

Manchester City Council Report for Resolution

Report to: Executive – 28 June 2023

Subject: Establishment of the Bee Network Committee

Report of: The City Solicitor and the Strategic Director (Growth and Development)

Summary

The purpose of this report is to propose new governance arrangements, in particular a new joint transport committee, to enable a more coordinated and integrated approach to Greater Manchester transport governance.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to:-

1. Agree to the establishment of a new joint transport committee (the Bee Network Committee) of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority ('GMCA'), the Mayor of Greater Manchester and the ten Greater Manchester Constituent Councils.
 2. Approve the appointment of members to the Bee Network Committee as set out in Appendix 1 and appoint 1 member, preferably the Executive Member as decision-maker with responsibility for transport, and 1 substitute member to the Bee Network Committee.
 3. Approve the Terms of Reference of the Bee Network Committee as set out in Appendix 2.
 4. Note the delegation of the functions of the GMCA and of the Mayor of Greater Manchester as set out in the Terms of Reference to the Bee Network Committee attached at Appendix 2.
 5. Agree the delegation of the functions of the Council, as set out in the terms of Reference attached at Appendix 2.
 6. Approve the Rules of Procedure for the Bee Network Committee as set out in Appendix 3.
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Wards Affected: All

Environmental Impact Assessment - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city

The continued development and enhancement of a public transport network for Greater Manchester will help to reduce transport-related carbon emissions by increasing the share of journeys undertaken by bus, Metrolink and rail, encouraging active travel and reducing journeys by car.

Effective transport governance will help ensure that these objectives are achieved.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments

The continued development of the public transport network will require continued monitoring and assessment as services develop and change over time to ensure that services are responsive to need, and these interventions enable those with protected characteristics to benefit fully from access to public transport.

Effective transport governance will help ensure that the needs of those with protected characteristics are factored into transport decision-making.

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS/Contribution to the Strategy
<p>A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities</p>	<p>Improving public transport and other non-car modes will support the growth of the economy by improving accessibility to jobs and opportunities for all residents.</p> <p>Effective transport governance will help ensure that this objective is achieved.</p>
<p>A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success</p>	<p>Excellent public transport connections will allow all residents in the city to access high-quality employment and education opportunities in the city and facilitate growth.</p> <p>Improving infrastructure and unlocking regeneration opportunities will attract investment, in turn boosting the local economy and creating jobs.</p> <p>Effective transport governance will help ensure that these objectives are achieved.</p>
<p>A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities</p>	<p>Good quality and affordable public transport will facilitate opportunities for communities across the city to make more sustainable travel choices, and open up opportunities for residents and businesses to access employment and education across the city.</p> <p>Effective transport governance will help ensure that these objectives are achieved.</p>

<p>A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work</p>	<p>High quality public transport, combined with other sustainable transport measures such as walking, wheeling and cycling can offer residents a viable alternative to the private car, therefore reducing short car journeys and therefore carbon emissions.</p> <p>Reducing dependency on the private car can help to create a more liveable city through reduced traffic congestion, road danger and create a safer, cleaner environment.</p> <p>Effective transport governance will help ensure that these objectives are achieved.</p>
<p>A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth</p>	<p>World class infrastructure will attract investment and promote a globally successful city. High quality public transport will make it easier for residents to access high quality jobs, education and leisure opportunities across the city.</p> <p>Effective transport governance will help ensure that these objectives are achieved.</p>

Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

Financial Consequences – Revenue

None.

Financial Consequences – Capital

None.

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact one of the contact officers above.

None.

1.0 Introduction/Background

- 1.1. The creation of Greater Manchester's integrated transport system, the Bee Network, will require a more coordinated and integrated approach to transport governance, that places accountability to local people at its heart.
- 1.2. Local control of the Greater Manchester transport network, and bus franchising in particular, will change the type and number of decisions being made. Greater Manchester therefore needs to change the make-up of its decision-making bodies so as to ensure Greater Manchester's new responsibilities are discharged in an effective and transparent way.

2.0 Current Arrangements

- 2.1 The GMCA, the Mayor of Greater Manchester and the 10 Greater Manchester Constituent Councils have delegated some of their functions to the Greater Manchester Transport Committee ('GMTC'). The functions delegated provide limited opportunities for GMTC to influence strategic decision-making and therefore transport policy. Its role combines elements of both decision-making around relatively minor issues and performance monitoring which is usually considered to be a scrutiny committee function. This has led to a lack of clarity both within and outside of the Greater Manchester system.

3.0 Principles for Future Governance

- 3.1 To help shape future governance, seven principles that set out the requirements of any new structures have been identified. They should:
 - Support shared ownership of the transport agenda across Greater Manchester, informed by local priorities and driven by consensus.
 - Support an integrated approach to policy development to support the delivery of an integrated network.
 - Separate decision-making and policy development from oversight and scrutiny.
 - Strengthen decision-making, scrutiny and local involvement.
 - Be simplified and transparent.
 - Support enhanced member and public engagement.
 - Ensure delegation to officers to enable operational flexibility, as appropriate.

4.0 The Way Forward

4.1 In alignment with these principles, the proposal is:

- A new, smaller, and more strategically focused 'Bee Network Committee' (BNC), which would lead transport decision-making at a regional level, taking greater ownership and responsibility for the Greater Manchester integrated transport network.
- Strengthened local engagement by increasing opportunities for local councillors and members of the public to contribute to and influence transport policy and services in their area.
- Formal scrutiny of the Bee Network Committee being part of the work programme of the newly strengthened Greater Manchester Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

4.2 Although the new committee itself would have greater delegated powers, no additional Constituent Council functions are to be transferred or delegated to the GMCA. As the functions being delegated by the Council to the new committee are executive in nature, the approval of the Council's Executive is needed to establish the committee.

4.3 The GMCA would delegate additional functions that are already conferred on or delegated to it, to Transport for Greater Manchester ('TfGM'). Such functions would be of a day-to-day operational nature, for example, local bus information, consultation procedures, transport and road safety studies. This will require corresponding amendments to the GMCA constitution which will be included in the annual review of that constitution.

5.0 The Bee Network Committee (BNC)

5.1 As with the present GMTCC, the Bee Network Committee ('BNC') would be structured as a joint committee, able to exercise decision-making powers and develop policy on behalf of the GMCA, the Mayor of Greater Manchester and the ten Constituent Councils.

5.2 It is anticipated that the new committee would have no more than 16 members, as set out below:

- Greater Manchester Constituent Councils appoint one member each to ten places (expected to be the transport portfolio holder – see below);
- GMCA appoints to one place;
- The Mayor of Greater Manchester;
- Additional members appointed by Mayor of Greater Manchester for political balance (up to a maximum committee size of 16).

- 5.3 The Constituent Councils would be expected to nominate their cabinet member with transport responsibility to the committee, or another councillor with decision-making responsibility where more appropriate.
- 5.4 By bringing together executive members from across the city region, the BNC will be able to take a holistic and integrated view of transport in Greater Manchester, and can better support and co-ordinate activity across district boundaries e.g. co-ordination of highways management.
- 5.5 Functions of the new committee would include:
- a) Decision-Making – Approving significant changes to transport network operations, and the draw down of funding to invest in transport infrastructure and operations.
 - b) Performance Monitoring – Oversight of the performance and financial sustainability of the transport network, holding transport operators and TfGM to account.
 - c) Policy Development – Developing transport policy to support the delivery of the Local Transport Plan (Greater Manchester 2040 Transport Strategy) and the Greater Manchester Strategy, within the parameters of the budgets set by GMCA.
 - d) Local Coordination – Facilitating coordination between the Constituent Councils to support effective highways management and infrastructure delivery. For example, oversight of the coordination of road works through the Greater Manchester Road Activity Permit Scheme (GMRAPS).
- 5.6 The GMCA would continue to approve:
- Transport Budgets
 - The Local Transport Plan and any sub-strategies
 - Metrolink and Bus Franchise contract awards
 - TfGM Executive and Non-Executive Appointments
- 5.7 TfGM would make day-to-day operational decisions within agreed parameters and policies.
- 5.8 The TfGM Executive Board would retain responsibility for ensuring TfGM has or develops the organisational capabilities and culture to deliver the transport strategies, policies and interventions of the Transport Authority as directed by the Mayor, the GMCA, Greater Manchester Constituent Councils and the BNC.

6.0 Strengthen Member and Public Engagement

- 6.1 A key part of these new governance arrangements will be an increased number of opportunities for local councillors and members of the public to influence transport policy and services in their area and better hold TfGM and other agencies to account for the operational performance of the network (e.g. around safety and personal security). These will include:
- Opportunities for local members to inform reviews of the transport network, including regular reviews of the franchised bus network, through direct engagement and consultation.
 - Virtual and in-person drop-ins established for local members to raise issues/concerns directly with TfGM officers.
 - Opportunities for local members to input via Transport Executive Members represented on Bee Network Committee.
 - Opportunities for Constituent Councils to refer petitions regarding the transport network to the Bee Network Committee, providing they comply with the requirements of that Constituent Council's petitions scheme.

7.0 Clear Scrutiny Arrangements

- 7.1 As Greater Manchester takes on new responsibilities and functions, it is important that scrutiny arrangements are appropriately strong. Under these proposals, the GMCA's single, integrated Overview & Scrutiny Committee will consider transport matters in one place, alongside other policy areas, allowing for integrated consideration of issues. This approach has been highlighted within the Government's recently published English Devolution Accountability Framework as an example of good practice.
- 7.2 The Overview & Scrutiny Committee will scrutinise the decisions of the BNC and will be able to call in decisions as it feels appropriate. It may also initiate task and finish groups, which can provide greater opportunity to focus on a particular issue.

8.0 Implementation

- 8.1 The attached draft Terms of Reference (Appendix 2) set out the proposed functions of and delegations to the Bee Network Committee. Appendix 3 sets out a draft of the proposed Rules of Procedure.
- 8.2 The GMCA and the Mayor at the GMCA meeting held on 26th May 2023 approved the new arrangements and the establishment of the Bee Network Committee as set out in the appendices and recommended it on for approval by the Greater Manchester district councils. Each Greater Manchester Constituent Council will need to agree to the establishment of the new Bee Network Committee, approve the proposed terms of reference and rules of

procedure and appoint an appropriate representative and substitute to the committee.

- 8.3 On conclusion of this process, it would be the intention to hold the first meeting of the new Bee Network Committee in July 2023, prior to the first franchised bus services entering operation in September 2023.

9.0 Recommendations

- 9.1 The recommendations to the Executive are set out at the beginning of this report.