

## GREATER MANCHESTER INTEGRATED TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

### REPORT FOR INFORMATION

**COMMITTEE:** Bus Network and GMPTE Services Committee

**DATE:** 7 August 2009

**SUBJECT:** Stakeholder Engagement and Customer Comments received by GMPTE between 1 January and 30 June 2009

**REPORT OF:** Interim Communications and Customer Services Director, GMPTE

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### PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise the Committee of the emerging Stakeholder Engagement Strategy and of the number and type of customer comments received by GMPTE about the bus network and GMPTE services.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are invited to note and comment as appropriate on the contents of this report.

### BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None.

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## 1. Executive summary

1.1 The number of complaints received by GMPTE about the bus network and PTE services, such as infrastructure and information provision, between 1 January and 30 June 2009 was 1761.

1.2 This shows a decrease of 821 complaints from the same period in 2008 when 2582 complaints were received.

1.3 Of the 1761 complaints received, 1307 related to commercial services (74%), compared to 1866 (72%) during the same period in 2008.

1.4 The table below shows a breakdown of complaints by area.

<b>Total Complaints</b>	<b>Half 2008</b>	<b>Yr</b>	<b>Half 2009</b>	<b>Yr</b>
Commercially Registered and Subsidised Bus Services	2245		1488	
Bus Stations and Bus Stops and Shelters	190		177	
Passenger Information Services	116		86	
Customised Services	31		10	
Total	2582		1761	

## 2. Background

2.1 The GMPTE complaints procedure aims to ensure that all complaints are dealt with promptly, consistently and fairly across the organisation. The responsibility for logging comments and ensuring they are sent to the appropriate respondent lies with the Customer Relations department.

2.2 Once logged, the complaint is either sent on to the operator if it relates to a commercially operated service or to the functional department if it relates to an internal matter.

## 3. Complaints by category

3.1 All significant complaint categories relating to bus complaints have fallen in line with the overall fall in complaints regarding commercial bus operators. There are no significant trends indicating any reason for reductions under any particular category.

<b>Top 5 Bus Complaint Categories</b>	<b>Half-year 2008</b>	<b>Half-year 2009</b>
Punctuality and Reliability	1167	774
Staff Performance	475	330
Attractiveness and Comfort	154	75
Routes	138	105
Ticket/Price Related	120	80

- 3.2 Complaints about services provided by GMPTE are categorised as internal and often reflect particular projects being undertaken such as the National Travel Pass scheme.
- 3.3 There are currently over 150 complaint categories and this, coupled with the relatively modest numbers of complaints, makes meaningful trend analysis difficult. The punctuality and reliability of services, along with staff performance continue to be the most significant reasons for complaint. However, both have seen significant reductions in volumes since last year.
- 3.4 Work has been completed as part of complaint management systems upgrade to limit the number of complaint categories to enable improved analysis and reporting.
- 3.5 Ten complaints were received about customised services such as Local Link – three of which related to failed services. This compares to 31 complaints received between January and June 2008 – eight of these were about failed services.

#### **4. Acting on complaints**

- 4.1 The key performance indicator (KPI) for complaints is the target of responding to 75% of complaints within 15 working days. This was revised from the original target of 90% in April 2008 to reflect the need for significant improvement in this area.
- 4.2 A fundamental review of the complaints handling process has been undertaken and, as a result, significant investment has been made in both complaints handling officers and management, and in IT solutions that will facilitate the efficient handling of complaints. The additional Customer Relations team members are now in place and receiving training, and the IT system is due for implementation in August 2009.
- 4.3 In 2008, the average KPI result was 63.5% but in 2009 the team has an average KPI of 78%. The target has now returned to 90% to reflect the additional resource investment made. June's result was 85%, with the average turnaround time down to 5.1 days.
- 4.4 The improvements made have been due to the implementation of enhanced tracking procedures and more regular updates being sent to the heads of departments. The re-design of the process for managing comments from MPs and Councillors, along with the increased resource

provided by the Interim Customer Relations Manager, has been a major factor in improving turnaround times.

## **5. Compliments**

5.1 GMPTE received 14 compliments about staff performance in the first half of 2009 compared to 13 for the same period of 2008. Since the introduction of the 'Thank You' scheme, which aims to recognise staff who exemplify the organisation's values, all compliments that meet the criteria for nomination are put forward to the 'Thank You' panel for consideration.

## **6. Stakeholder engagement**

6.1 Following the recruitment of an Interim Stakeholder Manager in February 2009, a Stakeholder Engagement Strategy has been devised and is now being implemented. The Strategy's reach is broad and incorporates a wide range of groups including the district councils, government and politicians, the business community, service providers, transport bodies, the health and education sectors, pressure groups, think-tanks, trades unions and academics.

6.2 Initiatives currently being worked on include:

- the launch of a tri-annual newsletter;
- working with partners to improve the transport content on their websites;
- increasing coverage in partners in-house publications;
- a seminar series; and
- project work on some of the schemes within the Greater Manchester Transport Fund such as cross city bus and park and ride.

## **7. Recommendations**

7.1 Members are invited to note and comment as appropriate on the contents of this report.