MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE METROLINK AND RAIL NETWORKS SUB COMMITTEE HELD ON 8 APRIL 2016 AT THE TOWN HALL, MANCHESTER

PRESENT:

Councillor David Chadwick  Bolton
Councillor Azra Ali  Manchester
Councillor Dzidra Noor  Manchester
Councillor Norman Briggs  Oldham
Councillor Ian Duckworth  Rochdale
Councillor Geoff Abell  Stockport
Councillor Dean Fitzpatrick  Stockport
Councillor Doreen Dickinson  Tameside (in the Chair)
Councillor Peter Robinson  Tameside
Councillor Michael Cordingley  Trafford
Councillor June Reilly  Trafford
Councillor Lynne Holland  Wigan

IN ATTENDANCE:

Peter Cushing  Metrolink Director, TfGM
Amanda White  Head of Rail, TfGM
Victoria Mercer  Metrolink Team, TfGM
Abiola Akinwale  Rail Team, TfGM
Paul Harris  GMIST

ALSO PRESENT:

Sarah Cunningham  Trans Pennine Express
Matthew Worman  Northern Rail
Karen Hornby  Network Rail
Nicola Watson  Metrolink MRDL

MR15/43  APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Roger Jones (Salford).

MR15/44  CHAIR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS

a) Welcome to Operators
The Chair extended a welcome to representatives from the train operators and thanked them for their continued attendance at Sub Committee meetings.

b) Welcome

Members also welcomed Abiola Akinwale, Rail Performance Manager at TfGM, who was attending his first meeting. It was noted that Abiola will be replacing Cat Dowell who is undertaking another role at TfGM and Members offered their thanks to Cat for her support to this committee.

MR15/45 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made in relation to any item on the agenda.

MR15/46 MINUTES

The Minutes of the previous meeting of the Metrolink and Rail Networks Sub Committee, held on 12 February 2016 were submitted.

Resolved/-

To approve the minutes of the Metrolink and Rail Networks Sub Committee, held on 12 February 2016, as a correct record.

MR15/47 METROLINK SERVICE PERFORMANCE

A report was presented which provided Members with an update on the performance of the Metrolink Network over monitoring periods 10 and 11, 4 January 2016 to 28 February 2016 inclusive.

Members noted that on 21 March, Metrolink services to Manchester Airport commenced operation from 03:00 hours from the Firswood stop.

Members noted that services on the Bury line had been disrupted following the recent derailment of a train on the East Lancashire Railway. Further details on this matter would be reported at the next meeting of this Sub Committee.

A Member highlighted recent incidents of cars accessing tracks at Holt Town. In response officers explained that further prominent signage had been installed at this location and that additional physical deterrents were also to be installed. It was also noted that officers were to monitor the progress of these new measures and if successful, replicate such in other areas across the Metrolink network.

In response to an enquiry from a Member, officers noted that services on the Oldham line were every 6 minutes. It was also noted that the services would
continue to be single trams. There was not capacity for the provision of double units during peak time periods.

Following an enquiry by a Member, officers confirmed that St Peters Square stop will be operational by the end of August 2016.

In response to an enquiry from a Member, Metrolink noted that discussions with Tram Divers in relation to rosters were continuing. An update on Customer Service Representatives would be provided to the Member concerned separately.

A Member suggested that future reports to this Sub Committee would benefit from the inclusion of details of the action taken by TfGM/MRDL on any delays caused to Metrolink services.

Following an enquiry from a Member, officers noted that Tram Drivers did not administer first aid to passengers. Drivers were responsible for the health and safety of all passengers on the tram and would ensure that any passenger in distress could access assistance quickly. In addition, Members noted that Travel Safe Officers carried a mobile defibrillator.

Resolved/-

To note the update on Metrolink Service Performance for Periods 10 and 11, as set out in the report.

MR15/48 DEPLOYMENT OF METROLINK CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES

A report was presented which provided Members with an update on the deployment and activities of Metrolink Customer Service Representatives during performance monitoring periods 10 and 11, 4 January 2016 to 28 February 2016 inclusive.

A Member highlighted incidents of anti-social behaviour on the Ashton line which reportedly involved a number of young people. Clarification was sought as to what processes were in place to inform districts of possible issues of anti-social behaviour by young people and the associated child protection concerns. In response, officers noted that the Travel Safe Unit was working in this area to address the anti-social behaviour and highlighted that the press reporting on this the matter had been exaggerated. Officers also undertook to speak to the Member concerned away from the meeting regarding how districts were informed of youth nuisance matters.

A Member suggested the introduction of on-board PSRs would help to deter anti-social behaviour and fare evasion.

A Member highlighted incidents of vandalism in the lifts at the Hollingwood stop which had affected accessibility. In response, Members noted that TfGM
continues works with Youth Agencies to help to educate young people and deter repeat issues.

Resolved/-

To note the update on the Deployment of Metrolink Customer Service Representatives, as set out in the report.

MR15/49 LOCAL RAIL SERVICE AND STATION ISSUES

A report was presented which informed Members of local rail service performance and station issues within Greater Manchester and the surrounding area during the monitoring periods 11 and 12 (10 January 2016 to 5 March 2016) inclusive. Updates were also provided on engineering works, Network Rail and train operator performance, Network Rail Delivery Plans, complaints and the new Northern and TransPennine franchises that commenced on 1 April 2016.

With regard to Northern Rail performance, it was noted that Greater Manchester Services had improved steadily following several periods of severe weather, but failed to meet target on both Periods 11 and 12 as a consequence of the introduction of a number of speed restrictions across the network. The main routes affected included:-

- Chester-Manchester Piccadilly via Altrincham - P11 85.3% and P12 83.5%
- Southport-Bolton-Manchester Airport/Manchester Victoria – P11 79.7% and P12 85.8%
- Liverpool-Warrington Central-Manchester Oxford Road - P11 80.8% and P12 83.0%
- Blackpool North – Manchester Victoria – P11 76.2% and P12 84.1%
- Preston – Hazel Grove – P11 69.4% and P12 77.0%.

Following an enquiry from a Member relating to the continuing poor performance of Southport-Bolton-Manchester Victoria/Airport services, Northern noted that an improvement team was looking at the timetable for this service to identify potential improvements.

In relation to rolling stock, a Member highlighted the proposal to relocate a number of Class 170 units to Chiltern Trains. In response, it was noted that TPE services on the Manchester-Sheffield-Hull route were to be retained until July 2016. Discussions regarding replacement units were ongoing.

With regard to the electrification of the Bolton and Wigan lines, a Member commented that bridge works take place as part of the electrification programme, to minimise disruption to passengers. In response, Network Rail undertook to discuss the work programme with the Member concerned at the rise of the meeting.
In response to an enquiry from a Member regarding improvements to facilities at stations, particularly those along the Chorley corridor, Northern explained that station surveys were being undertaken to understand what schemes may be prioritised.

Following a comment from a Member, Northern undertook to liaise with the operations team regarding Atherton rail services after 5.00 pm.

In response to an enquiry from a Member, officers noted that TfGM didn’t contribute to the Samaritans in relation to the work on suicide prevention. Work was continuing with Network Rail regarding the Suicide Prevention Strategy and details of frontline staff training processes regarding this matter were noted and an invitation to attend a future event would be extended to Members.

Following a comment from a Member regarding the environmental quality of Flowery Field Station, Network Rail undertook to meet the Member concerned on site.

Resolved/-

To note the update on local rail service performance.

MR15/50 RAIL NORTH UPDATE – PRESENTATION

Members received a presentation which provided an update on Rail North and Transport for the North and highlighted matters of governance, franchise management responsibilities, Rail North Partnership priorities and the Long Term Rail Strategy. An overview of TfGM’s Rail Strategy was also presented.

Resolved/-

To receive and note the presentation with thanks.

MR15/51 UPDATE ON THE ORDSALL CHORD

Network Rail provided a presentation which provided an update to Members on the work taking place in relation to the Ordsall Chord, outlined the details of the construction phase and highlighted rail capacity improvements the completed scheme will create.

A video on this scheme was also shared with the Sub Committee.

Resolved/-

To receive and note the presentation with thanks.
MR15/52  ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Members wished to place on record their thanks to Councillor Doreen Dickinson for Chairing Sub Committee the meeting this year.

In addition, the Chair wished Members well for the upcoming elections and reiterated the committee’s thanks to the Operators for their continued attendance at these meeting.