

Bury Council- 28 March 2012

Outlined below are some of the highlights of transport issues and information relating to Bury:-

1. Metrolink

- 1.1. TfGM is currently improving the passenger facilities on the Metrolink Bury line. The works will improve the passenger experience, extend the life of the assets and address existing maintenance issues.
- 1.2. The project objectives are:
 - to attract more passengers onto the Metrolink service;
 - to reduce the number of reported crimes and incidents at the stops;
 - to assist in obtaining the Safer Tram Stop accreditation for the stops; and
 - to provide an improvement in the customer experience for passengers.
- 1.3. Consultation with stakeholders including the Metrolink operator; Bury Council; Manchester City Council; Salford City Council and the Metrolink Design for Disability Reference Group, has been undertaken and will continue throughout the project.
- 1.4. Work began in June 2011 and throughout the construction programme all stops have remained in operation with disruption to passengers minimised. Construction work is practically complete at 6 of the 8 stops and will be completed in Spring 2012.
- 1.5. In 2011 TfGMs Passenger Services team worked with Metrolink RATP Dev Ltd (MRDL) to develop a customer care course designed to provide refresher training alongside valuable tools to improve the level of customer service that Metrolink provided. Preliminary sessions were undertaken with representatives from MRDL's Passenger Services team to establish the role each person plays within the organisation and the responsibilities they have to delivering a customer service. Feedback from the staff, management team and customers, by way of customer complaints, contributed towards the development of a customer care course tailored specifically to that department. The course, known as

“Smile”, was delivered to MRDL’s Passenger Services team by December 2011 and the focus on delivering customer service generated a significant number of commendations from customers as well as colleagues from TfGM and TfGMC. “Smile” is currently being delivered to MRDLs Operations team following the same preliminary process and work is being undertaken to roll out the initiative to the Engineering and management teams. By December 2012 the “Smile” initiative will have been rolled out organisation wide.

- 1.6. Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) is undertaking construction work on eleven Park and Ride (P&R) sites across the Metrolink network. The programme of works will create modern, fully accessible and integrated P&R facilities for Metrolink passengers. The investment in P&R facilities will represent a significant improvement for existing and new users. The car parks will be developed to a high specification and capable of achieving Police accreditation through the Park Mark scheme. The Bury P&R sites at Prestwich, Whitefield and Radcliffe, will have approximately 235 new parking spaces to supplement the 413 existing spaces. A design consultant is currently being appointed by TfGM and it is anticipated that construction for the three sites will be completed during 2013.

2. Bus

2.1. With regard to road-based Public Transport;

- 30 October 2011 saw the introduction of a new hourly bus service – the no. 8 operated by Transdev - linking Bury with Bacup and Burnley;
- 11 December 2011 saw the extension of the North Bury Local Link service to cover areas in Holcombe Village and Shuttleworth which were previously omitted by the service;
- Recent proposed evening reductions to the bus services linking Tottington, Bury, Jericho, Fairfield Hospital, Bamford and Rochdale have been deferred pending further analysis of patronage;
- There has been a series of “good housekeeping” measures promoted by TfGM which has helped to retain subsidised services across the District;

- As a result of successful funding bids for the Department for Transport's Green Bus Fund, Bury District has received brand new "green" buses (diesel-electric hybrids) operating on TfGM-subsidised bus services including 512 / 513 (Bury – Radcliffe – Kearsley – Bolton) and 484 (Prestwich – Swinton – Eccles – Salford Royal Hospital).

3. East Lancs and West Rochdale Area Study

3.1. Transport for Greater Manchester has been carrying out a study to identify;

- Transport issues acting as a constraint to achieving the Greater Manchester Transport Strategy objectives in the East Lancashire/West Rochdale area; and
- Cost-effective transport interventions which could enhance sustainable connectivity from the area to the Regional Centre and other key employment locations.

3.2. The study was funded and led by Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) with input from the local authorities (Bury MBC, Rochdale MBC, Rossendale BC and Lancashire CC), East Lancashire Railway and the Highways Agency.

3.3. Based on the findings of analyses of the travel market and transport network, a range of potential interventions have been explored to address constraints identified on the network which comprise:

- Rail based schemes using the East Lancashire Railway (ELR); and
- Bus based interventions including additional bus priority measures and P&R.

3.4. Work is currently being carried out to finalise the study outputs after which briefings will be arranged with Bury MBC, Rochdale MBC and other key stakeholders.

4. Local Sustainable Transport Fund

4.1. During July 2012, the Department for Transport gave full approval for the Greater Manchester LSTF 'Key Component' Bid which provides £4.94 million of capital and revenue grant resources over the four year period

from 2011/12 to 2014/15. A cycle hub is planned to be implemented at Bury Interchange in the 1st phase of this implementation, and received planning approval from Bury MBC in December 2011. It will provide around 50 enclosed, secure cycle parking stands, and lockers suitable for storing equipment like cycle helmets and wet weather clothing. Access will be provided on a membership basis by using a swipe card and CCTV will provide additional security.

- 4.2. This has been partnered with the introduction of a number of support packages such as adult cycle training, maintenance training and organised and led rides. 'Doctor Bike' sessions were held at Bury and Whitefield fire stations during March. A qualified cycle mechanic checked over the bikes and where possible adjusted brakes and gears and gave an overall 'health check' on the state of the bicycle.
- 4.3. The scheme is one of several being delivered under the Commuter Cycle Project, which will provide around 1,000 new secure cycle parking spaces across Greater Manchester along with a programme of cycling information, adult cycle training and cycle maintenance courses.
- 4.4. The Greater Manchester bid to the main Local Sustainable Transport Fund was submitted to the Department for Transport on the 20th December. This was for £34.3 million, and was partnered with £21 million of local and private funds.
- 4.5. If the bid is successful, Bury would receive a number of benefits. Sustainable access to Bury town centre will be improved firstly through the enhancement of four walking/cycling routes within the centre, principally by signing, but with also an improved crossing of the Bury-Manchester A56. Secondly, a walk/cycle route from residential areas to the north will be completed. The route from Holcombe Brook to the 35 acre Chamberhall business park is funded and currently being completed; and will be extended under the LSTF proposals through the business park to the town centre. This will provide the opportunity for faster journey times than would be possible by car, to both Chamberhall and the town centre from heavily populated residential areas to the north, by allowing cyclists to bypass the busiest road junction in the borough. It will also improve access to the business park, which is not served by bus.
- 4.6. The improvement of 2.3km of the existing National Cycle Route 6 (NCR6) south of Radcliffe to provide a cycle route from Radcliffe to Agecroft and

Manchester will provide an alternative route to Manchester, avoiding the congested A56. Public transport in the area is subject to overcrowding and cycling offers the opportunity for further modal shift. NCR6 provides a link between Radcliffe, where there is a high percentage of JSA claimants, and the Agecroft Commerce Park, and the industrial Clifton industrial area in neighbouring Salford, both of which are poorly served by bus.

4.7. There are also GM-wide improvements that would have clear benefits for Bury:

- access to employment projects, which include supporting jobseekers through travel advice and information, discounted public transport tickets and a 'bike back to work' scheme;
- travel support for businesses;
- smart travel information (providing information to travellers via the internet and smartphones, allowing them to plan journeys by all modes and to monitor their progress);
- Smart Ticketing, extending the Metrolink scheme to allow bus passengers to pay for tickets using a Smartcard; and
- Active Traffic Management, using real-time information (from Bluetooth detectors) to optimise traffic signals to ease traffic flow and give priority to late-running buses on 31 key routes. In Bury, this would benefit a number of roads, including the A58, A56 and A676 and A6053. The provision of real-time alerts of problems on the highway network would enable remedial action to be taken,

5. Countywide 'Forward Look'

5.1. In the coming months, key items brought to TfGM committee are likely to include;

- Bus Policy, taking into account the Competition Commission inquiry into the bus industry;
- Review of Public Transport Information;
- Review of GM Ticketing Scheme, and a multi-operator statutory scheme;

- Greater Manchester Road Activities Permits Scheme, which attempts to reduce the time taken by utilities and other companies to complete works which have a detrimental impact on the highway and subsequently cause congestion.