

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE RAIL
AND METROLINK SERVICES COMMITTEE OF
GREATER MANCHESTER INTEGRATED
TRANSPORT AUTHORITY HELD ON 17 JULY 2009**

PRESENT: Councillor Dickinson (in the Chair),

Councillors Chadwick, Dawson, Dillon, Evans, Griffin, Holland, Smethurst*, Whitehead, Wilkinson, Winstanley and Wright.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence were received and noted from Councillors Aldred and Rigby.

* Denotes a nominated substitute for an absent committee member.

RMN/09/01 URGENT BUSINESS (if any) at the discretion of the Chair.

The Chair agreed to accept the following items for consideration, as a matter of urgency, under the provisions of Section 100B (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 because of the following special circumstances:

a. Statement on Rail Rolling Stock

A statement was provided on rail rolling stock that updated Members, at the earliest opportunity, of recent lobbying to the Department for Transport and details of a recent press release, the copies of such were to be appended to these Minutes.

Resolved/-

That the report be received and noted.

RMN/09/02 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

RMN/09/03 MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE 2009/10

Resolved: That Members noted that the Authority, at its meeting on 19 June 2009, agreed the following Membership of the Rail and Metrolink Networks Committee for 2009/10 (13 Members):-

1.	Councillor Mark Aldred	Lab
2.	Councillor David Chadwick	Lab
3.	Councillor Jim Dawson	Lab
4.	Councillor Patricia Holland	Lab
5.	Councillor Alan Whitehead	Lab
6.	Councillor Roland Griffin	Lab
7.	Councillor John Dillon (Vice Chair)	Lib Dem
8.	Councillor Peter Evans	Lib Dem
9.	Councillor Craig Wright	Lib Dem
10.	Councillor David Wilkinson	Lib Dem
11.	Councillor Doreen Dickinson (Chair)	Con
12.	Councillor Michael Winstanley	Con
13.	Councillor Brian Rigby	Con

Substitutes:

1.	Councillor Peter Scott	Lab
2.	Councillor Eunice Smethurst	Lab
3.	Councillor David Jones	Lab
4.	Councillor Keith Whitmore	Lib Dem
5.	Councillor Richard Knowles	Lib Dem
6.	Councillor Yvonne Creswell	Con
7.	Councillor Dylan Butt	Con

RMN/09/04 TERMS OF REFERENCE

Resolved: Members noted that the Authority, at its meeting on 19 June 2009, agreed the following Terms of Reference for the Rail and Metrolink Networks Committee:

In accordance with the Authority's policies for integrated public transport:

- a) To consider all matters relating to the operation and service performance of local rail and Metrolink services in Greater Manchester, together with related facilities, including the status of individual rail stations within the Executive's monitoring system, and the promotion of local rail and Metrolink services.
- b) **Under delegated authority**, to review and approve all issues concerned with the level of, and support of, local rail services.
- c) To monitor:
 - the performance of local rail services; and
 - the performance of Metrolink services.
- d) To discharge the above within capital and revenue budgets determined by the Authority.

RMN/09/05 PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS

Resolved: Members noted that the Authority, at its meeting on 19 June 2009, agreed the following dates for the programme of meetings for the Rail and Metrolink Networks Committee during 2009/10:-

- Friday 17 July 2009
- Friday 2 October 2009
- Friday 4 December 2009
- Friday 5 February 2010
- Friday 9 April 2010

Each of the above meetings will commence at 10.30 a.m.

RMN/09/06 METROLINK SERVICE PERFORMANCE

The Metrolink Director submitted a report that informed Members of service performance and developments which had affected the Metrolink system for Period 13 (08/09) and Period 1 (09/10) (30 March to 31 May 2009). Results from MetQual inspections for the same periods were also provided.

It was reported that with regard to tram unit 2001, investigations were taking place by officers to determine if those problems affecting this tram unit were manufacturing faults.

A Member enquired as to what mechanisms were in place to ensure that essential electrical supply works had been suitably undertaken by contractors, following the reported overloading of the electrical supply on the Bury line and subsequent impact on tram services. In addition, concern was raised as to whether the current transformers would allow for the increase in tram usage. In response, Members were informed that this issue was restricted to the Bury line only and that subject to funding, a longer term project had been initiated to provide two new substations on the Bury line.

Following concern raised by a Member regarding the condition and suitability of lifts at Sale Metrolink Station, details of the maintenance agreement were to be forwarded to Members for their information.

A Member enquired if, with regard to patronage, such data included those passengers entitled to free on the City Centre Metrolink service who had travelled by rail from outside the Greater Manchester area. Members were informed that it did not at present but it was the intention to include this data in the future.

In response to an enquiry by a Member regarding the proposed rail cross-over on Mosley Street was still an option, officers undertook investigate and update Members.

Resolved/-

1. That the performance of Metrolink be noted.
2. That details of the lift maintenance agreement be forwarded to Members.

RMN/09/07 LOCAL RAIL SERVICE PERFORMANCE

Members received a report of the Interim Bus and Rail Director that informed them of local rail service performance within Greater Manchester and the surrounding area, during reporting period 2, (3 to 31 May 2009).

A Member offered thanks to Northern Rail in addressing issues and improving recent performance on Southport – Manchester services, however concern was raised that despite this recent improvement, this service group continued to be one of the worst performing groups. In response, Northern Rail representatives, reported that a Quality Improvement Team (QIT) was attempting to address such issues of poor performance and would provide an update on the work of the QIT at the next meeting of this committee.

Resolved/-

1. That the report be noted.
2. That Members receive a presentation from Northern Rail on the measures put in place to improve performance by the Southport – Manchester Quality Improvement Team.

RMN/09/08 LOCAL RAIL STATIONS AND PROMOTION

The Interim Bus and Rail Director submitted a report that informed Members of those activities related to local rail stations and promotion within Greater Manchester and the surrounding area, during reporting period 2; (3 to 31 May 2009).

It was reported that 19 stations failed to achieve a Station Service Quality score of 80% or above in period 2. The main reasons for these failures were due to poor cleanliness, graffiti, missing and defaced signage, rusting seats, broken fencing, lighting, defective toilets, broken help points and vegetation growth.

A Member requested that prior to the circulation of the Spotlights newsletter, a draft version should be considered by local ITA Members and District Officers, to identify if any transport issues were taking place locally which may be referenced in the newsletter.

In response to a request from a Member, officers undertook to investigate the feasibility of re-routing local bus services from Littleborough to the more accessible railway station at Smithy Bridge to assist those passengers with disability.

Resolved/-

1. That the report be noted; and
2. That officers undertake to investigate the feasibility of re-routing Littleborough bus services to Smithy Bridge railway station.

RMN/09/09 PLANNED NETWORK RAIL POSSESSIONS

A report of the Interim Bus and Rail Director was submitted that informed Members of Network Rail's procedure for possessions of the railway network to undertake engineering works.

Resolved/-

1. That the report be noted; and
2. That Members receive updates on future possessions which affect local rail network.

RMN/09/10 LOCAL RAIL SERVICE DEVELOPMENT

Members considered a report of the Interim Bus and Rail Director that set out progress on local rail service developments for possible implementation in December 2009 and/or December 2010 and sought approval for funding of the enhanced Manchester Piccadilly – Romiley – Marple – New Mills and Sheffield line rail service.

It was reported that with regard to the proposals for the provision of an Atherton line Sunday train service, discussions regarding stopping patterns on this line were to take place with operators at the forthcoming stakeholders' meeting.

A Member requested for the continuation of the enhanced Manchester Piccadilly – Romiley – Marple – New Mills and Sheffield Sunday service from 13 September onwards. In response, Northern Rail informed Members that this request would not be possible as such changes to the timetable required significant time to progress.

A request was also made for the xx.52 Marple service to depart from Rose Hill station. In response, Members were advised that such an increase in services at Rose Hill would require the introduction of additional resources.

A Member requested that the following services be included to those ITA timetable development priorities for December 2009, set out at Appendix A to the report:-

Manchester Victoria/Stalybridge/Huddersfield

- Reinstatement of 30 minute morning frequency towards Manchester.
- Reinstatement of those stops omitted on evening peak trains in both directions.
- Reinstatement of morning and evening peak trains serving Salford Crescent and Salford Central.
- Improve the week day off peak morning and afternoon frequency to half hourly between Stalybridge and Huddersfield.

Resolved/-

1. That funding of the enhanced Manchester Piccadilly – Romiley – Marple – New Mills – Sheffield line rail service be approved on the basis set out at Annex B to the report;
2. That the funding of a Sunday service on the Atherton Line be supported
3. That the timetable development aspirations for possible implementation in December 2010 set out at annex A to the report and those issues reported in the preamble above, be noted;
4. That a report on rail budgets be provided to the next meeting of this committee;

5. That a full report on the December 2010 timetable, including timescales and aspirations, be reported to the next meeting of this committee. This report was to include details of the discussions of the July 2009 Stakeholder conference.

RMN/09/11 IMPROVEMENTS TO METROLINK REPLACEMENT BUS STOP AT VICTORIA STATION

The Metrolink Director submitted a report that informed members of the additional steps taken to make the Metrolink Replacement Bus Stop at Victoria Station easier for passengers to locate.

A Member commented that facilities at bus stops be improved to allow for the installation of seats at bus shelters and that signage should also include alternative rail services in addition to replacement bus services. Signage at Piccadilly Railway Station did not explain the location of Fairfield Street and as such was confusing to visitors. An alternative of utilising the Station Approach for the bus service was suggested by a Member.

Resolved/-

- 1.) That the report be noted;
- 2.) That officers undertake to investigate those infrastructure and signage issues raised by Members in the pre-amble above.

RMN/09/12 PRESENTATIONS BY RAIL OPERATING COMPANIES

Members received a short presentation from First TransPennine Express and Northern Rail that set out operating and performance details.

Resolved/-

That the presentations be received with thanks and noted.

URGENT BUSINESS: STATEMENT ON RAIL ROLLING STOCK

In May 2007 the White Paper, "Delivering a Sustainable Railway" committed the Government to purchasing 1,300 new rail vehicles to cater for the recent and predicted growth on the railways, it also required the industry to provide capacity for 4,100 extra people to arrive in Manchester in the morning peak by 2014, on trains that were not more than 45% full.

In January 2008 the DfT released its Rolling Stock Plan which indicated that the main operator of commuter services in Greater Manchester, Northern Rail, would receive 182 of these 1,300 vehicles, to be used across the whole of the North of England. Officers from the ITA and PTE have been meeting with Northern Rail ever since to agree how these vehicles could be best used to reduce overcrowding.

We are however extremely concerned that twice since then the DfT has indicated Northern would receive fewer trains than were initially promised. First the number was reduced to 142, and most recently we were told that the number was 106, and could be reduced even further.

We are extremely concerned that this number of vehicles will not solve the problem of overcrowding on our trains. The Chair and Vice Chair met with the Minister last Thursday to highlight our concerns and were pleased that he asked his civil servants to look again at their calculations.

Also in that discussion the Authority repeated its demand that the trains released from the Oldham Loop in October should be kept in Greater Manchester, and should be paid for by the DfT and not by us.

Just this week they also met with Greater Manchester MPs to brief them on both situations. Officers are now working with the DfT to highlight the holes in their forecasts and to demonstrate why the full number of trains originally promised will be needed. In the meantime leading Members will be working with our colleagues in the House of Commons to keep up the pressure on the DfT and to ensure that Northern, and Greater Manchester, receive the right number of trains necessary to allow rail passengers to travel in safety and in comfort.

GMITA NEWS RELEASE

16 July 2009

Greater Manchester MPs call for urgent Westminster train talks

MPs from across Greater Manchester have thrown their weight behind calls for the North to get its fair share of trains to tackle overcrowding and cope with future growth.

At a meeting in Westminster yesterday (Wednesday), 12 MPs met a cross-party delegation from Greater Manchester Integrated Transport Authority (GMITA) – hearing that the Department for Transport plans to backtrack on its pledge of 182 additional carriages for operator Northern Rail.

Local MPs, led by Tony Lloyd for Manchester Central, are now asking for an urgent meeting with Transport Secretary Lord Adonis to press the case for more carriages than the estimated 106 now on offer.

Tony Lloyd said: “Rail underpins the economy of our city region, which will be put at a severe disadvantage if our rail network cannot cope with the overwhelming demand for travel that it is currently experiencing.

“The North seems to have fallen foul of much greater reductions in new train capacity than anywhere else in the country – in spite of passenger growth outstripping other areas of the country. We have a very strong case to make to Lord Adonis.”

Councillor Keith Whitmore, Chair of GMITA, added: “I think we are making real progress and I believe that the Transport Secretary and Rail Minister are giving serious consideration to our arguments. Yesterday’s meeting with MPs has added real impetus to our call for a government rethink.”

Vice Chair of GMITA, Councillor Ian Macdonald, said: “One of the justifications given to us for slashing the number of additional trains promised by a staggering 40 per cent is the recession. This just does not hold.

“Our ability to cope with the current economic crisis will be severely hindered if our rail network cannot get people to jobs, education and healthcare. What we are actually seeing here is a very distinct and growing divide in transport investment between the North and the South.”

Alongside the reduction in carriages from 182 to just 106, the Department for Transport has stated it will not pay for Greater Manchester to keep five Pacer trains (10 carriages in total) currently running on the Oldham Loop Line. The line closes for conversion to Metrolink in October this year.

Between 1995/6 and 2007/8 passenger journeys were up by 57 per cent in Greater Manchester. Over half of all trains in the peak now have standing passengers. People are increasingly being put off travelling by rail to use less sustainable modes.

The Northern Way study of the Manchester Hub published in April predicted that growth in Manchester commuter services will continue to outpace that of all other services in the area.

ENDS

Media contact: Becky Marr on 0161 244 1055 or email mediarelations@gmpte.gov.uk

Note to Editors

1. Greater Manchester Integrated Transport Authority is responsible for overseeing the provision of public transport in the county. It is made up of 33 councillors from the ten councils in Greater Manchester. GMPTE (Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive) implements the Authority's policies.

2. The Department for Transport launched its 'Rolling Stock Plan' on 30 January 2008, promising 1,300 extra carriages nationally. 300 were planned to address the rapid growth in demand in cities such as Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds and Cardiff.

The provision for Northern Rail was stated as 182 vehicles, including 24 electrics and 158 diesels. The DfT subsequently confirmed these proposals and restated its Rolling Stock Plan in July 2008.

3. GMPTE is overseeing a £600 million expansion of the Metrolink network to Oldham and Rochdale, Droylsden in Tameside, Chorlton in South Manchester, and MediaCityUK in Salford.