

<b>Meeting:</b>	Bury Local Bee Network Forum
<b>Meeting date:</b>	Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup> December 2025
<b>Title of report:</b>	Bee Network Quarterly Update
<b>Report by:</b>	Joanne Betts
<b>Decision Type:</b>	Report for information
<b>Ward(s) to which report relates</b>	All

## Summary

Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) will present the update in Appendix 1 on progress in delivering the Bee Network, Greater Manchester's plan for a high-quality, affordable and fully integrated public transport and active travel system for the people and businesses of Greater Manchester.

The update will include:

- Industrial action
- The Local Transport Plan update
- Simpler and fairer rail fares
- Bee Network improvements including:
  - A new and enhanced 24/7 TravelSafe LiveChat
  - The next phase of the concessionary bus travel trial
  - The new hourly night buses services on the 135 route between Manchester and Bury on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights.
- Bury Interchange and
- Network Patronage and Performance

## Recommendation

The Bee Network Forum is requested to note and comment on the Bee Network quarterly update.

## Reasons for recommendation

For information and discussion.

## Alternative options considered and rejected

N/A

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## **Transport Update for Bury Council**

### **August - November 2025**

#### **Industrial Action**

Industrial Action by Unison and Unite members of TfGM staff took place on 30 October, 5, 7, 12 and 14. Further action is planned between 25-28 November (inclusive).

Of over 1,300 staff at TfGM, the majority are not striking and many people across TfGM are working hard to minimise the impact of this action on passengers and communities, building on experience and insight from the first strike days.

Bus and tram services are running as normal, and all interchanges have been and will be open on strike days. Some facilities – such as ticket offices and toilets – may however be closed. On previous strike days TfGM has still managed to open ticket offices at some locations, depending on staff availability.

Ahead of the next period of strike action, TfGM are increasing support for passengers. There will be an increased staff presence at interchanges and bus stations to help passengers with any on-the-day enquiries, and work is ongoing to ensure that the ability of TfGM's control centre to manage demand across the highways network is not impacted.

#### **Local Transport Plan update**

Greater Manchester is refreshing our Local Transport Plan (LTP). This is a statutory requirement of the Local Transport Act 2008, with TfGM responsible for producing the document and keeping it up to date on behalf of GMCA, the Local Authorities and the GM Mayor.

It sets out our long-term goals and ambitions for transport and has two key components:

- Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2050
- Greater Manchester Transport Strategy Delivery Plan
- These documents set the strategic direction for transport in GM and outline the policies that are needed to help get us there, which helps to guide planning, funding and decision-making for transport investment.

This refresh has been a collaborative process, with opportunities for a wide variety of groups (including for Elected Members) to engage throughout the process.

Subject to approval by GMCA, the plan will go out to a 12-week consultation between 1 November and 23 February.

All relevant documents are now in the public domain ahead of the November meeting of the GMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee. You can [access these here](#).

### Simpler and fairer rail fares

From Sunday 7 December 2025, rail fares across Greater Manchester will become simpler, as a range of fares are replaced with just two simple options for everyone who buys a ticket on the day: Anytime and Off-peak.

This change will make travel easier and more transparent for passengers, who will have the same straightforward fare options regardless of the train company they use. It is part of the Government's UK-wide transformation of fares, making them easier to understand and journeys more seamless – to bring more people back to rail.

Greater Manchester will be one of the first areas in the country to benefit from this type of rail fare reform. It also marks an important first step towards integrating rail into the Bee Network from 2026 onwards, paving the way for contactless Pay As You Go and fare capping across bus, tram and train.

You can read more about the announcement in the [press release](#).

### Improving the Bee Network

- A new and enhanced 24/7 TravelSafe LiveChat allowing passengers to discreetly report criminal or antisocial behaviour on public transport [has been launched](#) as part of ongoing efforts to make passengers safe, and feel safe, while travelling on the Bee Network. Building on the existing LiveChat managed by Greater Manchester Police, people can now report issues via the Bee Network app, connecting them to police call handlers. When someone uses the new service, they will be connected to a real person who can provide support 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- The next phase of the concessionary bus travel trial will go live in November, to help Transport for Greater Manchester to further assess the impact of lifting the 9.30am restriction for those with a TfGM-issued concessionary travel pass (approximately 400,000 older and disabled people in Greater Manchester). This phase of the trial takes place in what is traditionally the busiest month on the network, and follows [an earlier phase](#) in August. At the conclusion of the trial, the evidence gathered during it, including passenger feedback, patronage and pass usage, will be assessed before a decision is made on whether the move can be made permanent.
- Two new hourly night buses services have been launched in September. The **135 (Manchester – Prestwich – Bury)** and the **17/17a (Manchester – Middleton – Rochdale)** connects Bury and Rochdale town centres with Manchester city centre on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights.
- From 1 September, around 150,000 18–21-year-olds in Greater Manchester are [able to apply for](#) a half-price 28-day bus travelcard (priced at £40, half the price of the equivalent adult fare).

### Wider local updates

- **Bury Interchange** – The planning application to create a new southern access to Metrolink (including a footbridge, lift and stairs) was approved by Bury Council on 22 July, with associated applications for a temporary northern access and temporary construction compound approved in September. Detailed design for this first phase of works is well underway. Outline design for



the main interchange and potential residential development is complete with submission in November for approval to progress to the next stage of design development.

- As part of the ongoing programme of maintenance and renewal works across the Metrolink network there has been work on the **Bury line** to replace beams in the Whitefield Tunnel. This work was delayed due to the discovery of bats in the tunnel, but was completed between Saturday 25 and Thursday 30 October.
- Following the completion of work to address overhanging trees on Moor Lane in Salford, Bee Network bus services 93 and 95 have returned to their normal route along Kersal Road.

### **Network Patronage and Performance**

Patronage is reported annually. The table below shows the annual growth of patronage across all modes, comparing September 2024 with September 2025.

<b>Service Area (Patronage)</b>		<b>Last year (Sept 24)</b>	<b>Now (Sept 25)</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
Bus	Patronage (rolling 12 months, millions)	167.0m	174.1m	Patronage continues to grow. T1 patronage is 10% up year on year. T2 patronage from Apr to Sep 25 is 10% higher than the equivalent period 12 months ago.  Industrial action affected service delivery and passenger numbers during September.
Metrolink	Patronage (rolling 12 months, millions)	44.5m	46.3m	Passenger numbers recovered following major track renewals in the City Centre. The latest 12-month rolling passenger journey figure is the highest on record, 46.3 million.
Rail	Patronage (rolling 12 months, millions)	55.9m	54.8m	N/A
Highways	Highway journeys (rolling 12 months, millions)	1818m	1840m	N/A



Service Area (Patronage)		Last year (Sept 24)	Now (Sept 25)	Commentary
Active travel	Cycling trips (rolling 12 months, millions)	45.8m	54.1m	Starling Bank bike hire trips are up 22% year on year. There were 62,476 rides during Sep 25. This is the highest monthly total in the scheme's history, beating the previous record of 61,353 set in May 25.
	Cycle Hire (rolling 12 months, thousands)	459	561	

Performance is reported monthly. The table below shows the monthly change in performance (punctuality and reliability) across Bus, Metrolink, Rail, and Highways. More information about bus punctuality data is [available here](#).

Service Area (Performance)		Last month (August 2025)	Now (September 2025)	Commentary
Bus	Punctuality	84.6%	78.2%	Punctuality was below target (80%) at 78.2%. The T1 area was above target at 84.3%, T2 and T3 were below target at 74.7% and 76.7% respectively.  Congestion, road works and adverse weather were the main causes of delays during this period.
	Zero-emission bus fleet (% of total bus fleet)	19.0%	19.7%	
Metrolink	Punctuality (trams departing less than 2 mins late)	89% (P5)**	92% (P6)**	Tram punctuality was above target (90%) at 92% and operated mileage narrowly



Service Area (Performance)			Last month (August 2025)	Now (September 2025)	Commentary
	Reliability: Operated mileage (number of tram vehicle miles operated compared with the number of scheduled miles)		97.7% (P5)	99.2% (P6)	missed the challenging target of 99.4% at 99.2%.
Rail	Northern (NTL)	PPM*	81% (P5)	81.6% (P6)	Crew availability continues to be a challenge on the rail network. Industrial action at Cross Country also continues with strike action planned for 1 November. Northern are continuing a short-term plan on Sundays, which sees around 200 GM services removed from the timetable.
		Cancellations	3.9% (P5)	5% (P6)	
	TransPennine Trains (TPT)	PPM*	83.3% (P5)	86.4% (P6)	
		Cancellations	5.2% (P5)	3.6% (P6)	
Highways	Journey time reliability (measures the % of journeys completed within the typical journey time, plus a tolerance of 25%).		95.6% (August)	93.7%	Operational and Travel Demand Management plans have been developed for the busy Christmas Market period. A range of interventions will be used to manage the network including traffic signal strategies and traffic regulation orders at known pinch points, targeted customer information and travel advice.

\*Public Performance Measure (PPM), measures % of services arriving at destination, having called at all scheduled stops, within 5 minutes of the planned arrival time.

\*\* P5 = Period 5 and P6 = Period 6, both defined as a four-week reporting period instead of a monthly one.