TRANSPORT FOR GREATER MANCHESTER COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BUS NETWORK AND TfGM SERVICES SUB
COMMITTEE, HELD ON 17 NOVEMBER 2017 AT MANCHESTER TOWN HALL

PRESENT:

Councillor David Chadwick  Bolton
Councillor Noel Bayley  Bury
Councillor Naeem ul Hassan  Manchester
Councillor Howard Sykes  Oldham
Councillor Phil Burke  Rochdale
Councillor Patricia Sullivan  Rochdale
Councillor Barry Warner  Salford
Councillor Robin Garrido  Salford
Councillor Tom Grundy  Stockport
Councillor Warren Bray  Tameside
Councillor Rob Chilton  Trafford
Councillor Mark Aldred  Wigan (Chair)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Alison Chew  Interim Head of Bus Services, TfGM
Mike Evans  Management Accountant, TfGM
John Fryer  Safer Travel Manager, TfGM
Jenny Hollamby  Governance & Scrutiny, GMCA
Nick Roberts  Head of Service & Commercial Development, TfGM
Martin Shier  Bus Partnerships Delivery Manager, TfGM
Colin Parr  Crime Reduction Partnership Officer, TfGM

ALSO PRESENT:

Adam Clark  Stagecoach Manchester
Ben Jarvis  Stagecoach Manchester
Bob Dunn  Diamond
Rob Hughes  First Manchester
Guy Warren  First Manchester
Alastair Nuttall  Arriva
Nigel McKinney  MCT
Inspector Cecilia Oakley  Greater Manchester Police (GMP)
BN/18/34    APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence received.

BN/18/35    URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed Members and representatives from bus operators. All attendees were thanked for their attendance.

There were no items of urgent business for consideration.

BN/18/36    DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received.

BN/18/37    TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 6 OCTOBER 2017

The minutes of the Bus Network and TfGM Services Sub Committee meeting held on 6 October 2017 were submitted.

It was noted that Councillor Robin Garrido had submitted his apologies for the meeting.

Resolved/-

That the minutes of the Bus Network and TfGM Services Sub Committee, held on 6 October 2017, be agreed as a correct record.

BN/18/38    FORTHCOMING CHANGES TO THE BUS NETWORK

Consideration was given to the report of the Interim Head of Bus Services, which informed Members of the changes that had taken place to the bus network since the last TfGM Bus Network and TfGM Services Sub Committee meeting. In addition the report also provided consequential action taken or proposed by TfGM and sought guidance from Members on proposed TfGM action.

The Head of Service and Commercial Development introduced the item and provided a verbal update on changes in relation to commercial registrations in the Wigan area, which would be circulated with the minutes of the meeting.

It was explained that a local consultation meeting about the Pennine Local Link was taking place on 21 November 2017 and a full update would be provided at Item 10 - Forthcoming Changes to the Bus Network, which would be considered in the private section of the meeting.

Resolved/-

That Members:
1. Noted that no notifications had been received of changes to the commercial network.

2. Noted that no action was proposed regarding changed or de-registered services.

3. Approved proposed changes to existing general subsidised services set out in Annex C of the report.

BN/18/39 REVIEW OF SUBSIDISED BUS SERVICES BUDGET

Members considered the report of the Director of Finance and Corporate Services and the Interim Head of Bus Services that updated the Sub Committee with regard to the current position on the 2017/18 subsidised bus services budget.

The report updated Members on the annualised cost of the general subsidised services network at 30 September 2017, the month of September and 12 month period to September 2017 and the current position against the 2017/18 subsidised services budget.

It was noted that the overall expenditure on the subsidised services (net of income) was £599k lower than budget in the six months to September 2017.

It was explained that in the wording in paragraph 4.2 of the report, should read 4.5% and not 5.3%. in line with the table.

A Member enquired about the underspend and asked if this could be used to support a school bus service in his ward. The Chair advised the Member to speak to Officers about the proposal following the meeting.

Resolved/-

That the report be noted.

BN/18/40 TRAVELSAFE PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

Members considered the report of the Customer Director that provided Members with an update on the Travel Safe Partnership’s approach to tackling antisocial behaviour on the bus network.

The Safer Travel Manager and Crime Reduction Partnership Officer from the Travel Safe Unit, and Inspector Oakley from GMP, who were in attendance at the meeting, introduced the report to Members and provided an update on the Travel Safe Partnership enhancements, Crucial Crew activity and current antisocial behaviour (ABS) trends.

A question and answer session followed the introduction and discussions were noted as follows:

- Members thanked the team for all their hard work.

- It was agreed that Inspector Oakley would provide Members with a breakdown of the schools that had been provided with a Crucial Crew event.
• It was highlighted that a Crime Analyst had been appointed, which was a dedicated post. It was explained that one of the key activities was to consolidate information and use data to deploy the Travel Safe Unit and to share information.

• A Member explained that there had been an increase in burglaries and suggested that the guided bus way in Salford might have assisted. It was explained that the team was working with divisional forces to understand the issue.

• A discussion took place about Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) and the powers they had. It was explained that their role was non-confrontational and not physical. However, they had received the necessary accredited training, could provide crime reports, ask for a person’s details, issue fixed penalties and ask for police officer assistance. In addition, they wore body cameras linked to the digital imaging database to identify offenders. They were the eyes and ears of the police on the ground. Further powers would need to be issued through the Chief Constable and the gold committee. A Member suggested that special police be reintroduced to tackle antisocial behaviour. It was explained that they would not be reintroduced. PSCO numbers had increased and more police resources such as mounted police on the network would be used to tackle the problem.

• A Member asked if there was any work taking place in Stockport. It was explained that there had been a spike of damage to vehicles. Intelligence was being gathered to identify offenders.

Resolved/-

That Members noted the Travel Safe Partnership’s additional frontline support and the enhancements to the approach to tackling antisocial behaviour on the transport networks.

BN/18/41    BUS NETWORK PERFORMANCE 2017/18 MID-YEAR

The Sub Committee considered the report of the Interim Head of Bus Services that informed Members of the observed operational performance of the GM bus network for the 2017/18 mid-year period and compared it against the level achieved in 2016/17.

Members raised a number of issues, which were noted as follows:

• In terms of passenger research, Members were anxious about the number of passengers that were not satisfied. It was agreed that the survey would be broken down further to identify trends.

• A number of Members raised concerns about punctuality and passenger expectations. Traffic conditions, infrastructure works, congestion and recovery time were identified causes. However, the operators had made service changes to improve punctuality and there had been progress. The operators raised concerns about the insufficient space at bus stations for recovery time and discussions were underway with TfGM. Officers would welcome a detailed analysis of where the problems were and to work on a solution with the operators.
• A discussion took place about infrastructure works and the impact on passengers trying to get to work. Operators amended service patterns if traffic management plans were available but this was not always the case. Officers advised that it was very difficult to predict day to day infrastructure works. However, they would try to improve and continue to share data with the operators.

• A discussion took place about industrial action. Officers advised that TfGM could not influence the situation. Operators explained that they were working hard to provide services during this time and had advised passengers, there were services but to expect delays.

• Officers invited Members to see the control room to understand the challenges involved when major infrastructure works were taking place.

• A Member asked for reassurance about passengers being able to utilise buses affected by the Moses Gate water main burst. Operators explained that a temporary timetable had been introduced and it was working well. There had not been adverse comments from passengers and they were able to use stops on the diversion route.

• A Member asked about the poor reliability of services in Bury as the statistics in the report did not reflect the conflicting comments that had been raised by resident groups and on social media. The Member asked if it was an impact of the Bury depot closure. Pay, terms and conditions, strike action and potential fare increases were also raised. In response, the operator explained that the statistics in the report belonged to TfGM. The operator acknowledged there had been problems and issues were being mitigated. It was envisaged Members would see improved services in the next few months. The Chair reassured Members that meetings with operators about delivery performance had taken place and Members should see a difference.

• In terms of paragraph 2.1 of the report, a Member asked Officers what that meant. Officers advised that passengers were content if their expected wait for a frequent service was not exceeded. Regarding Figure 5 – District Performance 2017/18 Mid-year versus 2016/17, the Member was pleased to that Rochdale’s starting point punctuality was very good. However, the mid-point punctuality could be increased.

• A Member enquired about the Optimised Public Transport Integration System (OPTIS) and when it would be available. Officers explained that the customer facing part of the project had been delivered and the back office data was scheduled to be introduced in the first calendar quarter of next year.

• A discussion took place about paragraph 3 - Fleet Profile of the report. Members raised concerns about pollution, service vehicle technology and the move toward hybrid vehicles. It was explained that in terms of hybrids consideration should also be given to other types of developments such as electric and gas buses that were on trial at the moment. The operators added that a biogas double decker bus and electric single decker bus was being trialled. However, the technologies were not developed enough as yet and range was an issue. A Member suggested that operators needed to invest in staff and new buses as some, dependent on where a resident lived, were in a state of disrepair.
Resolved/-

That Members noted:

1. The challenging operational conditions resulting from major infrastructure works, planned events and unplanned roadworks.

2. The high environmental standards of the bus fleet within GM.

BN/18/42 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved/-

That in accordance with Section 100(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting at this juncture for the following business on the grounds that it involves the disclosure of exempt information as defined in the respectively indicated paragraph(s) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

It would not be, on balance, in the public interest to disclose this information to the public and press for the reasons indicated within the reports.

BN/18/33 FORTHCOMING CHANGES TO THE BUS NETWORK

A report of the Interim Head of Bus Services presented to Members that provided commercial information relating to changes that had taken place to the bus network since the last meeting, or were proposed. In addition, the report also provided consequential action taken or proposed by TfGM.

Regarding the 408 service, Officers agreed to provide a Member with a narrative to explain the changes to residents in his area.

Resolved/-

That Members approved the proposals detailed in Section 1 of the Proposals for Consideration of the report with the exception of the Pennine Local Link where the Sub Committee delegated power to the Chair and Deputy Chair, in consultation with the Interim Head of Bus Services, to make a decision following a consultation meeting on 21 November 2017. The decision would be circulated to Members for information.