

COUNCIL

22 OCTOBER 2014

ITEM 7 -JOINT AUTHORITY QUESTIONS

1. Councillor Pickstone

Transport for Greater Manchester

Could the Council's representative to the Transport for Greater Manchester Committee outline T4GMs plans and aspirations around 'real time passenger information' for bus users - now available at bus stops in many towns and cities around the country?

(Councillor Noel Bayley to respond)

A. TfGM have already supported vehicle location technology that will provide real-time information across the tram system. This complements the Government's incentivising of smart-reader investment across the bus industry.

TfGM will respond to the rapid uptake of smartphones: in 2011 over 50% of 24-35 year-olds in the UK owned a smartphone. Smartphones are a prime source of information for more and more commuters, and we see great scope to use them to provide real-time information straight to travellers' pockets.

Local Sustainable Transport Fund grants enabled TfGM to invest in an information management system that gathers real-time data from bus, train and tram vehicle location systems. TfGM is now in discussions with operators around data sharing agreements.

This live travel information will be provided by us as open data by bus operators, to support journey planning smartphone applications created and run by technology entrepreneurs. This information availability will give the information and confidence to make smarter travel choices.

2. Councillor Southworth

Transport for Greater Manchester

Rossendale Transport has withdrawn most of the important 273 bus service from Bolton to Rawtenstall via Ramsbottom. Lancashire County Council is providing an alternative service from Rawtenstall to Ramsbottom. Is there any chance of the same from Ramsbottom to Bolton?

(Councillor Noel Bayley to respond)

A. Service 273 currently operates hourly on Monday to Saturday daytime and every two hours Sunday daytime. Most of the route is operated commercially but is partially subsidised by Lancashire County Council (LCC) Mondays to Saturdays and subsidised jointly with Transport for Greater Manchester on Sundays only.

Rossendale Transport has decided to withdraw the majority of the journeys on service 273 with effect from 26th October 2014 with the exception of the following:

- From Bolton: Monday to Saturday 1718 & 1818; and**
- From Rawtenstall: Monday to Friday 0715 & Saturday 0810.**

TfGM understand that Lancashire County Council are partially replacing the service between Ramsbottom and Rawtenstall, Monday to Saturday with service 13 operated by Boomerang Travel. Details of the service can be obtained from Lancashire County Council. Alternative journey opportunities between Bolton and Rawtenstall can be found through Traveline journey planner but would require you to change at Bury Interchange to complete a journey between these destinations.

<http://www.traveline-northwest.co.uk/>

The service received subsidy from Lancashire County Council, who were unable to agree the level of increase in subsidy required to maintain the Monday to Saturday service. TfGM in agreement with Lancashire County Council have withdrawn the Sunday service as it would no longer have a Monday to Saturday equivalent from the same date.

Due to ongoing budgetary pressures, TfGM has to reduce its expenditure on supported bus services by £7.1 million by the end of 2015/16, which equates to approximately 20% saving from the previous level of expenditure. As a result, significant reductions are being made to our existing network of supported services and there is no funding available to replace withdrawn services when there are alternatives journeys available for the majority of passengers, albeit requiring changing services to complete journeys.

ITEM 12 – QUESTIONS ON THE WORK OF OUTSIDE BODIES

1. Councillor Pickstone

Pension Fund Advisory Committee

Could the Council's representative on Greater Manchester Pensions Authority please inform members what levels of investment are held by the authority in:

- so-called 'pay-day' loan companies**
- companies which operate 'fixed odds betting terminals'**
- investment companies or funds that, in turn hold investments in the above.**

Please could you give details of any current investments, any investments in the last three years, and when the most recent investments were made.

A. The Fund has absolutely no direct holdings in 'pay-day' loan companies or companies which operate 'fixed odds betting terminals'.

However through it's arms length investments in Private Equity Funds the Fund cannot rule out having a very small indirect exposure to such companies.

The Fund publishes details of all holdings on the GMPF website on an annual basis, following completion of the annual audit. These can be found by searching the website for 'Holdings'.