

Minutes of:	BURY LOCAL BEE NETWORK FORUM
Date of Meeting:	4 th December 2025
Present:	Councillor G Staples-Jones (in the Chair) Councillors D Green, J Harris and J Southworth
Also in attendance:	Bury Council Officers:- Joanne Betts Natalie Blackston Michael Cunliffe Jonathan Marsh- TfGM Noah Cashmore- Youth Council Representative Councillor L Ryder- Observing
Public Attendance:	There was one member of the public present, Joanna Maudsley (Chair of Bury Older People's Network)

1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chair made introductions and welcomed all present to the meeting.
Apologies were submitted by Councillors G Marsden, U Farooq and L Buggie (Bury Council's Public Health Specialist).
Councillor D Green acted as a substitute representative for Councillor Farooq.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No Declarations of Interest were submitted.

3 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

That the Minutes of the last meeting held on the 25th September 2025 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

It was agreed:

That the minutes be approved.

Under matters arising Joanna Maudsley enquired about the question asked at the last committee which was in relation to concessionary rates being applied on the app if using a mobile phone and Joanne Betts would chase this up and seek confirmation from Alison Chew at TfGM.

4 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Chair reported that no public questions had been submitted in advance of the agenda pack being published for this meeting.

Councillor Southworth asked a question at the meeting on behalf of a local resident in relation to paying a bus fare with money. A relative of the resident had been turned away from paying a fare with a £2 coin. Before any checks could be made details of which bus route was required along with was the person a child or adult.

Councillor Green asked a question at the meeting on behalf of a local Prestwich resident who could not attend and had submitted photographs of damaged cars caused from the number 93 bus service. Buses serving this route had again been navigating onto other streets and she asked was there adequate driver training and GPS navigation. Would there also be a review of the route as there is heavy residential parking along the route and roads are becoming narrower with parallel parking most sides.

Discussions took place that this had occurred since the operator stagecoach took over and the Chair was happy to receive all the details for the resident and investigate the matter.

Councillor Ryder who was in attendance at the meeting commented on the number 90 bus service from Simister to Prestwich. It had been re-routed with one bus per hour along with no services on a Sunday and she had concerns that older people relied on the service. It was now too far a walk to the Longfield Centre for community gatherings and could a smaller service bus be looked into which could even avoid rush hour. There was regeneration work going on until July and that would be a lot of time for older people not to venture out.

The Chair stated he had received similar correspondence from a resident impacted and was happy to take the matter away and write to the relevant parties.

Councillor Green suggested if the ring and ride services could be signposted better.

Councillor Green commented on temporary road works caused by utility companies resulting in bus routes being diverted. No information had been displayed at the usual bus stops nor had local Councillors been informed of the re-routing. She would bring this matter up at the monthly regeneration meetings and make a request if TFGM could attend.

5

YOUTH REPRESENTATIVE UPDATE

The Chair introduced Noah Cashmore who was the nominated youth representative from the Youth Council to attend the Bury Bee Network Forum.

Noah reported he had attended the Circles of Influence Conference in mid-November which involved all schools in Bury talking about issues. Many items were in relation to public transport and feedback obtained enquired if a bigger bus could be provided for the number 480 service as it was very crowded during school start and finish times.

Safety on the Metrolink was addressed and the Besses and Whitefield stations felt unsafe whilst more Childsafe Officers were required and needed to help more rather than wearing headphones.

Bury Interchange seemed to attract lots of anti-social behaviour between the hours of 7.00-8.00pm with a strong smell of cannabis. The Youth MP for Bury had also raised these issues.

The Chair commented that there would be an increase of CCTV at the interchange and some of the Metrolink Stations are old train station platforms.

Noah added the number 487 service was also very crowded during school start and finish times and could one bus be provided for the general public with one for schools.

Noah also informed the meeting that the condition of some buses was not good with puddles of muddy water and litter. He asked if litter bins could be provided to help with the environmental impact.

The Chair stated that the above request could be made and dirty buses could attract bad behaviour.

Joanne Betts enquired if there was a feedback report from the Circles of Influence Conference that could be passed onto TfGM.

Johnathan Marsh added this would help the network plan for a better future and it was good to respond to consultations.

The Chair asked if Officers from the Childrens Youth Service could help provide the feedback information for TfGM.

It was agreed:

That the update be noted.

6

BEE NETWORK QUARTERLY UPDATE

Joanne Betts, Bury Council's Strategic Transport Lead presented a report from Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) on progress in delivering the Bee Network, Greater Manchester's plan for a high-quality, affordable and fully integrated public transport and active travel system for the people and businesses of Greater Manchester.

The update between August and November included information on:-

- Industrial action
- The Local Transport Plan update
- Simpler and fairer rail fares
- Bee Network improvements including:
- A new and enhanced 24/7 TravelSafe LiveChat
- The next phase of the concessionary bus travel trial
- The new hourly night buses services on the 135 route between Manchester and Bury on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights.
- Bury Interchange and
- Network Patronage and Performance

Joanne commented that of the 1,300 staff at TfGM, the majority are not striking and remaining staff are working hard to minimise the impact of this action on passengers and communities, building on experiences and insight from the first strike days.

From Sunday the 7th December, rail fares across Greater Manchester would become simpler, as a range of fares are replaced with just two simple options for everyone who buys a ticket on the day, which are:- Anytime and Off-peak. Greater Manchester will be one of the first areas in the country to benefit from this type of rail fare reform. It also marks an important first step towards integrating rail into the Bee Network from 2026 onwards, paving the way for contactless (Pay as you go) and fare capping across bus, tram and train.

A new and enhanced 24/7 TravelSafe LiveChat allowing passengers to discreetly report criminal or antisocial behaviour on public transport had been launched as part of ongoing efforts to make passengers safe, and feel safe, while travelling on the Bee Network. Building on the existing LiveChat managed by Greater Manchester Police, people can now report issues via the Bee Network app, connecting them to police call handlers. When someone uses the new service, they will be connected to a real person who can provide support 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The next phase of the concessionary bus travel trial went ahead to help TfGM to further assess the impact of lifting the 9.30am restriction for those with a TfGM-issued concessionary travel pass (approximately 400,000 older and disabled people in GM). This phase of the trial takes place in what is traditionally the busiest month on the network and follows an earlier phase in August. At the conclusion of the trial, the evidence gathered during it, including passenger feedback, patronage and pass usage, would be assessed before a decision is made on whether the move can be made permanent.

Two new hourly night buses services were launched in September. The 135 (Manchester – Prestwich – Bury) and the 17/17a (Manchester – Middleton – Rochdale) connects Bury and Rochdale town centres with Manchester city centre on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights.

From the 1st September, around 150,000 18–21-year-olds in Greater Manchester are able to apply for a half-price 28-day bus travelcard (priced at £40, half the price of the equivalent adult fare).

Bury Interchange – The planning application to create a new southern access to Metrolink (including a footbridge, lift and stairs) was approved by Bury Council on the 22nd July, with associated applications for a temporary northern access and temporary construction compound approved in September. Detailed design for this first phase of works is well underway. Outline design for the main interchange and potential residential development is complete to progress to the next stage of design development.

As part of the ongoing programme of maintenance and renewal works across the Metrolink network there has been work on the Bury line to replace beams in the Whitefield Tunnel. This work was delayed due to the discovery of bats in the tunnel but was completed in late October.

Following the completion of work to address overhanging trees on Moor Lane in Salford, Bee Network bus services 93 and 95 had returned to their normal route along Kersal Road. Councillor Green reported this had been a major problem in her ward and asked if the problem could be anticipated again for next year.

It was agreed:

That the report be noted.

7

DRAFT LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN - GREATER MANCHESTER TRANSPORT STRATEGY 2050 AND TRANSPORT DELIVERY PLAN (2027-2037)

Jonathan Marsh, Head of Strategic Planning at TfGM presented a report on how Greater Manchester is updating its statutory Local Transport Plan, replacing GM2040 Transport Strategy with the GM Transport Strategy 2050 and the GM Transport Delivery Plan (2027-37). These documents set out how the Bee Network and wider transport system will evolve to support a thriving, sustainable city region.

The Forum was presented with the draft GM Transport Strategy 2050 and GM Transport Delivery Plan (2027-37), including key proposals in Bury.

GM authorities delivered around £1.5 billion of transport capital projects in last 10 years, with an additional £650 million already committed up to March 2027.

GM were awarded just under £2.5 billion through the Transport for City Regions programme (2027-2032) in 2025 Spending Review and the Delivery Plan will set priorities.

The Delivery Plan sets out priorities to sustain, grow, and transform the Bee Network and wider transport system, including:-

- Bringing rail into the Bee Network.
- Expanding walking, wheeling, and cycling routes.
- New Metrolink lines and tram-train options.
- Upgrading interchanges and travel hubs.
- Better bus services and ticketing.
- Future metro/underground feasibility.

The draft plan includes specific interventions for Bury with consultations in early December.

The Metrolink Bury line would see all stops upgraded, with Heaton Park as a priority and this would be done from January 2027 with some completed before then.

As part of the consultation, a Bury drop-in session on the draft GM Transport Strategy 2050 and Delivery Plan had been arranged for Tuesday the 27th January, between 2:30–5:00 pm, at the area outside TJ Hughes in the Mill Gate Shopping Centre. Following discussions TFGM staff would be asked to extend the timeslot to cover the earlier lunchtime period.

Consultation will be open to anyone interested in the future of transport in Greater Manchester from the 9th December to the 9th March 2026. People can answer the consultation as a member of the public or in an official capacity (e.g. as an elected representative, statutory consultee, business, or other organisation).

The Chair requested that all Councillors present should try and promote the consultation in their wards and Jonathan Marsh added that promotional materials can be provided if required.

It was agreed:

That the presentation be noted.

8

REQUESTS FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The Chair suggested an email be sent out to Members of the Forum in advance of the agenda being produced for possible items.

9

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed:

That the next meeting will be held at 6.00pm on Tuesday the 17th March 2026 at Bury Town Hall.

COUNCILLOR G STAPLES-JONES
Chair

(Note: The meeting started at 6.00pm and ended at 7.35pm)