TRANSPORT FOR GREATER MANCHESTER COMMITTEE
REPORT FOR INFORMATION

Sub Committee: Capital Projects and Policy
Date: 23 November 2018
Subject: Interchanges Update
Report of: Head of Projects Group

PURPOSE OF REPORT
To provide an update to Members on recent progress made in respect of the new bus station facility at Wigan, and the future transport facilities being developed and delivered for Stockport, Tameside, Bury 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 in July 2018; 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:

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1. **Introduction and Background**

1.1 This report provides Members with an overview in relation to the new bus station scheme which was completed in October 2018 at Wigan and also provides an update on the work in relation to future facilities at Stockport, Tameside, Bury and future bus station improvements at Pendleton, which are currently being undertaken in conjunction with local authority partners.

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

2. **Wigan Bus Station**

2.1 The new Local Growth Deal funded Wigan Bus Station has been opened to the public two months ahead of schedule. Following the Completion of construction on the 26 September the station transferred into TfGM ownership so preparation works for opening could commence. The station was brought into operational use on 28 October and was officially opened by the Leader of Wigan Council the following day.

2.2 The bus station building opened to the public on the 24 October to allow passengers to familiarise themselves with the new facilities prior to the first services running from the 28 October. In advance of opening day, a live test event was conducted with volunteers from TfGM and Wigan Council using buses supplied by Operators. The test event was helpful in fine tuning the station for opening.

2.3 The temporary arrangements for bus and customer services maintained throughout construction have now closed and are being returned back to their previous arrangements.

2.4 The bus station development was 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, which has recently been acquired by Wigan Council. It is intended that the opening of the new bus station will complement and support the proposed commercial and economic regeneration within the town centre.

2.5 The Greater Manchester’s Design Disability Reference Group (DDRG) and Wigan Access committee were involved through the development of the design and were invited to attend the new station and provide feedback on the station to ensure it is accessible for all.

2.6 Initial feedback on the new facility from passengers and stakeholders has been extremely positive. This will be monitored and kept under review over the coming months.
3. Stockport Interchange Mixed Use

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 At the meeting of the GM Combined Authority on 29 June 2018, approval in principle was granted to progress the scheme incorporating complementary development opportunities to include a residential development (of circa 196 units) and public green space above the interchange.

3.5 Development activities have progressed in the meanwhile, in parallel to a pre-planning public engagement exercise that ran between 2 and 29 July, culminating in the submission of a planning application to Stockport Council Planning Department on 25 October. A determination of the planning application is anticipated during early 2019.

3.6 Focus will now be directed towards the procurement of a design and build contractor to provide early contractor involvement and buildability input from the commencement of RIBA Stage 3 design activity in early 2019, subject to the positive determination of the schemes planning application.

3.7 As previously reported, the Stockport Interchange Bridge and associated highway works initiative is being progressed through Stockport Council, as an advanced works package to the main Interchange Scheme.

3.8 The appointed design and build contractor for these works, commenced works on site in April 2018. A key milestone was achieved when the main steel bridge members were lifted into place in September. The new bridge and associated highway works are due to be brought into operation in 2019.
4. **Ashton Interchange**

4.1 The new Ashton Interchange Local Growth Deal scheme will see a new interchange constructed primarily on the existing bus station 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 worked closely with Tameside Council throughout the design development process; allowing a local perspective to be placed on the design to ensure that the Interchange aligns with the other highway and regeneration initiatives that are currently being proposed for Ashton town centre.

4.3 Planning Approval was granted in 2016 against a design that incorporated feedback from the public consultation that had previously taken place in 2015.

4.4 Following the National Probation Service’s vacation of the site, the contractor was appointed to design and construct the new interchange in June 2018. As the existing bus station is to remain operational, a hoarding has been established to allow partial demolition of the existing facility and isolate the construction works. Temporary stands have been established to maintain bus operations along with temporary footpaths/barriers to direct passengers and protect their safety.

4.5 Work is progressing well with the demolition works required to allow construction of the new interchange having been completed and the necessary service diversions being well advanced. Once the service diversions are complete, the foundation works will commence. Work to the new stands adjacent to the Metrolink platforms has started and will be brought into operation ahead of the new interchange becoming operational.

4.6 TfGM are working closely with Tameside Council officers to ensure that the highways arrangements for the new Interchange are fully integrated with the Council’s longer term plans for Wellington Road.

4.7 Subject to the satisfactory progression of the works, the new facility is due to be brought into full operational use in 2020.

4.8 In conjunction with the current work on the main Interchange Project, TfGM is in dialogue with Tameside Council around the future development of the
area of the existing bus station which will be released once the new interchange is operational.

5. Bury

5.1 TfGM are currently undertaking an initial piece of feasibility work, in conjunction with Bury Council and other key stakeholders, to look at options for the future development of Bury Interchange.

5.2 A particular area of focus for this work will be to ensure that any proposals that are brought forward, and for which funding is ultimately sought, are integrated with and fully support the Council’s wider plans for the regeneration of Bury Town Centre.

5.3 Further updates on this initiative will be provided to Members as the feasibility work progresses.

6. Minor Bus Station Improvement Works

6.1 As reported previously, the new facility at Farnworth was brought in to operation on 8 July 2018.

6.2 An update on the proposals for a new facility within Pendleton town centre is provided within the separate Bus Priority Update report which is on the agenda for this Committee.

7. Recommendations

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

Alex Cropper
Head of Projects Group