PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update Members on the performance and patronage levels on the Metroshuttle bus network for the calendar year 2015.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to note the contents of this report.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Metroshuttle Patronage and Service Performance report to the 9th October 2015, Bus Network and TfGM Services Committee.

CONTACT OFFICERS

Howard Hartley 0161 244 1660 howard.hartley@tfgm.com
Martin Shier 0161 244 1684 martin.shier@tfgm.com
1. **Executive Summary**

1.1 Currently, five Metroshuttle routes are in operation in Greater Manchester – three in Manchester city centre, one in Bolton town centre and one in Stockport town centre. The purpose of this report is to update Members on the performance and patronage levels on the Metroshuttle bus network.

1.2 1.9 million customers travelled on Manchester Metroshuttles during 2015, an average of 37,000 passengers per week.

1.3 Patronage on Manchester Metroshuttle service 1 during 2015 was 795,325. Service 1 provided 98.4% service regularity for 2014/15.

1.4 For Manchester Metroshuttle service 2 patronage during 2015 was 815,776. Over the same period the overall service regularity was 98.8%.

1.5 Service regularity for Manchester Metroshuttle service 3 for 2014/15 was 99.6%. The number of customers travelling on service 3 during 2015 was 315,156.

1.6 During 2015 an average of 6,399 passengers per month travelled on the Bolton Metroshuttle. Reliability in 2014/15 was 98.7%.

1.7 Stockport Metroshuttle patronage during 2015 was 290,877. Reliability in 2014/15 was 97.4%.

2. **Manchester Metroshuttle**

2.1 The Manchester Metroshuttle services 1, 2 and 3 are operated by First Manchester through a contract with TfGM. The services are operated with three electric and 17 low carbon diesel-electric hybrid vehicles, provided by TfGM with the assistance of DfT green bus funding.

**Service changes**

2.2 Manchester City Centre is currently undergoing significant infrastructure works in association with a number of major public transport improvement schemes including the Metrolink Second City Crossing (2CC), Bus Priority Package and Network Rail’s Northern Hub works.
2.3 To improve service reliability, to avoid roads which are subject to long closures and to provide a greater level of service, all three Metroshuttle routes were subject to the following route changes:

- **Metroshuttle 1 (Branded Orange)**

  Key destinations comprise: Piccadilly Station Approach, China Town (Portland Street), Manchester Central (Peter Street), Deansgate (Spinningfield), St Marys Gate; from this point the service will return to Manchester Piccadilly via Victoria Station Approach, Todd Street, Withy Grove, Thomas Street, High Street, Church Street, Dale Street and Ducie Street. The service will operate up to every 8 minutes on a Monday to Saturday daytime and a 10 minute frequency on a Sunday daytime.

- **Metroshuttle 2 (Branded Green)**

  The service is revised to operate between Shudehill Interchange and Piccadilly via Spinningfields. This will provide additional capacity between Deansgate-Castlefield Metrolink stop and Piccadilly and maintain the link between Piccadilly and Spinningfields. Oxford Road Station, the Medlock Street, Chester Street, Oxford Road loop and the Angel Street loop will no longer be served. The service will operate every 10 minutes on a Monday to Saturday daytime and every 12 minutes on Sunday daytime.

- **Metroshuttle 3 (Branded Purple)**

  Revised route to operate between Piccadilly and Deansgate-Castlefield Metrolink stop. This will provide additional capacity between Deansgate-Castlefield Metrolink stop and Piccadilly. Liverpool Road, Lower Byrom Street, Quay Street and Deansgate are also served and to south of Oxford Road Station, Oxford Road, Hulme Street and Cambridge Street are also served. Albert Square, Spinningfields and Salford Central Railway Station will no longer be served.

  The service will only operate during the morning and afternoon peak periods on weekdays. (7.00am to 10.30am and 3.30pm to 7.30pm). At these times the service will operate every 10 minutes.

2.4 All three new routes were introduced In June 2015.

**Manchester Metroshuttle Service Contract**
2.5 Additional requirements have been included in the contract that places greater emphasis on service quality and better management of the services. These additional measures include;

- Ensuring only drivers with the right skills and attitude are selected and provided with appropriate customer service training.
- Improved levels of supervision and more robust measures to remedy any issues that may arise, particularly during times of peak demand.
- Introduction of targets and standards for customer satisfaction; with a minimum initial target for users of at least 85% satisfaction, working towards 90% over the first two years of the contract.

2.6 All of these measures are to ensure a better overall experience for customers, and are reflected in the customer satisfaction survey results, detailed in the following sections.

Customer Satisfaction Survey January 2016

2.7 First have appointed Illuma Research to undertake a twice yearly satisfaction survey of Manchester Metroshuttles. A total of 1,200 interviews took place in mid-June, across all three Manchester Metroshuttle services, Monday to Saturday.

2.8 Overall satisfaction of the service was 89.8%. This remains relatively stable in comparison to previous survey results, as demonstrated in graph 1 below; 38% of customers are very satisfied with the Metroshuttle service, which is 2 percentage points lower than previous survey result. Only 1% of customers rated themselves as very dissatisfied.

Graph 1 Customer Satisfaction

2.9 Attributes showing the highest level of satisfaction are;
• Safety of driving 94.8%
• Driver attitude 94.7%
• Driver appearance 92.1%

2.10 Attributes showing the lowest levels of satisfaction are;
• Bus stop environment 75.1%
• Legroom 72.8%
• Space for bags, buggies etc. 70.7%

2.11 Since September 2010, 16 of the 22 attributes have improved. Most improved areas are;
• Destination display +5.7%
• On board information +5.3%
• Temperature / ventilation +5.3%

2.12 Graph 2 below gives an overview of the satisfaction of each service element;

Graph 2 Customer Satisfactions by Attribute

Patronage

2.13 Graph 3 overleaf provides a breakdown of monthly Metroshuttle patronage; 2014 in comparison to 2015. There are notable variances in patronage during the warmer weather and holiday periods.
Analysing monthly trends of 2015 against 2014; January through to December demonstrated a decline in patronage (2.6 million in 2014 and 1.9 million in 2015), this represents a 26.9% decline in patronage. It is considered that ongoing works in the regional centre, are in part attributable to the reduction in patronage.

During July and August 2015, the months were largely comparable to that in 2014. This is largely due to the Metrolink St Peters Square blockade in which Metroshuttle services were utilised to support Metrolink customers, providing a link between Manchester Piccadilly and Deansgate Station.

Service 3 has seen the sharpest decline 620k in 2014 to 315k in 2015. This is due to the service being altered to operate peak time only. Service 1 patronage declined by 33% (1.2m 2014) to (795k 2015). Service 2 has remained relatively stable.

Graph 4 overleaf provides a breakdown of annual patronage.

Table 1 overleaf provides a breakdown of cost per passenger.
Due to the decline in patronage, the cost per passenger for 2015 was up from 64p to 89p. This is the highest cost per passenger since the inception of Metroshuttle. However, it is worth noting that the cost per passenger for the Metroshuttle is favourable when compared to the general network.

2.19
Performance

2.20 TfGM monitors the performance of the five Metroshuttle services as part of the Punctuality & Reliability Monitoring System (PRMS). Manchester Metroshuttle observations are undertaken at Shudehill Interchange and Piccadilly Rail Station, where services are sampled during specific time bands throughout the day.

2.21 The Manchester Metroshuttle services are operated as “frequent services”. The DfT definition of a frequent service is that the service does not operate to a scheduled timetable; however, the operator is expected to provide a minimum of six buses an hour.

2.22 TfGM uses a Service Regularity measure to monitor frequent services. Where no timetable is provided, customers are looking for their service to have even intervals between buses. Regularity measures buses whose gap is 2 minutes over that expected. Service Regularity encapsulates both the reliability and punctuality aspect of frequent services.

2.23 Table 2 below provides an annual comparison of Service Regularity of Metroshuttle services.

Table 2 Annual Service Performance

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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>94.0%</td>
<td>98.2%</td>
<td>98.1%</td>
<td>99.2%</td>
<td>98.5%</td>
<td>98.4%</td>
<td>97.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>98.8%</td>
<td>99.1%</td>
<td>99.7%</td>
<td>99.5%</td>
<td>99.6%</td>
<td>98.8%</td>
<td>99.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>98.2%</td>
<td>99.6%</td>
<td>99.8%</td>
<td>99.4%</td>
<td>99.0%</td>
<td>99.6%</td>
<td>99.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Service Performance</td>
<td>96.5%</td>
<td>98.9%</td>
<td>99.1%</td>
<td>99.4%</td>
<td>99.0%</td>
<td>98.9%</td>
<td>98.6%</td>
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2.24 For 2014/15 all three services had an overall Service Regularity of over 98%. Metroshuttle 3 was the best performing with an overall result of 99.6%. Of the three Manchester Metroshuttles, service 1 had the lowest overall result of 98.4%.

2.25 Analysing annual performance; 2014/15 overall performance was at its lowest since 2009/10. Service 1 and 2 performance during 2014/15 was at its lowest since 2009/10, however, service 3 performance was at its highest since 2011/12. This would indicate that as service 3 is peak only, the break in service allows it to recover. Whilst the overall figure is declining, it is above TfGM code standard target of 98%. TfGM will continue to work closely with First to ensure current performance levels are maintained.

2.26 Ongoing events and roadwork’s in Manchester City Centre continue to directly impact on the Manchester Metroshuttle services. The most significant were;
• Corporation Street (north of Withy Grove) was reduced to a single lane resulting in temporary signals and shuttle working. Full closures have been in place at various points throughout the year. This will continue to be disrupted for the long term due to Metrolink second city crossing. Works began in May 2013 and will be in place until 2016.

• Several closures of Withy Grove throughout the year associated with Metrolink works.

• Cross Street / King Street closed as part of on-going Metrolink works and are in place until 2016.

• Bus Priority Package works along Portland Street throughout the year resulting in lane closures and temporary signals.

• Lane closures on Princess Street at various points throughout the year associated with Metrolink utility diversions and changes to the traffic management is in place until 2016 for second city crossing and bus priority works.

• Closure of New York Street for BT works from 29th June until 9th August 2015.

• Several closures around the Gartside Street / Byrom Street area to facilitate weekend crane lifts throughout the year.

• Mancunian Way closure from the end of August and the associated knock on effect of displaced traffic in the city centre.

• Events in the City Centre included;
  - Political marches;
  - Bupa Games;
  - Manchester Marathon;
  - Sky Ride;
  - Parklife;
  - St Georges Day Parade;
  - Pride.
  - Chinese New Year.
Customer Comments

Graph 4 Manchester Metroshuttle Complaints

2.27 TfGM received 58 comments from customers about the Manchester Metroshuttle during 2015. Metroshuttle 2 received the most comments (27), whilst Metroshuttles 1 & 3 had 21 and 10 comments respectively. When put into context, this equates to one complaint for every 32,700 customers that travel on Metroshuttle.

2.28 Of the 58 comments received, 38 complaints related directly to the driver. Of these 38, 15 related to driver behaviour and manner and 17 related to driving standards.

2.29 There were 15 complaints received for bus failing to stop or route taken. This largely relate to buses being full and unable to load more passengers. It is also worth noting that bus stops have been closed due to roadwork’s, with passengers being unaware that they should be using a temporary stop.

2.30 As part of the contract, First undertook to provide a more focussed and specialised training program for the Metroshuttle drivers to ensure that a greater level of service could be provided. In the light of this, TfGM is in regular contact with First regarding these issues and seeks to ensure that positive action is taken by them to minimise the likelihood of similar problems and that First meet the required standards.
Next Stop Announcement System

2.31 Following engagement with Guide Dogs for the Blind Association; TfGM will be retrofitting audio and visual passenger information systems to 20 Optare Low Carbon Emission Buses that operate on the Manchester Metroshuttle routes.

2.32 The retro fitting of audio and visual passenger information systems will improve the accessibility specification of the Manchester Metroshuttle buses; making it easier to use, especially for those with visual and hearing impairments.

2.33 The visual content will be provided in the form of route line plans, text and video content. The content size can be adjusted to suit the requirement. Passenger audio and visual content will be provided automatically as the vehicle travels along a specified route.

2.34 Audio and visual passenger information will be provided when the bus approaches, arrives or leaves specified locations along the route.

3. Bolton Metroshuttle

3.1 The Bolton Metroshuttle (service 500) was introduced in November 2008. It is operated by Cumfybus, again using TfGM hybrid vehicles, through a contract with TfGM, supported by funding from Bolton Council and TfGM. This service links the bus station, rail interchange and Bolton town centre and operates a 15 min frequency from 9:00 until 18:00, Mondays to Saturdays.

Patronage

3.2 Graph 5 below shows a comparison of the patronage on the Bolton Metroshuttle for 2014 against 2015.

Graph 5 Bolton Metroshuttle Patronage by Month
3.3 Bolton Metroshuttle patronage for 2015 had an average of 6,399 per month. This is comparable to 2014 (6,579).

Cost Per Passenger

3.4 There was a rise of 2.5% when comparing the annual cost per passenger; from £1.58 in 2014 to £1.62 in 2015.

Performance

3.5 Less frequent services, such as the Bolton Metroshuttle, are measured by their reliability and punctuality. Reliability of services is an indication of the number of journeys that do not run and are not therefore observed, and punctuality is the number of journeys that ran on time within a window of tolerance of no more than 1 minute early and 5 minutes late.

3.6 Observations are undertaken at Bolton Bus Station. Services are sampled during specific time bands throughout the day. Table 3 below shows the quarterly performance of the Bolton Metroshuttle.

Table 3 Bolton Metroshuttle Annual Service Performance

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>500</td>
<td>Reliability</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>99.4%</td>
<td>98.9%</td>
<td>98.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Punctuality</td>
<td>76.5%</td>
<td>93.3%</td>
<td>90.6%</td>
<td>92.8%</td>
<td>95.6%</td>
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3.7 When comparing annual performance reliability during 2014/15 dropped by 1.5% in comparison to the previous year; as did punctuality (2.9%). The reliability performance during 2014/15 was the lowest since the
inception of the service. Whilst both measures have declined, performance is still above minimum code standards. The operator has cited road works in Bolton town centre on Newport Street and Deansgate as having an impact on performance.

Customer Comments

3.8 Two comments were received by TfGM regarding the Bolton Metroshuttle during 2014/15. One regarding injury sustained to a passenger on the vehicle that was involved in a road traffic accident, however no fault was attributed to the operator. The other was regarding driver behaviour; the driver was dealt with through the operators discipline procedure.

4. Stockport Metroshuttle

4.1 The Stockport Metroshuttle (service 300) was launched in November 2008 and adopted the Metroshuttle brand in August 2009. It is funded by Stockport MBC and TfGM and links Stockport Rail Station with the bus station, shops and leisure facilities in the town centre. The service operates a 12 minute frequency from 8am until 6pm, Mondays to Saturdays, and from 10:30 until 17:00 on Sundays. The service is operated by Manchester Community Transport, who was awarded the tender and replaced Arriva in July 2014, and again operated with TfGM hybrid vehicles.

Patronage

4.2 Graph 6 below shows a comparison in the patronage on the Stockport Metroshuttle for 2014 against 2015.

4.3 During 2015, 290,877 customers travelled on the Stockport Metroshuttle with an average patronage of 24,240 per month. This has decreased by 17% in comparison to 2014 (29,506).

Graph 6 Stockport Metroshuttle Patronage by Month
**Cost Per Passenger**

4.4 The cost per passenger during 2015 was £0.86. This is up 21% when compared to 2014 (£0.71).

**Performance**

4.5 The Stockport Metroshuttle is scheduled to operate every 12 minutes with performance measured in the same way as Bolton Metroshuttle. Observations are undertaken in Stockport Bus Station. Services are sampled during specific time bands throughout the day and over 3 days during the quarter.

4.6 Table 4 below shows that the Stockport Metroshuttle performance during 2014/15 was much improved when comparing to 2013/14. Reliability improved by 0.1%, with punctuality up by 8.4% The improvement in performance is even more pleasing when you take into account the number of major road works that have taken place in the town centre during the previous 12 months.

**Table 4 Stockport Metroshuttle Annual Service Performance**
Customer Comments

4.7 Six comments were received during 2014/15. All six complaints were regarding driver conduct. TfGM continue to work with operators identifying areas of concern and ensuring operators work towards addressing the issues.

5. Recommendations

5.1 Recommendations appear at the front of this report.

Howard Hartley
Head of Bus