelopment of Farnworth bus station was granted by Bolton Council in July 2017. Detailed technical designs have since been finalised and a procurement exercise led by the Council, has taken place to identify a preferred contractor to deliver the works.

6.3 The scheme is now progressing through the final approvals process and subject to these approvals being granted, it is anticipated that work will begin in spring 2018, with the improvements to the bus station scheduled to be completed during summer 2018.

**Pendleton**

6.4 TfGM is continuing to work in conjunction with Salford City Council and other key stakeholders, to design proposals for the improvement of the current bus operations and passenger waiting facilities in Pendleton town centre, adjacent to Salford shopping centre. Outline proposals have been developed and a process of engagement with key stakeholders will take place in early 2018. These improvements will both support and complement the wider transportation and regeneration initiatives that are taking place in this area and will also incorporate much improved pedestrian connectivity.
6.5 In addition to the design and development work which is currently taking place to enhance the passenger experience at Pendleton, TfGM will continue to work with Salford City Council with a view to identifying potential funding opportunities for a new dedicated bus station in Pendleton over the longer term.

6.6 Further updates in relation to the development work for the above schemes will be brought to this Sub-Committee in due course.

7. Recommendations

7.1 A full set of recommendations is set out at the front of this report.

Alex Cropper

Head of Projects Group
Appendix 1 - Bolton Interchange - Public Opening Day Photographs (3rd September 2017)
Appendix 1 - Wigan Bus Station - Progress Photographs (13th November 2017) and Visualisation
Appendix 1 - Tameside Interchange - Planning Approved Visualisations