

Joint Authority Questions

1. Can the Council's TfGM representative provide us an update on First Bus selling their Queens Road depot and disposing of 160 buses and tell us how this will affect Bury? **Cllr Walmsley**

Councillor Bayley to respond.....

On Tuesday 19 February, it was announced formally that the Queens Road depot and the services that operate from it would be purchased by the Go Ahead Group. The intended sale includes the depot site at Queens Road and the bus fleet of around 160 vehicles.

No impact on services operating in Bury is anticipated.

First have provided assurances that existing local bus services from the Queens Road site will continue to operate until the sale is completed and customers should see no changes to their daily journeys throughout this period of transition. First has advised that there will be continued use of the relevant First branded tickets on what will become the Go Ahead network, and vice versa.

Employees who work for the Queens Road bus operation will transfer to the Go-Ahead Group. TfGM has sought assurances from First Manchester that they will provide support for staff during this period of transition and that passengers will not be affected by any changes to service levels.

TfGM officers have held discussions with the Go Ahead team and will be engaging in further, dialogue in the coming weeks to ensure that all necessary requirements are met. These will include them providing the acquired services that operate under contract to TfGM as well as the other factors that as a new operator to Greater Manchester they should be aware of to ensure that the transition is a smooth one. Go Ahead has confirmed that its services will operate as Go North West. All bus services that operate from the Oldham and Bolton depots, including Vantage, will remain unchanged and will continue to be operated by First Manchester.

2. Could the leader provide us with the statistics on the number of hate crimes reported to GMP in the last 12 months across Bury and explain how this compares to previous years? **Cllr Walmsley**

Councillor Tariq to respond.....

Experiencing hate crime can be a particularly frightening experience as you've been targeted because of who you are or who your attacker thinks you are. Unlike non-identity related offences, the attack is very personal and specifically targeted, which means it's less likely to be a random attack.

Hate incidents can feel like crimes to people who suffer them and often escalate to crimes or tension in a community. Incidents can be reported but the police can only prosecute when the law is broken.

As Members will know spikes in Hate Crime such as following the Manchester Bombing or the Brexit referendum gain much media coverage but Hate Crime is on the rise across the country more generally - [94,000 hate crimes](#) were recorded by the police in England and Wales in 2017/18. That's an increase of 17% on the previous year and more than double the number five years ago.

In Bury in the 12 months to January 2019 there were 512 Hate Crimes in Bury, which was actually down slightly from the 539 in the previous 12 months. In the year before that there were 395 recorded Hate Crimes for Bury which, on the face of it, was a worrying 36% jump. The reasons for the significant increase are varied but the single most crucial reason was a significant change in recording practices from Greater Manchester Police. It is felt that the current figure is a more accurate representation but it does make historic comparison more difficult.

Regardless of whether Hate Crime is increasing or not it continues to be a major priority for this Council. It is clear that issues like Hate Crime, which have deep-rooted cultural motivations, cannot be addressed by any single agency which is why Members will be reassured to hear that the multi-agency Hate Crime Forum continues to meet regularly. Reporting to the Community Safety Partnership, the Forum consists of statutory and voluntary services all working to a common Action Plan.

In February we celebrated Hate Crime Awareness week with events across the borough to raise awareness of the impact of Hate Crime and increase reporting. The week was a huge success and culminated in a big event in the Millgate Centre which drew a lot of attention.

This year we intend to work more closely with our 3rd Party Reporting Centres which are key to ensuring that people feel safe to report Hate Crime and also act as a beacon in communities, promoting the idea of zero tolerance to Hate Crime. We also intend to reach out to businesses and engage them in this work through a charter.

Finally, we will continue the excellent anti-hate crime work in schools which recognises that hate crime is not just a long term course of action but one that spans through all ages and strands of society.

3. Could the Council's Representative on the Police and Crime Panel update members on what Greater Manchester Police is doing to improve from its current position of having the worst level nationally of hate crimes which are 'closed without a suspect'? **Cllr Pickstone**

Councillor Tariq to respond.....

It is true that 46% of recorded racially and religiously-aggravated offences are closed without a suspect being identified, which is a disappointing trend seen nationwide.

I'm sure members will agree that this is not a reflection on how seriously the Police take these issues but clearly, and this is a view shared by the Force lead for Hate Crime Ass. Chief Constable Wasim Chaudhry, there is some way to go to reassure communities of that.

The primary reason for this figure is the fact that Greater Manchester have been particularly successful in increasing the reporting of Hate Crime. Through the regional Hate Crime Awareness Week, the National Hate Crime Awareness Week and the ongoing campaigns and community work that we do throughout the year we have redoubled our efforts to promote the reporting of all Hate Crimes, no matter how much information the victim has or the number of witnesses.

Clearly, if people are reporting crimes now that a few years they wouldn't have due to having scant evidence or witnesses this will have an impact on the ability to solve these crimes. However, it does give us a much more accurate picture of the scale of the issue we're facing.

For example, on occasions where there are not witnesses or CCTV, such as vandalism it may not be possible to identify suspects but it helps with intelligence gathering and can identify any patterns or links between crimes which can help to tackle Hate Crime in the future.

Members may rest assured that through the Police & Crime Panel I will be encouraging the Police to do more to follow all active lines of enquiry to trace suspects and bring Offenders to justice. And locally I will ensure that this issue is raised through the Community Safety Partnership.

I will report back progress on this matter in the future.

4. Could the Council's representative to the Transport for Greater Manchester Committee inform members how many buses are used each day to provide subsidised bus services in Greater Manchester? How many of these buses currently meet the emissions standards set by the proposed Clean Air Zones? **Cllr Pickstone**

Councillor Bayley to respond.....

TfGM does not have an exact figure as TfGM procures services and it is up to the operators how they resource them. In terms of the overall Greater Manchester bus fleet, as at Autumn 2018 approximately 90% of buses operating in GM (including those on cross-boundary services) do not comply with the standards that are being set within the draft Clean Air Zone proposal in that they are either Euro V or older. However, an important component of the Clean Air Plan Outline Business Case (OBC) is a Clean Bus Fund. This is intended to provide support to retrofit the majority of existing Euro IV and V buses with flexibility for the move to an EV bus network, via financial assistance towards charging infrastructure, prioritised on Air Quality benefits and commercial contribution. Greater Manchester has also set out an expectation from government for an action to support the replacement of non-compliant buses.

5. Could the Council's representative to the Transport for Greater Manchester Committee inform members on the take-up of the 'Heywood Link' service by residents who live in Bury (e.g. in the Heywood Old Road area?) **Cllr D'Albert**

Councillor Bayley to respond.....

Between October 2018 and March 2019 there were 4,688 trips on the Heywood Local Link service of which 261 were made by residents registered with a Bury postcode. This only represents 5% of trips on this service, as the service is more widely used by Rochdale residents due to the area served. It should be noted however that there are more journeys made to or from the Bury area of the service including by non-Bury residents (821 trips (17.5%) over the same period) who are accessing work, leisure, or other services.