

**Minutes of the meeting of the Bee Network Committee
held on Thursday, 27th February, 2025 at GMCA Offices, Tootal Buildings, 56 Oxford
Street, Manchester M1 6EU**

PRESENT:

Councillor Eamonn O'Brien (in the Chair)	GMCA
Councillor Toby Hewitt	Bolton Council
Councillor Hamid Khurram	Bolton Council
Councillor Alan Quinn	Bury Council
Councillor Anthony McCaul	Manchester City Council
Councillor Josh Charters	Oldham Council
Councillor Grace Baynham	Stockport Council
Councillor Aidan Williams	Trafford Council
Councillor John Vickers	Wigan Council

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Chris Barnes	TfGM
Richard Nickson	TfGM
Rosalind O'Driscoll	TfGM
Daniel Vaughan	TfGM
Fran Wilkinson	TfGM
Melinda Edwards	GMCA
Paul Harris	GMCA

BNC/11/25 Welcome & Apologies

The Chair extended a welcome to those members present.

Apologies for absence were received and noted from GM Mayor Andy Burnham, Councillor Phil Burke (Rochdale), City Mayor Paul Dennett (Salford), Councillor Stephen Homer (Tameside) Councillor David Meller (Stockport), Councillor Jacqueline

Owen (Tameside) Councillor Tracey Rawlins (Manchester), Councillor Howard Sykes (Oldham), Caroline Simpson Group Chief Executive and Steve Warrener, TfGM.

BNC/12/25 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made by any member of the committee in respect of any agenda item.

BNC/13/25 Chair's Announcements and Urgent Business

The Chair invited officers to update the Committee on the recent tragic incident on Mosley Street, Manchester involving a van collision with a tram and resulting in the death of a 3-year-old girl and bus service performance improvements being made in the Tranche 3 area.

A Member asked if the bus operators had enough drivers to operate services. In response it was noted that at the commencement of the Tranche 3, bus services had a full compliment of drivers to operate bus services across the network. Work was taking place with bus operators to maintain staff levels and driver retention.

In response to an enquiry from a member regarding the potential to utilise empty buses on route to respective depots that would normally be "out of service" as part of a timetable, officers undertook to explore this matter further and provide an update at a future meeting.

Members sought details on how often the Bee Network app is updated to advise users of bus service delays and bus stop closures. In response, officers outlined that work taking place to make improvements to the app to show the most recent information. In addition, it was noted that information on bus stop closures was also detailed on the Bee Network website.

Resolved/-

1. That the update on bus service performance improvements being made, particularly in Tranche 3 area be noted.

BNC/14/25 Minutes of the Meeting held on 30th January 2025

The minutes of the meeting of the previous meeting Bee Network Committee held on 30th January 2025, were submitted.

Resolved/-

The minutes of the meeting of the Bee Network Committee held on 30th January 2025 were approved as a correct record.

BNC/15/25 Transport Infrastructure Pipeline Report

Chris Barnes (Network Director Infrastructure, TfGM) presented an update on progress delivering a pipeline of transport infrastructure improvements to support the operation of the Bee Network. The report made a number of recommendations for members to support the continued development and delivery of the pipeline programme.

A Member welcomed the work to achieve step free access at GM railway stations and recognised the need for the prioritisation of such schemes. The member enquired if as there will be any acceleration of step-free schemes as GM moves to control of railway stations. In response it was noted that the relationships with rail industry partners and funding flexibility opportunities will allow for the acceleration of step free access schemes.

In welcoming the approach to making railway stations across the network step-free, a Member suggested that it would be helpful for on-train announcements to be made advising passengers of whether the upcoming station would be step-free. In response, officers undertook to explore this suggestion further with rail operator colleagues.

In response to comments from a Member regarding the works at Greek Street, Stockport, officers thanked Stockport Council for their support with this major infrastructure scheme and mitigate the impact of this work.

A Member expressed frustration that the Cheadle Station works had not yet started and Northern Rail timetabling issues. Officers undertook to raise this matter with Northern Rail.

In welcoming monies for highway maintenance, a Member suggested that there is a shortfall in funding for districts to achieve maintenance ambitions. In response, it was noted that a re-prioritisation exercise of the CRSTS was to be considered by GMCA and the Bee Network Committee in March 2025 which will look to find further headroom to support highway maintenance and growth.

In welcoming the proposed improvements at Levenshulme railway station, a Member sought information on the timescales involved for this scheme. In response, members noted that officers were hopeful that site works could commence in 2026 and delivered in 2027, subject to successful tender and design processes.

Members sought clarification on the capital funding mechanism and Department for Transport (DfT) funding contribution arrangements. In response, it was noted that discussions were continuing with DfT regarding the incentivisation approach. It was also noted that a formula for allocation has previously been agreed with all GM districts and will be applied once funding is released by Government. In addition, it was noted that given the short delivery period work was taking place with local authority partners to understand timescales for all aspects of delivery of the CRTS funding period. The provision of clear strategic plans for highway maintenance will be able to demonstrate to DfT the delivery capability across GM.

Member highlighted accessibility issues at Hag Fold and Greenfield railway stations. In response, members noted that the ambition remains for all GM stations to be fully accessible and these stations will be brought forward as quickly as possible.

In welcoming the proposals for improvements at Golbourne Station, a member asked when it is anticipated for the final approval of these improvements be considered the Committee. In response, it was noted that I detailed design work is anticipated to commence in April following an evaluation process with the view to be on site by the end of 2025.

A Member highlighted the need to ensure that the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) to be included in infrastructure schemes to deal with the significant levels of rainfall across the conurbation.

Resolved/-

1. That the current position, recent progress and key milestones on the transport infrastructure pipeline, as set out in the report, be noted.
2. That approval be granted for the drawdown of Greater Manchester's City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) funding and associated scheme progression as follows:-
 - Improving Journeys: Salford Crescent – MediaCity UK: £1.5m;
 - Metrolink Renewals Programme: £51.86m;
 - Golborne Station: £5.269m;
 - Bee Network Rail Station Accessibility: £7.99m; and
 - Stockport: Greek Street Bridge Streets for All Phases A & B: £0.45m and Full Business Case.
3. That the drawdown of £49.5m Core Highways Maintenance and Local Safety & Minor Works funding for 2025/26, as set out in the report, be approved.
4. That the drawdown of Local Highways Maintenance funding of: £4.438m 2024/25 and £11.105m 2025/26, as set out in the report, be approved.
5. That the adoption of the Greater Manchester Sustainable Drainage Design Guide, be noted.

BNC/16/25 Date of the Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Bee Network Committee would take place on Thursday 27th March 2025, commencing at 2:00 pm.