

REPORT FOR RESOLUTION

COMMITTEE: Policy and Resources

DATE: 22nd January 2010

SUBJECT: Review of Safety and Security on Public Transport

REPORT OF: The Clerk to the Authority and the Interim Bus and Rail Director, GMPTE

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform Members of the Policy and Resources Committee of the work, findings, and proposed actions determined by the GMITA Safety and Security Review Panel and to secure Members' endorsement in implementing the Review's recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are recommended to:

- 1 Note and/or comment on the report.
- 2 Endorse the findings and actions proposed by the Safety and Security Review Panel as outlined in Sections 3 and 4 of this report.
- 3 Request officers implement the key actions proposed at the appropriate time, or as stated in the report.
- 4 Request further update reports are submitted regularly to the Bus Network and GMPTE Services Committee and the Rail and Metrolink Networks Committee.

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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

All background documents relating to the work of the Transport Safety and Security Review can be accessed in Room 308 at Manchester Town Hall.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 One of the GMITA policy priorities for 2008/09 identified a desire to review the scope to further improve passenger safety and reduce anti-social behaviour, on all modes of transport across Greater Manchester. Sustaining an attractive, safe and secure, public transport system for users and for the staff employed in the industry is essential and an important part of this is improving the public's perception of safe travel on the public transport network. GMPTE on behalf of the Authority has an important role to play in providing and enabling a wide range of successful activities across the public transport network that help in creating a safer, more secure, public transport environment for members of the public and for staff working on the network in Greater Manchester.
- 1.2 The Authority agreed that a Panel should be established to conduct a comprehensive review of all GMITA/GMPTE activities in the area of safety and security on and around public transport in Greater Manchester, looking specifically at joint working arrangements eg the Crime Reduction on Public Transport (CROPT) Project (See Glossary at Appendix 1). The CROPT forum brings together key agencies such as Greater Manchester Police (GMP), British Transport Police (BTP), the public transport operators across Greater Manchester, and the ten Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) to influence further improvements in public transport safety and to improve the travelling public's perception of safety.
- 1.3 This Review and its findings, drawn from an objective assessment of current activities in the area of safety and security on and around public transport, proposes some procedural modifications which will maximize the impact of future GMITA expenditure in this area of work.

2 Review Process

- 2.1 A Review Panel was formed comprising a representative of each of the main political groups on the Authority, namely Councillors Macdonald, Dillon and Chadwick, and supported by GMITA/GMPTE officers. Councillor Godson was included in the process as substitute Panel Member.
- 2.2 The remit of the Panel was to gather information and evidence which would increase Members' understanding of the concerns of passengers and staff with regard to personal safety when travelling on the Greater Manchester public transport network. The Review findings, on where improvements could be made, would then shape the key actions identified later in this report.
- 2.3 A baseline report was prepared by GMPTE officers setting out a summary of current safety and security activities along with an assessment of current performance, supported by a benchmarking exercise of safety and security arrangements in other city regions. The report identified resource levels dedicated by the Executive to the area of work under review and provided information on passenger perceptions of safety and security on and around the network.

- 2.4 A series of Panel meetings took place with representatives of partners responsible for the provision of public transport services. These were:
- GMPTE - Crime Reduction Advisory Team and Strategic Research
 - Staff, Passenger and Media Groups – Passenger Focus, UNITE and GMPTE Media Section
 - Train/Tram and Infrastructure - Northern Rail, First TransPennine Express and Metrolink
 - Bus and Infrastructure - (GMBOA) Greater Manchester Bus Operators Association, Stagecoach Manchester, First Manchester, GMPTE Bus Stations & Route Equipment and J C Decaux
 - Policing Partners and CDRPs (Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships) – GMP, BTP, 2 local CDRPs

3 **Key Findings**

3.1 The evidence received by the Review Panel underlined the importance of safety and security on the public transport network in assisting the Authority to meet its objectives for public transport in Greater Manchester. The Panel was pleased to find that the vast majority of trips on public transport in the region pass without incident or cause for complaint.

3.2 Public Perception

3.3 Public perception is crucial to establishing a widely-accepted safe environment in which people will wish to work and commute. The Panel found that a range of measures are helping to improve the general public's perception of safety and security around public transport. Measures having a positive affect on perception include: the Travel Safe Officers scheme on Metrolink; lighting levels on bus and rail stations and in bus shelters; use of CCTV cameras; and the visible presence of uniformed officers both on and off vehicles. However there is scope to review approaches to maximise impact on perceptions.

3.4 The Panel found that publicity, both good and bad, can affect the public's perception of a safe and secure transport network. GMPTE and operators were found to make use of local press correspondence pages to, where possible, promote positive perceptions.

3.5 The National Passenger Survey (August 2008) reported by Passenger Focus in March 2009 indicated that only 63% of passengers were satisfied with personal security at rail stations, whilst 72% expressed satisfaction with on-train security, despite the fact that people tend to spend shorter periods of time at the station than on the train. Often a decrease in safety perception at rail stations can be explained by seasonal variation ie increased hours of darkness. Passenger Focus suggest that changes to staffing patterns which would enhance night time staffing at stations will improve public perceptions by aiming to highlight safety and security achievements. However, the Panel also noted a propensity for the media to dwell on negative stories.

3.6 Train and Rail Network

- 3.7 The Panel found that CCTV is acting as a deterrent to anti-social behaviour on the railway network, and that real-time CCTV monitoring on trains and at stations has resulted in successful prosecution of offenders. Technology improvements, design, and environment have all proved to significantly affect the safety satisfaction rates at stations. For example the installation of ticket barriers at rail stations improves standards of safety and security, whilst also reducing fare evasion and thereby increasing revenue.
- 3.8 Wherever possible, prosecutions are sought for crimes on the railway network, either through BTP for the more serious incidents or through train operating companies using railway by-laws to deal with anti-social behaviour type incidents; and robust mechanisms are in place for providing incident feedback to rail companies' staffs.
- 3.9 Rail operators reported to the Panel that availability of staff for work connected with the provision of a safe and secure transport network is affected by current franchising arrangements; and therefore suggested that further commitments to public safety could be sought through future franchise agreements. Operators suggested that development of the franchising process would incentivise operating companies to invest in safety and security initiatives through the terms of the rail franchise. Longer franchising periods were suggested as one way to improve safety and security conditions; along with a baseline specification of safety and security set by the Department of Transport.

3.10 Metrolink Trams and Infrastructure

- 3.11 Evidence from the Metrolink staff representative set out initiatives which aimed at improving the staff working environment and liaison between GMP and Metrolink staff, which have resulted in improved incident response times on the light rail network. Metrolink staff incident reporting procedures have also recently been upgraded.
- 3.12 In-tram CCTV is installed on all Metrolink vehicles along with a scheduled programme to upgrade to a real-time system. CCTV installations are also underway at Metrolink stations, beside a programme to acquire Secure Station Accreditation for more of the 36 Metrolink Stations. Trials are underway of 'head cams' – small surveillance cameras worn on the head by Metrolink Travel Safe Officers.
- 3.13 Accreditation of the Metrolink Travel Safe Officers was confirmed by the Chief Constable earlier in the year. The Panel concluded that it is now crucial that the accreditation powers are used to maximum effect and has suggested that monitoring of the accreditation process is annually reported to the Rail & Metrolink Network Committee.
- 3.14 It was also noted that there could be future scope through Metrolink to emulate Merseytravel's approach to carry out their own prosecutions for minor offences on the network, eg feet on seats.

3.15 Bus Services

- 3.16 The Panel found that safety and security issues which affect the bus network include anti-social behaviour, assaults on passengers or staff, non-payment of correct fare, fraudulent use of period tickets/passes, vandalism, graffiti, bullying and intimidation. The Panel heard that targeted joint operations have been very successful. For example the use of a 'Ghost Bus' – an initiative used for reported incidents of vandalism where intelligence informs the operation of a bus carrying plain clothes Police and other agency officers instead of regular passengers.
- 3.17 The introduction of the Bus Watch Specials initiative has been welcomed by GMITA/GMPTE and the bus operating companies across Greater Manchester as a deterrent/response to the issues identified above. The Panel has recommended that passenger surveys should be undertaken relating to the implementation of the scheme, and its impact on the network should be monitored and reported regularly to Members through the Bus Network and GMPTE Services Committee. Greater Manchester Police (GMP) reported that a development plan is being drawn up on behalf of the Chief Constable to significantly enhance staffing levels of Special Constables across the Force. The Bus Watch Specials initiative is part of this vast recruitment drive.
- 3.18 Once the Bus Watch Specials initiative has become firmly established across the network, a comparative assessment of its benefits, alongside those of the Patrol & Response Units, in helping to provide a safe and secure bus network will be made. This evaluation of the two services will help determine the nature of future service provision. It should be noted that the CROPT Strategic Steering Group has agreed that this review should be triggered after 3 years, ie 2012. The Panel also asked respondents for their views on the Patrol and Response Units, which are jointly funded by GMITA and operators. Reflecting comments made by operators it was noted that future contracts for the Units should continue to ensure that a high level of customer service standards and conflict resolution is consistently maintained by the provider.
- 3.19 Bus operators also indicated their strong support for the work of the PTE around CDRPs and other partnerships. However, they cautioned against too many transport crime related meetings between GMPTE and bus operators, such as CROPT SSG // CROPT APPG // BOSG // Schools Sub-Group, so as to ensure that they are able to represent themselves effectively at these forums.
- 3.20 Fraudulent ticketing on the transport network is a major problem for GMPTE and operators. Apart from the low level incidents of tickets being altered by individuals or of people 'sharing' tickets, there are issues of organised criminal activity in relation to ticket fraud. GMP's Chief Constable has indicated that if sufficient evidence of the nature and scale of this problem was provided that consideration would be given to GMP allocating resources to investigate the matter.

3.21 Bus Stations and Shelters

3.22 The Panel found that the introduction of double staffing at bus stations, along with improved procedures to support lone workers, the introduction of 'head cams' for PTE bus station staff, and conflict awareness training have all helped to increase safety and the perception of safety for staff. Initiatives such as the introduction of links between bus station CCTV and town centre CCTV systems are welcomed by staff. Evidence shows that the use of technology is improving the public transport environment, as passengers report feeling safer when there is visible evidence of CCTV usage, particularly where real-time monitoring is operational. New CCTV systems such as that at Altrincham Interchange capture high quality images which can be used as evidential material when required, and the presence of CCTV equipment can in itself act as a deterrent to those likely to participate in anti-social behaviour.

3.23 A series of measures used to combat crime at bus shelters have been implemented in partnership between GMPTE who own 792 shelters in Greater Manchester, J C Decaux who own 3577 shelters across the region, and the Police and local authorities in Greater Manchester. CCTV technology is installed in shelters at identified crime hot spots (using statistical crime data) and agreed by the PTE and the local authority. All shelters are monitored daily and repairs are undertaken within 48 hours.

3.24 Policing and Partnering

3.25 The Panel found that Greater Manchester Police (GMP) has been working with its partners for the last 18 - 24 months on initiatives to 'deny space' for criminal activity on the public transport and highway networks. Successful initiatives include Gateway Checks, Patrol & Response Units, Protocols for Concessionary Travel on buses and Metrolink for Police, PCSOs and Community Wardens/Rangers, Ghost Bus Operations, Bus Shelter CCTV, the Bus Watch Specials, Bus Station Exclusion Notices, Police 'Pods' at bus stations, and operations carried out on 'mischief nights' such as Operation Treacle - on 5 November - an initiative designed to tackle anti-social behaviour and reduce injuries caused by fireworks.

3.26 There is now a broader understanding of public transport safety and security needs as a result of GMPTE's presence on each of the Greater Manchester CDRPs and organisations welcome further developments of cross-tasking with partners. CDRPs are developing strong partnerships at all levels, and achieving reductions in the rates of crime/criminal damage.

3.27 GMP work closely in partnership with BTP, particularly at transport interchanges and on specific initiatives, such as football match policing and joint intelligence programmes.

3.28 The Panel was advised of Salford's 'Safest' protocol – ensuring safer travel – whereby agencies are made aware of their responsibilities and delivery expectations in terms of safer travel. This protocol is being considered in at least one other CDRP, and further encouragement is being given to other districts to implement similar initiatives.

3.29 In addressing prevention and enforcement issues relating to the Transport Strategy a great deal of work goes on in schools. It was noted that educating the young in Citizenship Classes in primary schools is being shown to reap benefits in this area. For example, Manchester CDRP through its Transport Thematic Officer (jointly funded between Manchester CDRP and GMPTE), is currently involved in creating a DVD featuring a cast of youngsters from local schools. The DVD shows, amongst other things, incidents of vandalism, smoking on buses, and loud music being played and then explains to children that this is unacceptable behaviour and advises how they should behave on public transport.

4. **Key Actions**

In the light of its findings, the Panel has recommended the following actions.

4.1 In recognition of the Panel's broad conclusion that much of the work already underway is both effective and to be commended, GMPTE should continue to work with operators in employing, as part of its public transport safety and security 'toolkit', the use of innovative initiatives and tactics such as - Gateway Checks, Patrol & Response Units, Protocols for Concessionary Travel on buses and Metrolink for Police, PCSOs and Community Wardens/Rangers, Ghost Bus Operations, Bus Shelter CCTV, the Bus Watch Specials, Bus Station Exclusion Notices, Police 'Pods' at bus stations, and operations carried out on 'mischief nights' such as Operation Treacle.

4.2 Whilst the recent trend is towards improvements in the public's perception of a safe and secure transport network, the Panel proposes that GMITA/GMPTE will review approaches for promoting public perception and identify how we can best use the media to raise the profile of public transport for the residents of Greater Manchester, assuring them that GMITA/GMPTE is working on their behalf to promote a safe and secure public transport network, particularly in the evenings.

4.3 The Panel recommends that GMITA/GMPTE officers should progress the issue of safety and security as part of the future rail franchising process

4.4 It is proposed by the Panel that the GMITA Rail and Metrolink Networks Committee is requested to establish an appropriate monitoring system for the performance/outcomes of the deployment of accredited Travel Safe Officers on the Metrolink system.

4.5 The Review Panel recommends that GMPTE should further promote and, through the GMITA Bus Network and GMPTE Services Committee, monitor the effectiveness of the Bus Watch Specials Initiative.

4.6 The Panel proposes that GMPTE undertake a tendering process for future provision of the Patrol & Response Service with a view to ensuring that it best complements the new Bus Watch Specials initiative so as to determine the future longer term delivery of a uniformed service on the bus network.

- 4.7 GMPTE represents the public transport system in all GM Community Safety Units (CSUs), and operates at a local level through engagement with operators, local Neighbourhood Policing Teams and CSUs. In addition the Panel proposes that GMPTE should encourage enhanced joint working between transport operating companies and the 10 GM districts, where appropriate.
- 4.8 Another recommendation of the Panel was that GMPTE should ensure that the transport crime related meetings between GMPTE and bus operators are undertaken with minimum bureaucracy and meetings, so as to ensure that operators are able to represent themselves effectively at these forums.
- 4.9 The Panel proposes that GMPTE should work closely with the various operators to identify the nature and scale of the problems associated with ticketing fraud on the transport network in order that GMP can give further consideration to the level of resources it ought to commit to investigate this problem.
- 4.10 It was recommended by the Panel that organisational reporting mechanisms across the local transport system should be regularly reviewed and be consistent across all organisations and modes. (Evidence was received from operators that bus drivers may become 'desensitised and resilient to low level verbal abuse and anti-social behaviour'. Also Metrolink TSOs do not always report acts of anti-social behaviour as they see this type of incident as 'part of the job'.) Panel members consider that anti-social behaviour should not be tolerated by any member of staff or of the travelling public and encouragement should be given to everyone to report such incidents.
- 4.11 The Panel propose that GMPTE encourage best practice on all modes, which should be shared with other operators and other modes to ensure efforts are concentrated in the areas where best service provision has been achieved, and where shared information can benefit the public transport user.
- 4.12 Leading Members and officers of GMITA met with the Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police earlier in 2009 where discussions on a number of initiatives were extremely positive. The Panel recommends that this type of regular liaison at a high level, between GMITA/GMPTE and GMPA/GMP, should be maintained to lobby support for public transport issues.

5 Recommendations

- 5.1 A full set of recommendations appear at the front of this report.

Sir Howard Bernstein
Clerk to the Authority

Michael Renshaw
Interim Bus and Rail Director

GLOSSARY

BOSG	Bus Operators Sub Group – Bi-monthly session to discuss issues of concern to Bus Operators - comprises representatives of Bus Operators and GMPTE Transport Services/Transport Planning Officers /Bus Station Managers
Bus Watch Specials	Initiative whereby staff from GMPTE, Greater Manchester Police, Stagecoach and First are recruited to work on the bus network as a team of part-time Special Constables, dedicated to reducing crime and incidents of anti social behaviour on bus routes and bus stations
CDRPs	Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships – Multi agency approach at a local authority level (representing statutory, voluntary and private organisations) to tackling crime and disorder
CRAT	Crime Reduction Advisory Team – GMPTE Team
CROPT	Crime Reduction on Public Transport – Forum which brings together key agencies (GMPTE, Policing organisations, transport operators and local authority Crime Reduction Teams across Greater Manchester) to improve public transport safety and security
CROPT APPG	CROPT Action Plan Progression Group – Operational arm of the CROPT process - comprises middle managers and all key partner agencies
CROPT SSG	CROPT Strategic Steering Group – Multi agency governing body of the CROPT process - comprises senior managers and all key agencies
CSUs	Community Safety Units – Local authority units working to support the Crime Reduction Partnerships
GMBOA	Greater Manchester Bus Operators Association
UNITE	Transport Industry Employee Union
TSOs	Travel Safe Officers – A team of Metrolink Officers accredited by GMP to Public Community Safety Officer standards under the Community Safety Accreditation Scheme