

Classification: Open	Decision Type: Non-Key
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Report to:	Cabinet	Date: 25 th September 2024
Subject:	Establishing a Bury Local Bee Network Forum	
Report of	Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth	

Summary

1. This report sets out a proposal to establish a Bury Local Bee Network Forum to ensure that the coordination and development of the Bee Network, Greater Manchester’s vision for a joined-up travel network that works for everyone, is informed by Bury’s local views and priorities.

Recommendation(s)

2. It is recommended that Cabinet:
 - i. Note the establishment of a Bury Local Bee Network Forum.

Reasons for recommendation(s)

3. Establishing a Bury Local Bee Network Forum will help to ensure that the Bee Network meets Bury’s local needs and priorities as it develops. It will also provide a Forum where local transport issues can be raised and where the impact of, and opportunities arising from, decisions made by the GM Bee Network Committee can be considered. It will also provide a Forum where consultations on local and city-region transport matters can be considered.
4. The Greater Manchester Bee Network Committee has recommended that all GM Local Authorities establish a Forum in their areas to ensure better control and coordination over deployment of services across the Bee Network.

Alternative options considered and rejected

5. No other options were considered/were applicable.

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Background

6. The Bee Network is Greater Manchester's ambitious plan for an integrated, low-cost, high-frequency public transport network, bringing together local trams, buses and hire bikes – and ultimately local train services – with the largest walking, wheeling and cycling network in the country.
7. It was launched in September 2023 with the introduction of Greater Manchester's first franchised bus services which started running in Bolton, Wigan and parts of Salford and Bury. By March 2024, all Bury's bus services were part of the franchise scheme. By January 2025, all Greater Manchester's bus services will be part of the franchised Bee Network.
8. The Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) has put new governance arrangements in place to support the development of the Bee Network by establishing a new Bee Network Committee to lead transport decision-making at a regional level and take greater ownership and responsibility for Greater Manchester's integrated transport network. The GM Bee Network Committee has replaced the former Greater Manchester Transport Committee.
9. The GM Bee Network Committee has an important role in developing transport policy, and advising and supporting the Constituent Councils, the GMCA and the GM Mayor on specific transport issues. By establishing a Bury Local Bee Network Forum, Bury Council can ensure that as the Bee Network develops it does so in a way that best meets local needs and priorities and supports our ambitious growth plans and Let's Do It vision of faster economic growth than the national average, with lower than national average levels of deprivation. As part of the Northern Gateway proposal, for example, we need to ensure that there are new high-frequency Bee Network bus services connecting residents directly to new employment opportunities.
10. The Bee Network must develop in a way that helps deliver our Local Transport Strategy vision by providing Bury residents with safe, reliable and affordable access to key services and employment opportunities in the Borough and beyond by public transport, walking wheeling or cycling. Having a Local Bee Network Forum will ensure that voice of Bury residents is heard and can help to inform and influence the development of the Bee Network.
11. The Forum could get involved in reviews of the franchised bus network as they relate to the Borough. TfGM are carrying out a series of Network Reviews to better understand bus services across the city-region so that they can better plan the bus network. They are seeking community feedback to help identify opportunities for change and improvement. A review of Bury's

Bee Network Bus Services began in August 2024, with community feedback being sought by the end of October. This is the first stage of the process and TfGM will continue to engage with stakeholders as they develop the review through the subsequent stages of the overall process. In addition to reviews based on geographical areas of Greater Manchester, a programme of thematic reviews – for example, opportunities for night-buses, orbital services, or priority routes – also gets underway from January 2025.

12. The Forum will also be a place where transport issues can be raised and where the impact of, and opportunities arising from, the transport policies developed by the GM Bee Network Committee can be considered. Having the Bury Council appointment/substitute Member appointment to GMCA Bee Network Committee on the Bury Local Bee Network Forum will ensure there is a clear connection between the GM Committee and the Local Forum. Local member input into the Bee Network Committee could be collated by the Forum.
13. It is expected that consultations on local and city-region can be considered at the Forum, and draft policies and strategies could be debated. The Forum could, for example, provide a response to the consultation on the draft updated GM Transport Strategy 2040, which is expected to go live early next year.

The Bury Local Bee Network Forum

14. The Bury Local Bee Network Forum will be a non-decision making body. The draft Terms of Reference for Bury's Local Bee Network Forum are attached in Appendix 1, with the key principles set out below:

Core Membership

15. The Bury Local Bee Network Forum will have a core membership of 5 elected members, to be appointed on a politically balanced basis. Forum Members will be made up of Members (three Labour and one from each of the opposition groups).
16. Members of the Forum will be required to attend training to assist in undertaking the role of a Forum member.

Additional membership

17. All elected members will have a standing invite to Forum meetings.
18. Officers leading on Transport, Public Health and Climate Change will also be invited to attend Forum meetings.
19. Membership may also be extended in future to include other stakeholders, such as representatives from local groups or organisations, particularly

groups that represent those who may experience barriers to using Bee Network services or can advise on specific issues.

Chair

20. Forum meetings will be chaired by Cllr Staples-Jones.
21. The Chair may choose to appoint a Vice Chair.
22. In the absence of the Chair or the Vice-Chair, a replacement Chair will be elected for the duration of the meeting.

Meeting arrangements

23. The Forum will meet quarterly.
24. Forum meetings will be held in person and in public.

Conclusion

25. Members are requested to note the establishment of a Bury Local Bee Network Forum as set out above and in Appendix 1 Bury Local Bee Network Draft Terms of Reference.

Links with the Corporate Priorities:

Please summarise how this links to the Let's Do It Strategy.

26. Establishing a Bury Local Bee Network Forum is consistent with the Key Priorities of the Bury 2030 'Let's Do It' Strategy, particularly in terms of ensuring the transport network supports inclusive economic growth and with the principles of taking a local view in ensuring that the needs and priorities of residents are taken into account as the Bee Network develops.

Equality Impact and Considerations:

*Please provide an explanation of the outcome(s) of an initial or full EIA and make **specific reference regarding the protected characteristic of Looked After Children**. Intranet link to EIA documents is [here](#).*

27. Establishing a Bury Local Bee Network Forum will have no negative impacts on equality. The Forum will be open to all elected members meaning that all residents' views and issues can be considered.

Environmental Impact and Considerations:

Please provide an explanation of the Environmental impact of this decision. Please include the impact on both **Carbon emissions** (contact climate@bury.gov.uk for advice) and **Biodiversity** (contact c.m.wilkinson@bury.gov.uk for advice)

28. No material environmental impacts.

Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
There is a risk that without a Local Network Forum we miss the opportunity for local needs and priorities to inform the development of the Bee Network.	To establish a Bury Local Bee Network Forum
Bee Network Forum meetings are not well attended	The dates and times of Forum meetings will be published in advance.

Legal Implications:

29. It is intended that the Cabinet will establish a Bury Local Bee Network Forum in accordance with the membership and draft terms of reference set out in this report. The Bury Local Bee Network Forum must follow the direction set by it and not exceed the remit it has been given.

Financial Implications:

30. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Bury Local Bee Network Forum Draft Terms of Reference.

Background papers:

Please list any background documents to this report and include a hyperlink where possible.

Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.

Term	Meaning
The Bee Network	The Bee Network is Greater Manchester's vision for a joined-up travel network that works for everyone. The Bee Network is making it easier to get around by bus, tram, train, walking, wheeling or cycling.

Bee Network Reviews	These are evidence-based reviews of franchised Bee Network bus services being undertaken by Transport for Greater Manchester to help them identify opportunities for change and improvement.
Bus franchising	Bus franchising is the system through which Greater Manchester's bus network is being brought back under public control. Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM), on behalf of Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA), will plan and co-ordinate services. It means fares, timetables and routes will be set by the GM local authorities instead of private companies.