TRANSPORT FOR GREATER MANCHESTER COMMITTEE
REPORT FOR INFORMATION

Sub Committee: Bus Networks and TfGM Services
Date: 22 April 2016
Subject: Demand Responsive Transport Update
Report of: Head of Bus

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform members of the performance of the demand responsive Local Link services and to update on work undertaken to develop the services.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to:

i. Note the contents of this report; and

ii. Note that a further report will be submitted in three months.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

BNTS Sub-Committee 11 November 2015: Demand Responsive Services Update

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1. **Introduction and Background**

1.1 Local Link offers a demand responsive transport service which allows people to travel within defined areas that have a particular gap in the transport provision, such as irregular transport services or low accessibility to employment, education, health and leisure opportunities.

1.2 The services are distinct from Ring and Ride, which is a grant funded service for those whose mobility issues prevent them from using the general network.

1.3 There are currently 28 services across Greater Manchester on 19 contracts. However Marple Local Link is being withdrawn from 28 May 2016.

1.4 Between January 2015 and December 2015 63% of services were operated on dedicated mini-buses with trips scheduled through the Booking, Schedule and Dispatch team based in TfGM’s Contact Centre, using Trapeze Pass scheduling software. 37% were operated by private hire operators, using their fleets of saloon cars and their own booking, schedule and dispatch processes.

1.5 Of the 63% of trips booked and scheduled using Trapeze Pass, 82% were booked via the TfGM Contact Centre; the remaining 18% were booked via the web booking facility.

2. **Service Performance**

**Patronage**

2.1 Between 1\textsuperscript{st} January 2015 and 31\textsuperscript{st} December 2015 281,232 passenger trips were made on TfGM’s Local Link services; a decrease of 7.9% compared to the previous year (January 2014 and December 2014) for like for like services.

2.2 A comparison of Local Link services shows that the patronage on 38% of services increased in 2015 compared to 2014. 8 services have increased in patronage in 2015 including the 4 services that were enhanced in 2013 with LSTF funding.

**Cost per trip**

2.3 Between 1\textsuperscript{st} January 2015 and 31\textsuperscript{st} December 2015 the overall cost per trip excluding external contributions, was £7.59.
2.4 Officers review all services where the cost per trip exceeds £10 and implement measures to address any issues which are identified. This could involve increasing engagement with large employers or community organisations in service areas where usage does not reflect expected demand, or reducing service provision, if high costs indicate that the service is provided where alternative transport provision is available.

2.5 A number of services have been revised following a retendering exercise to ensure that they are delivering better value for money. This has involved reducing vehicles, operating hours and areas of service.

**New Customers**

2.6 Data on newly registered Local Link customers is currently only available for those customers registering for services which use TfGM’s scheduling software. Between 1st October 2015 and 31 March 2016 599 new customers were recorded as registering with the Local Link service.

2.7 This identifies a steady growth in the number of new customers from the period 1st April to 30th September 2015 when 730 new users registered for the service.

**Trip purpose**

2.8 The most common trip purpose requested during the 6 month period was ‘Work’ which made up 46% of trip requests. ‘Work’ was also the most common trip purpose during the previous 6 months.

2.9 This consistent demand for trips for ‘Work’ purposes reflects the work undertaken by TfGM officers to change the reputation of the service from its previous position, as a service primarily viewed as serving the elderly, like Ring and Ride, to a distinct service which can be relied upon by all sections of the public to make time critical trips, such as trips to work.

**Table 1 Trip purpose between January 2015 and December 2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trip purpose</th>
<th>Requests</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work Trips</td>
<td>94231</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Trips</td>
<td>27574</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Trips</td>
<td>26037</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure Trips</td>
<td>19449</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping Trips</td>
<td>18428</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Trips</td>
<td>12079</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Trips</td>
<td>4227</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion Trips</td>
<td>4086</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

nb: Data for trips booked through TfGM’s booking contact centre/ online booking system only.
Service Reliability

2.10 TfGM advise all Local Link customers that their transport may arrive at any time between 10 minutes before and 10 minutes after their scheduled trip time. This allows for greater flexibility when scheduling trips on-to shared vehicles. Therefore, trips are determined to be running punctually if they arrive at any time during this 20 minute window.

2.11 Between October 2015 and February 2016, 93.88% of trips were performed within the scheduled window; these are shown in table 2 below as % of on-time trips. From April 2016, when an operator is found to have performed journeys outside the scheduled window or found to have not performed the trips, they will be penalised financially as part of the new Local Link Conditions of Contract.

Table 2 Trip punctuality between October 15 and February 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Oct-15</th>
<th>Nov-15</th>
<th>Dec-15</th>
<th>Jan-16</th>
<th>Feb-16</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Patronage (Local Link Only)</td>
<td>15892</td>
<td>15792</td>
<td>14202</td>
<td>14488</td>
<td>14733</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. Early Trips</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. Late Trips</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. Non Performed Trips</td>
<td>638</td>
<td>570</td>
<td>1324</td>
<td>721</td>
<td>915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% On Time Trips</td>
<td>95.44%</td>
<td>95.92%</td>
<td>90.24%</td>
<td>94.49%</td>
<td>93.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Non Performed Trips</td>
<td>4.01%</td>
<td>3.61%</td>
<td>9.32%</td>
<td>4.98%</td>
<td>6.21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Local Link Rebranding and Promotion Programme

3.1 TfGM completed a programme of work funded by the Department for Transport’s Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) to re-brand and promote Local Link as a reliable way to travel to work and interchange with the wider transport network.

3.2 This piece of work consisted of;

- rebranding the service,
- improving the Local Link Web page,
- providing branded liveries for all vehicles operating the service,
- simplifying the leaflet design,
- working closely with employers to explain how people can benefit from Local Link; and
- Offering a single free trip to new users registering through the website.
3.3 The rebranding and promotion programme has not increased patronage as expected. Therefore officers are exploring other methods to boost patronage such as using social media to connect with potential customers.

4. **Trapeze and Future Service Developments**

4.1 On 1 March 2016, a new version of Trapeze Pass was launched. The new version contained a number of improvements which will help advisors in the TfGM’s Contact Centre. For example advisors will now be able to see visible street routing to make it easier to schedule passengers onto vehicles. The new version also contains a number of bug fixes which correct issues with the previous software.

4.2 TfGM recently met Trapeze to discuss a possible additional functionality to Trapeze. This functionality will change the way we schedule Local Link services. Currently Local Link works as a door to door service. In future officers would like to have some Local Link services that use Common Locations, such as bus stops, as pick up or drop off points. This will enable us to carry more passengers and decrease the scheduled time windows.

4.3 TfGM has applied for additional funding as part of the Department for Transport’s Transition Fund to help towards the cost of delivering this additional facility.

4.4 Officers are trialling a fixed route Local Link service in Middleton. Currently one vehicle on Middleton Local Link operates as a demand responsive service to/from Middleton to Kingsway Business Park in Rochdale. The fixed route will now operate from Middleton Bus Station at scheduled times, serving key destinations which have been identified from previous patronage. This is being trialled on one service initially and if successful will be rolled out on other services in future. This will allow more users to travel at once, meaning more people benefit from a more cost efficient service.

5. **Future Developments**

5.1 As detailed above, work will continue to ensure all services operate on fully accessible minibuses, are scheduled through TfGM’s central scheduling system and provide comprehensive monitoring data, by the end of 2016.

5.2 Officers will also continue to review all services operating at over £10 per trip or approaching their contract expiry date, to ensure that these services are meeting their objectives and offering value for money.
5.3 Officers will feedback to this committee on the performance of the fixed route Local Link service on Middleton Local Link.

5.4 Officers will report back on the progress of the additional functionality for Trapeze which would allow scheduling to and from common locations.

5.5 Work will also be on-going to continually review all services and the service model to ensure that they are meeting their objectives and offering value for money.

5.6 Officers will update the Committee in three months on service performance.

6. Recommendations

6.1 See front sheet for recommendations.

Howard Hartley
Head of Bus
Appendix A: Individual Performance Statistics for Local Link Services

On a Contract by Contract basis, *contract prices are based on prices effective 31 December 2015*

*The first chart for each service contains monthly patronage, refused (the percentage journeys that are not able to be accommodated each month) and cancellations (the percentage of journeys that are cancelled each month).*

*The second chart shows the journey purpose range for each contract.*

Minibus operation Services

**East Manchester**

![Chart showing patronage, refusals, and cancellations for East Manchester over a year.]

*Service commenced: Mar 2004*
Patronage (January 2015 and December 2015): 15,000
Cost per trip: £10.86

The usage of East Manchester was consistent throughout 2015; all months in 2015 had over 1,100 passengers except December. East Manchester provides a valuable service; the main destinations served are Manchester Royal Infirmary and North Manchester General Hospital.

This service has been retendered and following retender the number of vehicles which operate the service has been reduced. From April 2016 the overall hours of operation remain unchanged however the overall capacity of the service has been reduced.

Officers believe that the service will be able to incorporate the majority of trips without raising the current refusal levels significantly. This will deliver a more cost effective service.

Officers are proposing to incorporate the Dane Bank service from October 2016.
Hattersley

Service commenced: Jul 2004
Patronage (January 2015 and December 2015): 12,651
Cost per trip: £8.26

Hattersley Local Link was enhanced by LSTF funding in 2013. Usage of the service increased by 14.9% in 2015 compared to 2014. However the cost per passenger remains high. Therefore the service has been reviewed to reduce the operating hours of the service to reduce costs but minimally affect the patronage. Officers are exploring the idea of combining Hattersley and Tame Valley Local Link services due to the commonality of destinations visited by users.
Heywood service commenced: Jul 2005
Patronage (January 2015 and December 2015): 13,649
Cost per trip: £8.52

The Heywood service has been reviewed due to the current contract expiring in October 2016. As the chart above shows it provides a high percentage of work trips, of which over 4,000 trips in 2015 were to Pilsworth, Industrial Estate.

The service review identified that one vehicle can be combined to operate on both Middleton and Heywood Local Links. This will further reduce the cost and further improve the sustainability of the service.
Service commenced: Oct 2006
Patronage (January 2015 and December 2015): 13,035
Cost per trip: £6.01
The usage of Hindley Local Link was consistent throughout 2015; all months in 2015 had over 1,000 passengers except December. The service has recently been extended for a further two years and officers have recently added Morrisons, Ince as an additional destination.
**Hulme**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Patronage</th>
<th>Refusals (%)</th>
<th>Cancellations (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>May 15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jun 15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jul 15</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug 15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep 15</td>
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<td>Oct 15</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 15</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec 15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Service commenced:** Jun 2003  
**Patronage (January 2015 and December 2015):** 7,952  
**Cost per trip:** £7.89

A service review was performed in July 2015 as the previous contract ended in April 2016. The review identified that the service provided a vital service in light of recent local bus service withdrawals however efficiencies could be made to the current contract.

This service was retendered and following retender the overall hours of operation remain unchanged however the overall capacity of the service has been reduced. This has reduced the current contract cost by 22%.
Officers believe that the service will be able to incorporate the majority of trips without raising the current refusal levels significantly.
Kingsway, Newbold, Deeplish and Rochdale Evening

Service commenced: Sept 2008
Patronage (January 2015 and December 2015): 22,651
Cost per trip: £6.90

Kingsway Local Link covers four different Local Link operations (Kingsway, Rochdale Evening, Deeplish and Newbold). The overall patronage increased by 14% in 2015 compared to 2014. Over 88% of trips are for work. Of these work trips 59% are for JD Sports and 33% are for Asda.

Due to the seasonal nature of employment the combined services patronage rose above 1,800 trips per month in October and November 2015.

This service was retendered and following retender the overall contract cost increased. Officers are working with JD and Asda to look to implement more
fixed route services around shift patterns to better enable more passengers to travel at the same time and try to reduce refusal levels.
Marple and Mellor

Service commenced: Feb 2000
Patronage (January 2015 and December 2015): 883
Cost per trip: £31.24

The service was retendered in January 2015. The demand was not as expected once the change from taxis to minibuses took place. Monthly patronage was on average 91 passengers per month. The cost per passenger for 2015 was £31.24 per passenger.

Therefore, given the high cost and lack of demand for the service, BNTS committee agreed to the withdrawal of the Marple Local Link service from 28 May 2016.
Service commenced: Jul 2005
Patronage (January 2015 and December 2015): 17,296
Cost per trip: £9.87

Patronage has grown in by 10.3% in 2015 compared to 2014; the service provides vital links to key destinations that are not easily accessed on the general bus network such as Kingsway Business Park, North Manchester General Hospital, Heywood Distribution Centre.

As this service is operating at close to £10 per trip, officers have reviewed the service and have identified cost savings that can be achieved by reducing the hours of operation on one vehicle. In addition, the one vehicle which currently
operates as a demand responsive Local Link service to Kingsway Business Park will now become a fixed route service from Middleton Bus Station to Kingsway Business Park. During the times when this service is not operating as a fixed route service it will operate as an additional vehicle on Heywood Local Link.
Service commenced: Apr 2002
Patronage (January 2015 and December 2015):
Cost per trip: £9.81

Partington Local Link was enhanced by LSTF funding in 2013 which added additional areas of operation. Usage of the service increased by 6% in 2015 compared to 2014. However the cost per passenger remains high.

Patronage never dipped below 1,500 passengers in 2015. In September, October and November over 1,800 passengers travelled on the service. Patronage has continued strongly in 2016 in January and February it has
remained over 1,700 trips per month, showing a year on year increase of 8% in January and 10% in February.

The service has the highest number of refusals of all Local Link services, which suggests that the service is currently operating at close to capacity at certain times of day.

Officers are looking at fixed routes at busier times of day, where passengers travelling to common locations can travel together.
Service commenced: Aug 03
Patronage (January 2015 and December 2015): 10,902
Cost per trip: £11.32

The usage of Salford Local Link dropped by 6% in 2015 compared to 2014. A service review was undertaken in July 2015 as the previous contract ended in April 16. The review identified that the services hours of operations and vehicle requirement.

This service was retendered and following retender the service hours were reduced and the number of vehicles in operation was lowered. This has reduced the current contract cost by 62%.

Officers believe that the service will be able to carry the majority of passengers at a significantly reduced cost.
Wythenshawe (includes Timperley and Heald Green)

Service commenced: Feb 2003
Patronage (January 2015 and December 2015): 38,785
Cost per trip: £9.10

The service was enhanced in 2013 under the LSTF programme to offer better access to employment opportunities in Manchester Airport and New Manchester Enterprise Zone.

This enhanced service combined the existing Wythenshawe, Heald Green and Timperley Local Link services with a substantially enhanced service provision to provide improved employment links to/from Manchester Airport/Airport City. Usage of the service increased by 4.9% in 2015 compared to 2014. Patronage has never dipped below 3,000 passengers in 2015. The cost per passenger remains high due to the service operating 24 hours a day and 7 days a week.
As mentioned for over services, officers are looking at fixed routes at busier times of day, where passengers travelling to common locations can travel together.
Current Taxi operations; contracts will no longer operate on this model from October 2016

For the following contracts TfGM do not have data on cancelled or refused journeys and journey purpose.

Dane Bank and North Reddish

Service commenced: Oct 2006
Patronage (January 2015 and December 2015): 1,924
Cost per trip: £8.24

Officers have reviewed the service and due to the close proximity to the East Manchester Local Link service area it can be incorporated into the contract at no additional cost to TfGM. Officers will monitor service performance once the service is booked and scheduled through Trapeze.
Service commenced: Apr 2000
Patronage (January 2015 and December 2015): 3,662
Cost per trip: £6.83
This service was added to the East Bolton Local Link contract from 03 April 2016. A combined Local Link service for East Bolton, Daubhill and Deane and North Bolton are currently out to tender.
East Bolton

Service commenced: Jan 06
Patronage (January 2015 and December 2015): 21,695
Cost per trip: £4.01

Daubill and Deane and North Bolton Local Link service were added to the East Bolton Local Link contract from 03 April 2016. A combined Local Link service is currently out to tender.
Service commenced: Jan 00
Patronage (January 2015 and December 2015): 6,386
Cost per trip: £8.77

Usage of the service dropped continually throughout 2015,

The service is now being booked and scheduled through TfGM’s Contact Centre which will give us greater visibility of times of operation. A new Glossop extension has been added which partially replaces the 202 evening and Sunday journeys this is being funded wholly by Derbyshire County Council.
Hollinwood and Werneth

Service commenced: Dec 2004
Patronage (January 2015 and December 2015): 6,141
Cost per trip: £4.89

Patronage dropped continually throughout 2015 patronage over the year was down 10% and continued to drop in early 2016. The contract is currently out to tender with a number of options aimed at providing a cost effective minibus operated service.
Horwich

Service commenced: Sept 2001
Patronage (January 2015 and December 2015): 10,188
Cost per trip: £2.75
The patronage levels varied throughout the year. The current contract doesn’t end until 29 October 2017 when the service will be retendered.
North Bolton

Service commenced: Apr 2009
Patronage (January 2015 and December 2015): 1,099
Cost per trip: £12.51

Daubill and Deane and North Bolton Local Link service were added to the East Bolton Local Link contract from 3 April 2016. A combined Local Link service is currently out to tender.
Ramsbottom and Tottington

- Service commenced: Jan 2000
- Patronage (January 2015 and December 2015): 12,310
- Cost per trip: £3.09

Patronage was stable throughout 2015 on nine months patronage was above 1,000. The contract is currently out to tender with a number of options aimed at providing a cost effective minibus operated service.
Saddleworth and Mossley

Service commenced: Jul 2004
Patronage (January 2015 and December 2015): 34,663
Cost per trip: £4.70

On ten out of twelve months over 2,500 passengers travelled on the service per month. The current contract ends on 07 April 2018. However officers have agreed with the operator to change the service from being booked and scheduled by the operator and operated by taxis to being booked and scheduled by Trapeze and TfGM and operated by minibuses.