

**TRANSPORT FOR GREATER MANCHESTER COMMITTEE
REPORT FOR RESOLUTION**

DATE: 10 February 2012

SUBJECT: Tram-train: TfGM input to forthcoming Network Rail
Route Utilisation Strategy

REPORT OF: Rail Programme Director, TfGM

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform Members of TfGM's contribution to a Network Rail strategy on alternative rail technologies, and specifically of a brief case-study of possible tram-train operation on the Manchester – Marple via Bredbury rail line.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to:

1. note that TfGM has been assisting Network Rail in its Alternative Solutions RUS with information about the potential for tram-train in Greater Manchester and that the RUS report will be published for consultation at the end of February 2012
2. endorse the proposal to inform Network Rail that the Manchester – Marple tram train is only one of a number of potential schemes in Greater Manchester; and
3. endorse the development over the next year of a tram-train strategy for Greater Manchester.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Report to GMITA Policy and Resources Committee, 19/11/10

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1 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 TfGM has been supporting Network Rail over the past year on its RUS on alternative rail technologies (the “Alternative Solutions” RUS) which includes a significant workstream on tram-train application to the rail network. The results of TfGM’s initial appraisals of potential tram-train routes around Greater Manchester, and specifically a route from Manchester to Marple via Bredbury have been shared with Network Rail on a confidential basis. This work follows a letter from Norman Baker to the then TfGM Chair in May 2011 which asked if we could share our analysis of the Marple - Manchester route, as an example of a possible tram-train scheme for the future, with both Network Rail and DfT. The then TfGMC Chair responded to the Minister agreeing to share TfGM’s analysis.
- 1.2 The Manchester - Marple route is likely to be among the less difficult tram-train routes to implement, and has been the subject of more initial appraisal work than other potential tram-train lines in Greater Manchester.
- 1.3 The policy climate within DfT and Network Rail is increasingly positive towards tram-train in general, especially in view of the need to explore options to reduce rail subsidy. We expect also that the DfT may make a decision on whether to proceed with the South Yorkshire pilot tram-train service from Sheffield to Rotherham within the next month.

2 Expected recommendations of the RUS

- 2.1 The report of the RUS is still being prepared, and its final recommendations are not yet available. However, it is understood that the report is likely to be favourable towards the potential for tram-train in areas of medium-density traffic where there is potential to attract substantial additional demand onto rail. Such a conclusion would appear to be strongly favourable to the case for tram-train in Greater Manchester.

3 TfGM’s input to the RUS

- 3.1 Network Rail proposes to include a brief case-study of tram-train on the Manchester – Marple via Bredbury rail line in the report of the RUS, based on TfGM’s analysis. The case-study will include a general description of the proposed service change; a map of the existing and programmed Metrolink network and GM rail network; a very general description of the basic infrastructure required; and a high-level table of the results from the modelling and appraisal. The report is due to be published for consultation at the end of February 2012.

- 3.2 It is important that the report of the RUS is clear that the Manchester – Marple line is only one of a number of potential tram-train schemes in Greater Manchester. Officers will ensure all potential schemes are fully appraised as part of a future analysis.
- 3.3 Any future decisions on the relative priorities of potential tram-train routes should be based upon the development of a tram-train strategy for Greater Manchester, which it is proposed is developed over the next 12 months.

4 Recommendations

- 4.1 Please see front sheet of report for recommendations.

Stephen Clark
Rail Programme Director