

Meeting:	The Council
Meeting date:	16 July 2025
Title of report:	Update on Greater Manchester Joint Authorities Activity 
Report by:	Leader of the Council
Decision type:	Non key decision
Ward(s) to which the report relates:	All
Summary:	This report provides an update on the activity of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority.

1. Background

This report provides an update on work of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and other Greater Manchester joint authorities following an update to Council in March 2025.

The council has agreed a specific area of focus for each update, however due to the presence of the Greater Manchester Mayor at the council on the 16th July, there is no focused update on this occasion.

Recycle for Greater Manchester Update

#CottonOn

- We recently brought our ‘#CottonOn to recycling your clothes’ campaign to Bury’s Mill Gate Shopping Centre. Featuring a washing line of damaged clothing, our installation reminded residents in Bury that they can recycle clothing regardless of their condition. The washing line was fitted in The Mall, a busy thoroughfare of the shopping centre and was active for five weeks from Monday 17th March.
- Whether ripped, stained or damaged, clothes and shoes can all be recycled. Residents can take damaged clothing and shoes to the large network of textile banks across Greater Manchester including at Every Steet and Cemetery Road recycling centres and

in supermarket car parks and some large shops. Damaged clothing is given a new lease of life by being turned into animal bedding, carpet underlay or even car seats.

- The campaign originally launched in Stockport's Merseyway Shopping Centre in the Autumn, and Bury is the second council area in Greater Manchester to host the installation. There were lots of additional advertising activities in and around Mill Gate to create an immersive experience for visitors; floor graphics gave residents information on local spots to recycle their clothing, posters were featured at prominent points around the shopping centre including at The Rock and a 30 second radio advert was broadcast on Greatest Hits Radio to reiterate the key campaign messages.
- Removing clothing and textiles from the general waste bin is a key priority. Based on GMCA's waste composition analysis from 23/24, 17,000 tonnes of clothing are disposed of in the general waste bin every year.

Cultural Activity

- We've had a busy few months supporting residents of different faiths manage their waste over key festival dates.
- First up we provided information to Jewish residents of Bury to help manage their waste around the spring festival of Passover. We wrote a blog for the R4GM website and created social media assets which was shared with colleagues at Bury Council. With a focus of spring cleaning, we encouraged residents to dispose of excess waste at their local recycling centres. We also focused on food waste, including common foods associated with the Seder. We published adverts in the Jewish Advertiser newspaper to residents in Bury and across Greater Manchester.
- We also supported Muslim residents celebrating Ramadan and Eid. With such a focus on food, our messaging included key information on preventing and managing food waste. We gave information on storing key ingredients to make them last longer, recipes you can make from leftovers as well as specific information on popular food types like dates. As well as publishing on our social media channels, we advertised in Asian Leader newspaper. We also ran a radio advert on Crescent Radio and Heritage Radio. This was broadcast in both English and Urdu.
- Finally, at Easter, we focused on Easter egg packaging messages. The coinciding bank holiday weekend is one of the busiest times at our recycling centres and we ran adverts in The Bury Times to remind residents that centres at Every Street and Cemetery Road were open all over the holiday weekend.

The Bury Times

- Over the last few years, we've taken out an annual advertising package with The Bury Times. This involves a half-page in the printed newspaper every month and digital advertising through the publication's website and social media channels. This ensures key waste messages and R4GM campaigns are promoted to residents of Bury on a monthly basis. The readership of the paper is 22,700 readers per edition and around 270,000 unique monthly browsers on the website.
- In the last year we've promoted diverse messages including food waste, batteries and the new guidance on pots, tubs and trays. In addition, we recently promoted our compost

campaign in a special Mother's Day supplement of The Bury Times. We reminded residents in Bury that they are entitled to get £10 off a compost bin, as well as free postage and packaging through our subsidised offer.

Education

- The last year has been another busy one for our Education team across their three sites. Schools, community groups and members of the public have enjoyed tours at either our purpose-built education centre at the Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) at Longley Lane, our Renew Hub in Trafford Park and our solar farm in Bolton.
- 93 Bury residents attended a session last year including groups from St Andrew's Primary School, Tottington & Bury West Rotary Club and Radcliffe Townswomen's Guild. This is a slightly lower number of visits than from other districts, and we'd like to remind everyone that our Education team are available to do outreach sessions to schools and other groups that find it hard to visit. You can find out more about tours, including upcoming open days here: [Education & Learning | Learn to Waste Less & Recycle More](#)

Recycling Centre Rates:

Site	Feb 25	Year to date
Cemetery Rd, Radcliffe	60.75%	63
Every St, Fernhill	60.87%	62

Contact the RFGM Team:

<https://recycleforgreatermanchester.com/>

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Transport for Greater Manchester Update

Strategic Activity

- Greater Manchester is set to deliver the UK's first fully integrated, zero-emission public transport system by 2030 thanks to a government funding boost at the Spending Review. The Chancellor visited Rochdale to announce details of the Transport for the City Regions funding, with Greater Manchester awarded £2.5 billion. This is set to support Greater Manchester to:
 - **Create an all-electric local public transport network:** A thousand new EV buses will form a 100% electric fleet serving its communities. Alongside trams powered by renewable energy and e-bikes for hire, it will deliver an emission-free network. This will build on progress already made to cut CO2 emissions and improve air quality.
 - **Bring rail into the Bee Network:** Local rail lines will be integrated with the Bee Network, with Greater Manchester communities the first outside London to be served by fully joined-up bike, bus, tram and train travel by the end of the decade. The move will see major improvements to stations, including making more fully accessible, as well as capped fares.

- **Deliver major projects to drive green growth:** A pipeline of transport projects – including a tram line to Stockport and tram-train services connecting Oldham, Rochdale, Heywood and Bury, new Metrolink stops and modern new interchanges which will support the delivery of thousands of new homes, skilled jobs and green growth.
- **Regional leaders went to Westminster to set out proposals for a new Liverpool-Manchester Railway** that would deliver jobs, growth and regeneration across the North West, while offering a new, more effective model for building big projects: led locally, delivered faster, and designed around communities. A report published in May outlines the case for the new line, which would run from Liverpool Lime Street to Manchester Piccadilly, with stops at a new Liverpool Gateway station, Warrington Bank Quay and Manchester Airport. It estimates that construction of the railway could deliver a £15bn boost to the economy and create 22,000 jobs – and kickstart a £90bn economic transformation across the North. You can find out more and read the full press release [here](#). At the Spending Review, the Chancellor committed to setting out the Government's northern rail ambitions – including for Northern Powerhouse Rail – in the 'coming weeks'.
- **The Mayor of Greater Manchester has launched a new campaign - “Backing Our Taxis: Local. Licensed. Trusted.”** - calling for new powers to tackle 'out of area' licensing of taxis and private hire vehicles (PHVs). In Greater Manchester, nearly half (49%) of private hire vehicles are now licensed by authorities outside of its ten councils. Further information can be found in the press release, as well as at the campaign's landing page (www.backingourtaxis.com).
- **£1.3m of active travel funding has been allocated for the delivery of new and enhanced School Streets in Greater Manchester.** The programme has had a strong response across the city-region so far, with all 10 Local Authorities requesting funding to deliver new schemes, with the number of schemes in operation set to increase from 37 to 60 in the next year.
- In collaboration with GMCA, TfGM, the police and fire services, the UK's three biggest food delivery companies - Deliveroo, Just Eat and Uber Eats – all signed the new Greater Manchester Food Delivery Charter to improve the safety and conditions of food deliveries in GM. The charter positively reinforces how couriers should always ride safely and legally – on roadworthy bikes – with delivery schedules that are realistic and do not incentivize them to break the law. Under the charter, couriers are also encouraged to report collisions involving injury to the police to help identify hotspots and reduce incidents.
- Greater Manchester has expanded its free bus travel initiative for care leavers, now including those aged 18 to 25, up from the previous limit of 21. This expansion aims to support care leavers in their transition to independence by offering free anytime bus travel within GM. Additionally, half-price off-peak day travel and weekend travel on Bee Network trams will be introduced later this year following feedback from care leavers.
- TfGM has published the most recent edition of our Inclusion & Equalities Annual Report, covering activity in 2023-2024. This year's report shows how we have delivered against our equality objectives, the progress we are making and what still needs to be done to ensure the Bee Network works for everyone.

- A Licence for Greater Manchester (LfGM) scheme has been launched to make becoming a Bee Network bus driver a more attractive and flexible career. This initiative, agreed upon by TfGM, bus operators, and Unite the Union, allows drivers to move between operators without starting at entry-level pay, recognising their years of experience. The scheme builds on previous efforts to improve terms and conditions, including the adoption of the Greater Manchester Good Employers Charter by operators. Read more in the press release [here](#).
- Following a ten-week consultation between November 2024 and January 2025, the Greater Manchester School Travel Strategy went to May's Bee Network Committee and GMCA meetings for endorsement and adoption. The Strategy outlines our vision of more young people choosing to walk, wheel, scoot, cycle or use public transport to get to school and access further education. To help achieve this, TfGM have proposed eight overarching activities;
 1. Create safe street around schools;
 2. Continue to deliver walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure;
 3. Increase access to cycles and cycle storage;
 4. Support young people to become travel champions;
 5. Improve the customer experience on public transport;
 6. Make our network safe and secure;
 7. Create an integrated network; and
 8. Engage schools and community groups.

Network Updates

- Punctuality of the first buses to come under local control (Tranche 1) is now consistently above 80% (up from c.69% on the pre-franchised network). Reliability in Tranche 2 and Tranche 3 is also better than before franchising (both tranches consistently above 70% since the beginning of March), with work ongoing to improve performance across the whole network. The latest punctuality report (published weekly [here](#)) during the period 8-14 June shows the following:
 - Tranche 1 punctuality: 84.4%
 - Tranche 2 punctuality: 77.7%
- The launch of Contactless PayGo in Spring 2025 has been a huge step forward in how people can travel across our city-region, enabling contactless 'tap in' payments across buses and trams – making travel easier and guaranteeing passengers pay the lowest possible fare for their journey. Since its launch this payment method has already amassed over 5 million journeys.
- It has not been possible to complete the full beam replacement works at Whitefield Tunnel (initially targeted for the end of June 2025) due to the discovery of a bat during the works. Bats and their roosts are protected under UK law, and as such a change to the works programme is necessary to protect the roost. This means that a further closure

of the line will be required at a later date to complete the works once relevant processes have been followed in relation to surveys and ecological licenses.

- Work on the Metrolink network in Manchester City Centre will mean that no services will be running between Bury and Picadilly or Piccadilly Gardens, services from Bury to Altrincham will continue to run via Market Street. These works will be taking place from Tuesday 3 June to Sunday 10 August.
- Aimed at delivering joined-up, reliable services, a programme of local bus network reviews continues. Network Reviews will explore how buses can better serve communities, making improvements that would not have been possible before franchising. Work on the Bury network progressed through initial engagement in late 2024, and we have now undertaken a detailed GM-wide connectivity assessment, identifying gaps and opportunities in the current provision. An overview of the assessment as well as a revised process for taking forward changes is due to be considered by the GM Bee Network Committee in June. Subject to approval, further engagement will follow later in 2025.

Wider local updates

- Bury Interchange – Ministerial approval for the OBC was received in March 2025. The planning application for the Phase 1 early enabling works package to create a new southern access to Metrolink was submitted to Bury Council on 2 April 2025 and has been validated. TfGM are continuing to develop the design for the main interchange in partnership with Bury Council and other stakeholders. The opportunity to include residential development alongside the interchange is in development in partnership with GMCA, with a RIBA 2 design and OBC shift statement ongoing. TfGM anticipate that a decision will be made in summer 2025.
- Elton Reservoir New Stop – TfGM are continuing development work on proposals for a new Metrolink stop, Travel Hub and Park & Ride, to be delivered as part of the strategic allocation for around 3500 homes and supporting infrastructure, identified in Places for Everyone. TfGM will continue to work with Bury Council, the site developers and other stakeholders to develop these proposals as part of the wider masterplan for the site.
- Metrolink Stop Improvements Programme – Heaton Park Phase 1 has now received “Programme Entry”, and the team will begin preparing a combined OBC/FBC and engagement with contractors. Additional work is required to refine the prioritisation for the wider stop improvements programme and secure funding.

Greater Manchester Combined Authority Meeting (May)

A link to the papers are available here:

[GMCA - Friday 30th May, 2025](#)

Items considered and agreed included:

Greater Manchester Fire Plan 2025-29: Participation Approach & Outcomes	Safer Transport Review
Greater Manchester's Integrated Pipeline	Greater Manchester AI Demonstrator City Region
Integrated Water Management	Greater Manchester Post-16 Sufficiency Fund
Community Accommodation Service (Tier 3) Budget	Greater Manchester School Travel Strategy
Bus Franchising Re-Procurement Strategy	Mayoral Development Corporation for Middleton Town Centre – In Principle Decision
GM Brownfield Housing Fund Reallocations: Approvals Made Under Delegation	GM Investment Framework Recommendations

GM Investment Framework Recommendations	
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Greater Manchester Combined Authority Meeting (June)

A link to the papers are available here:

[Greater Manchester Combined Authority - Friday, 29th November, 2024 10.30 am](#)

Items considered and agreed included:

Adopting a new Greater Manchester Strategy	Greater Manchester Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise Accord: Update and Forward Strategy
Race Equity Framework: Implementation Update and Future Areas of Focus	Delivering Better Bus Services for Greater Manchester
City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement Reprioritisation Strategy	Re-Commissioning Our Pass Exclusives: Eliminating Cost Barriers for Young People to Access Cultural, Leisure and Social Activities
Improving Renting Standards and Enforcement across Greater Manchester	Healthy Homes Services in Greater Manchester: Supporting Local Authorities and the First Falls Prevention Pilot
GM Brownfield Housing Fund: Original Brownfield Housing Fund Review, 2025/26 Programme and Prioritisation Methodology	Stockport Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC) Delivery Plan 2025-2030
Western Gateway: Proposed Mayoral Development Zone	Proposed Old Trafford Regeneration Area Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC)
Greater Manchester Investment Framework: Conditional Project Approval	GMCA Capital Outturn 2024/25
GMCA Revenue Outturn 2024/25	Greater Manchester Investment Framework: Conditional Project Approval
Stockport Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC) Annual Action Plan 2025 - 2026	

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1. That Council note the updates from the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Transport for Greater Manchester, and Recycle for Greater Manchester, with further updates to be presented to future Council meetings.

List of Background Papers:-

Minutes of GMCA meetings linked throughout.

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