

Joint Authority Questions

1. Greater Manchester Pensions Fund - Cllr Pickstone

Council the Council's representative to the Greater Manchester Pensions Fund inform members why GMPF justify investing £989 million in companies involved in Fracking? (Source: Fossil Free UK).

The Greater Manchester Pension Fund has not invested nearly a billion pounds in fracking. Such a statement is misleading and the Pension Fund is not aware of any direct investment in fracking. What has been referred to here, has probably been calculated by adding up all amounts in companies that are household names that provide fuel, such as BP and Centrica British Gas.

The Fund has long identified climate change as a key risk and the question fails to recognise the significant work that the Greater Manchester Pension Fund is undertaking to deliver its obligations, whilst seeking to achieve the Paris Agreement goal of 100% of pension fund assets being compatible with net-zero emissions, by 2050. This is despite financial decarbonisation of the economy being a complex and challenging issue, particularly for long-term investors such as pension funds.

Significantly the Greater Manchester Pension Fund has been recognised as being the thirtieth best out of the World's Top 500 Institutional Investors for taking account of climate change risk; and the second best of all Local Government Pension Schemes after the Environment Agency.

It has also been acknowledged and recognised as being committed to the transition to a low carbon economy and supporting efforts to address climate change and by influencing and pushing for greater transparency on companies' business models. The Greater Manchester Pension Fund continues to be the biggest local government pension investor in low-carbon sources. It operates within a clear ethical framework and seeks to change the behaviours of the companies it invests in to become carbon neutral; whilst ensuring it protects the pensions of our members and reduces costs to taxpayers.

Friends of the Earth Manchester and Fossil Free GM were invited to the Greater Manchester Pension Fund's first stakeholder "stewardship day" last year. This was the first in local government and where 80% of the Fund's stakeholders agreed with the approach. The Pension Fund will continue to keep its "Responsible Investment Policy" under review, in order to bring it into line with the goals set out in the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change

2. Greater Manchester Waste and Recycling Committee - Cllr Pickstone

Could the Council's representative to the Greater Manchester Waste and Recycling Committee inform members of what assurances are in place to ensure that the plastics recycled by residents are being safely recycled and no materials are dumped into the environment?

Answer: Cllr Quinn

Once a council vehicle has collected recycling from residents, it delivers the load to one of our transfer loading stations and then checked for contamination (items that would affect the ability to recycle the materials). If incorrect items are present, the site staff will take measures to remove them, to allow the load to go for processing. If the load is too contaminated, this waste material would be diverted to the Runcorn Energy from Waste plant, as a Refuse Derived Fuel, which is used to generate electricity.

The only type of plastics that can be recycled in Greater Manchester are plastic bottles Plastic bottles are collected in the comingled bin along with glass and metal cans. These are all sent to the Materials Recovery Facility in Sharston for sorting. Here the recycling is separated by different sorting technologies. Plastic bottles are sorted into different types – HDPE, PVC and PET – and then baled to be sent on for recycling. Bales of plastic bottles are currently sent to the Viridor recycling plant in Skelmersdale and are turned into plastic flake to be used in new products. The end market can and does change depending on demand for raw materials, at the moment, 100% is being reprocessed in the UK but sometimes this can change.

Other types of plastic, such as plastic pots, tubs and trays, go in the residual waste bin. . This waste is processed as a Refuse Derived Fuel and sent to the Runcorn Energy from Waste plant which is used to generate electricity. Therefore no plastic waste is dumped.

Our contractor Viridor is also monitored closely by the Contract Services Team to ensure they are fully complying with waste management legislation. Litter picking is also carried out regularly in and around the site by the Viridor operatives to ensure any windblown material is contained. Contract monitors visit the sites to check the correct procedures and policies are being followed.

3. Greater Manchester Police and Crime Panel - Cllr S Wright

Could the Council's representative on the Greater Manchester Police and Crime Panel inform members of trends of firework related anti-social behaviour around the recent bonfire night?

Answer: Cllr Tariq:

As Members will know; as well as the fun and spectacle of the period around Bonfire night there is also an element that sets out to cause trouble. For a number of years there has been a campaign in the run-up to Bonfire night promoting responsible behaviour and highlighting the perils of not doing so.

This year the campaign was also supported through the BSafeBCool project which went into most secondary schools in the borough and provided messages about safety, including specific messaging about

responsible behaviour at this time of the year. Feedback from this event has been extremely positive from both teachers and pupils and we will build on this next year,

This year the volume of incidents recorded by Police as 'firework-related' in the period around Bonfire night was down 44% on the previous year and down 200% on Bonfire Night itself. This is encouraging, especially given that it came on the back of successive rises from previous years.

Unfortunately, the Fire Service don't release their figures until next year and, given that in Bury deliberate fires were up 25% from 2016 to 2017, it will be interesting to see if the trend follows that of the Police. Another interesting statistic to note will be whether attacks on firefighters are up as they increased over 200% across Greater Manchester from 2016 to 2017.

We continue to take this issue seriously and will be looking to understand the trends when we have all of the data back and assess whether the new inputs have been a trigger for any decreases we have seen. As lead for this area I will report back but am pleased with the progress we have made in partnership with the Police and other services.

4. TFGM – Councillor Y Wright

People waiting at the bus stop outside Castle Leisure Centre often have their view of approaching buses obscured by one or even two coaches parked while waiting for school children in the centre having a swimming lesson. A recent incident saw a man and a lady having to stand in the middle of the road in order to watch for the bus and make sure it stopped which is a very dangerous situation. This happens on a regular basis. Could the Council's representative on GMPTA look at the feasibility of the bus stop being moved further up Bolton street, outside the entrance to the East Lancs railway, leaving space further down for coaches with shorter and more direct access to the leisure centre for pupils.

Answer: Cllr Bayley:

There is a previous enquiry from 2015 on this matter, where it was decided to retain the stop/ shelter where it is and advise the operators at the time (First and Rosso) to observe the stop, if visibility was obstructed by the coaches.

A site visit has been scheduled with Bury MBC/ Greater Manchester Police on the 11 December to review the layout of the existing Bus Stop/ Coach parking outside Castle Leisure / ELR on Bolton St, Bury. The findings will be fed back to Councillor Y Wright following this meeting.

5. TFGM – Cllr Walmsley

Could the TfGM representative provide council with an update on the new Metrolink Early Bird ticketing initiative and are there any plans to extend provision in the new year?

Answer: Cllr Bayley:

As part of the Mayor's 'Congestion Deal' TfGM committed to "offer cheaper Metrolink fares for early morning travel, to encourage people to travel at quieter times." This recognises the critical part that behaviour change and modal shift will have to tackle congestion.

The Mayor announced a series of measures to tackle congestion as part of the deal, including an 'early bird' Metrolink offer launched on 12 November 2018.

This is a pilot offer, and evaluation of take-up and value for money will be undertaken to inform a decision on whether to bring forward a more permanent early morning travel offer.

There are two products available:

- Early Bird – travel before 07:30 for £1 (tickets expire at 07:30)**
- Early Bird Plus – travel before 07:30, between 13:00 and 15:30, and after 19:00 for £3**

The time restrictions on both products ensure that the journeys made using the products do not adversely impact full fare-paying customers during the periods of highest demand.

A marketing campaign is underway to promote the Early bird pilot.

6. TFGM – Cllr Hayes

Can the TfGM representative advise whether bus operators are planning to put up bus fares in the New Year in common with previous years.

Answer: Cllr Bayley:

Operators have advised that they are reviewing fares for the New Year, but the exact impact is as yet not know.