



Title            **Bury Transport Questions**

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- 1        Could the Authority's spokesperson on the Transport for Greater Manchester Committee inform members the impact on ticket prices for passengers who now need to use two different bus operators on services formerly run by First Manchester. What have you done to address this issue? Councillor Pickstone**
- 1.1       First Manchester's Queens Road and Bolton depots in summer 2019 were bought by Go North West and Diamond Bus respectively. As part of this, a ticketing arrangement was agreed between First Manchester, Go North West and Diamond Bus to allow use of each individual operators' tickets on each other's services to mitigate the impact on passengers who had previously purchased First Manchester products and needed to travel on services run by different operators. Operators decided to end this ticketing arrangement on 31 December 2019.
- 1.2       TfGM officers have discussed the situation with all three operators. For customers who have annual passes valid beyond 1 January 2020, the operators will refund, if asked, the pro-rata amount from 1 January 2020 until the pass end date.
- 1.3       All three operators have stated that they believe that the majority of passengers do not need to interchange between operators and that there should therefore be no significant impact.
- 1.4       It is noted however that some passengers may need to interchange. These passengers, who travel on services provided by different operators, now need to purchase a multi-operator product to make the same journey. For example, the current price of a 7-day mobile product, valid on the individual operators' service only, is either £16 (Go North West) or £17 (First Manchester and Diamond Bus) The equivalent 7-day multi-operator product is currently £19.50.

- 1.5 In order to assist passengers who are able to use the services of one operator, TfGM has arranged to sell individual operator tickets in our Travelshops. First and GoAhead products are now available, with Diamond tickets becoming available in the near future.
- 2 Could the Authority's spokesperson on the Transport for Greater Manchester Committee give us a progress update on the issue of conductors on trams, following resolutions from Bury and other councils requesting that these be introduced on a trial basis? Councillor Powell**
- 2.1 As part of the TravelSafe Partnership, a new Transport Unit consisting of more than 60 police officers, was launched on 18 November 2019. The unit has already had a significant impact in deterring crime and ASB.
- 2.2 They have carried out a number of high profile and undercover operations across the bus and tram networks. In its first month, the unit made 35 arrests, found and safely returned 22 people missing from home, undertook almost 800 searches (stop and search or stop and account), recovered five weapons, issued numerous cannabis warnings, seized 45 vehicles for various offences and secured positive drug and alcohol tests.
- 2.3 There has been various positive media articles and significant positive reach and engagement across social media about the work being done by the unit as part of the TravelSafe Partnership.
- 2.4 Overall across the network, there has been a 6% reduction in incidents of crime and ASB reported to the partnership in 2019 compared to 2018, with incidents at Metrolink stops down by 2% and on tram incidents down by 27%. Fare evasion is also down across the network.
- 2.5 The Bury Line has been identified as a Tactical Priority for the TravelSafe Partnership, which means there will be a closer look at the issues and some targeted work around prevention, engagement and enforcement during this current period (for eight weeks minimum). This will be across the line but will also include work with Bury College which features heavily in the incidents reported on the Interchange.
- 2.6 The operator KeolisAmey is currently in the process of procuring new security arrangements, which we anticipate will bring additional improvements for passengers.

2.7 There are currently no immediate plans to introduce conductors on the tram network, but this will be kept under review.

**3 Could the Authority's spokesperson on Transport for Greater Manchester Committee inform members how many of the 27 new trams arriving in 2020 will be used on the Bury Altrincham and Bury Piccadilly routes and what proportion of the remaining single tram services will be replaced by double trams? Councillor Pickstone**

3.1 Patronage on the Metrolink network is increasing, including on the Bury line.

3.2 Delivery of new trams will commence from July 2020, with the first three deliveries being utilised on the Trafford Park Line. Bury line services will see new trams in operation by the end of 2020.

3.3 Currently, seven of the ten services per hour on the Bury line are double units. With the addition of the new trams, capacity will be increased incrementally until mid-2021, at which point TfGM plans for all services departing from Bury to be double units, running at six-minute intervals during peak times.

**4 Can the representative for TfGM give council an update to improvements to the Bury Metrolink line? Councillor Quinn**

4.1 In addition to increased capacity from the introduction of new trams to the network, TfGM are working on a number of other improvements to services in and around the Bury area. This includes;

- Additional Park and Ride provision at Radcliffe and Whitefield
- Renewal and upgrade of Heaton Park and Whitefield stops
- Additional traction power substations

4.2 The TfGM Draft Delivery Plan 2020-2025 sets out the practical transport actions that TfGM are planning to take over the next five years. As part of these plans, TfGM will complete a business case for a potential Metrolink stop at Elton Reservoir. This will offer a fast and frequent service into Manchester city centre and Bury, as well as support potential development as laid out in the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework.

**5 The X41 is due to be scrapped which many residents in Ramsbottom and across the borough rely on to travel to Manchester. Will the Leader consider writing to Transdev to ask them to reconsider the dropping of this service? Cllr. Ian Schofield**

- 5.1 Transdev notified TfGM in December 2019 of their intention to withdraw their commercial express service X41 with effect from 26th January 2020. The service operates between South Lancashire (Accrington; Edenfield) into North of Bury then directly to Manchester City Centre. The service runs daily on an hourly basis with half hourly services in the Monday to Friday peak.
- 5.2 Following the decision by Transdev to withdraw the service, meetings and discussions have been taking place between Transdev, TfGM, Local MPs and Councillors to understand the reasons behind the withdrawal and to establish if there are any opportunities for the service to be reinstated or replaced.
- 5.3 The withdrawal of the service is due to be considered at Greater Manchester Transport Committee on Friday 17 January. The Committee oversees a limited budget to subsidise services where the commercial bus market withdraws services or changes routes. This budget is under significant pressure and the Committee prioritises those services considered essential for social need. GMTC/TfGM does not generally provide subsidy for the provision of express services into Manchester City Centre and particularly not in cases of full-service withdrawal by an operator. The alternative routes for passengers are via Bury.
- 5.4 Transdev has advised that the service, despite a competitive ticket price, has struggled to compete with tram and rail services, faced congestion issues on the motorway, and is poorly used in the Ramsbottom area. Their decision to fully withdraw the service indicates that in their view it is a failing service that is no longer commercially viable.

**6 Can the Leader of the Council advise what extra benefits will come of the TFGM £10 charge? Cllr. Robert Caserta**

- 6.1 It is estimated that the £10 annual charge to add tram and train to the pension-age concessionary travel pass will generate an annual income of circa **£1.25million**. This money will be ring-fenced for investment back into public transport services, specifically the bus network. It will also

enable TfGM to continue to fund local concessionary travel schemes in the future, making sure that they are sustainable in the long-term.

- 6.2 The annual £10 charge to add tram and train travel also brings the concessionary pass for people of pensionable age into line with the range of other concessionary passes that are available, including Our Pass - the concessionary travel card for 16-18 year olds.

**7 Please could the leader tell us what the council can do to help Ramsbottom councillor's in our efforts to save the X41 bus services which provides vital direct transport link residents between Ramsbottom and Manchester? Cllr Cummins**

- 7.1 Please refer to answer 5.1

**8 The consultation on a proposed bus franchising scheme for Greater Manchester has just ended. Could the Leader please tell us what the next steps will be in this process, and what difference the proposed changes would mean for Bury residents, if approved? Cllr Black**

- 8.1 Currently, in Greater Manchester, individual bus companies decide the routes, frequencies, fares and standards. There is no coordination and limited oversight. The public sector fills in the gaps and funds services, where possible, in areas where bus companies decide not to run a service.
- 8.2 Franchising means bus services – including routes, frequencies, fares and standards – would be brought under local control. Under franchising, GMCA would coordinate the bus network and contract bus companies to run the services, with profit being reinvested in the buses. This would enable GMCA to develop an integrated, multimodal public transport network that can meet the demands of both passengers and the city-region's economy. This would include a unifying brand, tickets that can be used on all buses as well as Metrolink and an ambition for a daily cap. Franchising also provides the best basis to secure future investment in Greater Manchester's bus network.
- 8.3 We are pleased that more than 8,000 people and organisations, including nearly 500 from Bury, responded to the consultation on this important issue. Improving public transport is a top priority for Greater Manchester and buses are a vital part of this. Three out of four public transport

journeys in Greater Manchester are made by bus, and Bury residents depend on them to get to work, the shops and essential services.

- 8.4 The responses to the consultation are now being analysed by independent market research agency Ipsos MORI, and this analysis will then be published as part of a GMCA report on the outcome of the consultation. The responses to the consultation, as well as the Assessment, will inform the Mayor's decision whether to implement the proposed bus franchising scheme. It is anticipated that this decision will be made in March at the earliest.