PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform Members of the latest patronage trends for demand responsive Local Link and Ring and Ride services, to report progress to date and any subsequent actions that may be required to improve services.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to:

1. Note that both Local Link and Ring and Ride patronage have increased for the quarter to March 2011 when compared with the same period in 2010.
2. Note the slight increase in Local Link contract costs and reduction in cost per passenger journey between the same periods.
3. Note the continuing publicity and promotion campaigns to further develop the Local Link brand.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Report to the Bus Network and PTE Services Committee 11 March 2011: Demand Responsive Services and Ring and Ride Services - Update
Report to the Bus Network and PTE Services Committee 8 October 2010: Demand Responsive Services - Update

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report informs the Bus Network and TfGM Services Committee of the latest journey trends on Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) services and of on-going work to improve patronage and value for money. Overall Local Link and Ring and Ride patronage for the quarter ended March 2011 has increased, by 3.4% and 6.0% respectively, since the same quarter in 2010, which is an improvement on the static patronage detailed in the previous report.

1.2 The report also describes actions relating to specific services and gives details, in Appendix A, of current performance of individual services, including Ring and Ride.

2. DOOR TO DOOR SERVICES

2.1 Thirty-six Local Link services on thirty contracts are funded either by Transport for Greater Manchester and/or from external funding sources such as EU funding and Manchester Airport. The latest available service by service patronage data for all thirty-six services is shown in Appendix A.

2.2 In addition the Transport for Greater Manchester Committee funds Greater Manchester Accessible Transport Limited (GMATL) for Ring and Ride provision via the Greater Manchester Accessible Transport Trust. There is however, a clear distinction between the two services; Ring and Ride is intended for passengers of all ages who find it difficult to use conventional public transport due to health, disability or mental health reasons, whereas Local Link is planned to meet local gaps in public transport provision and is available to all passengers living within the designated area.

2.3 Table 1 shows patronage on demand responsive services for the quarter January to March 2011 against the same quarter in 2010. The Ring and Ride service level on Row 1 is unchanged over this period so this represents a like for like comparison. Row 2 compares the twenty-seven Local Link contracts, either partly or wholly funded by TfGM, existent from January 2010 to March 2011. Thus it excludes any services that have changed between the comparison periods, thereby also allowing a like for like comparison of the same services.

2.4 Subsidised bus services cannot be compared on the same basis, however, since patronage data to enable a comparison that excludes any service that has changed between the two periods under comparison is not available owing to the volume of subsidised bus service changes. Therefore, for this comparison, actual Local Link patronage, including all service changes but excluding wholly externally funded services, is shown in Row 3 while Row 4 shows actual subsidised bus service patronage, also including all service changes; both compared over the same time periods.
Table 1: Patronage changes in the fourth quarter 2009/10 and 2010/11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Row</th>
<th>Jan-Mar 2010</th>
<th>Jan-Mar 2011</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ring and Ride (Like for Like comparison)</td>
<td>254,842</td>
<td>270,224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Local Link Patronage (Like for Like comparison)</td>
<td>80,476</td>
<td>83,228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Actual Local Link patronage</td>
<td>80,791</td>
<td>83,989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Actual subsidised bus services</td>
<td>57,824,000</td>
<td>59,372,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can thus be seen that the positive patronage trend on Local Link is marginally greater than that for subsidised bus services. The greater quarterly increase for Ring and Ride patronage is mainly attributable to January 2010 being a particularly poor month, possibly due to poor weather, an effect which was less pronounced on Local Link.

Table 2 shows the most frequent Local Link journey purposes, where measured,

Table 2: Journey purpose on Local Link journeys

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Jan-Mar 2010</th>
<th>Jan-Mar 2011</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leisure</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This shows an increase of 7% in employment trips at the expense of leisure, down 5% and shopping, down 3%.

3. COMPARISON OF COSTS AND PATRONAGE

Total net annual operating costs for like for like DRT Local Link services, including external funding, for the quarter ending March 2011 increased by 2.5% when compared with the same quarter in 2010. The cost to Transport for Greater Manchester also increased by 2.5%. However, officers have successfully negotiated and implemented contract price reductions for four wholly internally funded service contracts expiring in this period and further cost reductions have
been negotiated for contracts expiring in May 2011. It is therefore expected that overall costs will be decrease from the quarter to March 2011 figure.

3.2 Current cost per journey data for the period from January to March 2011 is shown in Table 3 below. This has reduced by 6 pence by trip overall and 4 pence per trip to Transport for Greater Manchester when compared with the equivalent 2010 data due to the improvement in patronage.

3.3 Cost per passenger journey differs by type of operator since taxi based services can be operated more flexibly and generally at lower cost than dedicated vehicle community transport operated services; albeit at the expense of vehicle capacity and accessibility, and contract management information.

Table 3: Cost per passenger journey for like for like services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All contract costs</th>
<th>Cost to Transport for Greater Manchester only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Transport operated services Jan – March 2011</td>
<td>£6.83</td>
<td>£6.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxi operated services Jan – March 2011</td>
<td>£4.29</td>
<td>£4.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total cost per journey Jan – March 2011</td>
<td>£5.83</td>
<td>£5.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total cost per journey Jan – March 2010</td>
<td>£5.89</td>
<td>£5.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change from quarter Jan - March 2010 to Jan to March 2011</td>
<td>£0.06 decrease</td>
<td>£0.04 decrease</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.4 Most services operated by Community Transport operators are booked through the Transport for Greater Manchester Booking, scheduling and despatch centre currently operated by GMATL under contract to Transport For Greater Manchester. The one exception, Partington Local Link, is planned to be operated through the scheduling centre from August 2011. The annual cost for operating the centre is currently £151,000, equal to £0.75 per passenger trip in the quarter to March 2011, which is not included in the average cost per passenger for Community Transport operated services shown in the table. This cost does not apply to taxi based services where the journey booking, scheduling and despatch are undertaken by the operator and the cost is included in the quoted contract cost used to calculate the cost per passenger journey data.

4. PROPOSALS FOR NEW AND AMENDED SERVICES

4.1 Officers introduced the Rochdale Evenings Local Link service from May 2011 as a planned replacement for five withdrawn evening subsidised bus routes in Rochdale.

4.2 In addition, at the last meeting of this Committee, Members approved the withdrawal of the Standish and Shevington Local Link from October 2011 due to low usage and high cost per trip. As requested by Members, officers are contacting the
remaining service users in advance to allow passengers time to make alternative travel arrangements.

4.3 Service areas in Marple and Mellor and Mottram Tame Valley have been expanded; in Marple to replace an evening link between Greave and Romiley left unserved by the withdrawal of the evening 380/381 bus service at the end of July. Mottram was expanded to ensure that passengers in Broadbottom and Stalyhill Drive continued to have a link to Stalybridge, Tameside General Hospital and Ashton when the 239 service was withdrawn in June.

4.4 Officers will continue to monitor services monthly, in conjunction with the local fixed route network, and, where required, recommend action to Members at future meetings of this Committee to ensure services deliver value for money and meet demand in the most efficient manner.

5. SERVICE PROMOTION

5.1 One of the factors influencing patronage growth is awareness of the service. The effects of specific leafleting campaigns can be seen in the patronage trends for Marple, Salford and Wythenshawe Local Links and the Airport Nightlink service. Radio advertising is presently being conducted on Tower FM to cover the five services within their catchment area, primarily Bolton and Bury. A promotional video for use on the Transport for Greater Manchester website and at events has also been produced. The effectiveness of these initiatives will be monitored as part of the 2011/12 local Link monitoring programme.

5.2 The introduction of a new service will be accompanied by significant marketing to ensure that people living within the local area are aware of the service and have the available information to book a journey. At a minimum this would involve a press release and house to house distribution of the leaflet in advance of the service start date in addition to distribution of leaflets in local businesses and facilities including the usual TfGM outlets. The website would also be updated to include the leaflet. Further promotion may involve outreach work and poster campaigns. New services are promoted more intensively than other services in order to encourage patronage to develop to an optimum level.

6. CHANGES TO LOCAL LINK AND RING AND RIDE FARES

6.1 In the 11 March 2011 report to this Committee, Members approved revised fares on DRT and Ring and Ride services to reflect wider changes to the local concessionary travel scheme from 3 April 2011.

6.2 The full effect of these fare changes on patronage cannot yet be determined as insufficient post fares revision patronage data is yet available. Officers will report on this in the next six-monthly progress report.
7. CONCLUSION

7.1 Where the same services are compared between both periods, Local Link patronage for the quarter ending March 2011 has increased by 3.4% over the same quarter in 2010 and 4.0% in real terms. Ring and Ride patronage, where the service has not changed between the two time periods used for comparison, has increased by 6%. Subsidised bus service patronage has increased by 2.7% in real terms. These similar patronage trends suggest that Local Link and Ring and Ride services are, in common with bus services, being affected by wider economic conditions.

7.2 These latest patronage increases show an improvement over the static position previously reported. Further targeted marketing activity will be undertaken and officers will continue to examine and amend services where necessary to improve service penetration and ensure costs are contained. A further progress report will be submitted to this Committee in six months.

7.3 Officers will continue to monitor Ring and Ride services, meeting monthly with managers from GMATL. A separate report on Ring and Ride performance will be presented at the next meeting of this committee, inclusive of service level outputs and patronage.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 See front sheet for recommendations.

Michael Renshaw
Bus and Rail Director
APPENDIX A

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS FOR DEMAND-RESPONSIVE TRANSPORT SERVICES

Airport Nightlink

Patronage Jan-Mar 10: 931  
Patronage Jan-Mar 11: 939  
Difference between quarter to Mar 11 and quarter to Mar10: 0.9%  
Cost per journey: £9.18  
Cost per journey to Transport For Greater Manchester: £4.59

Officers are planning to investigate, with Manchester Airport staff, possible alternatives to this service such as car sharing schemes.

Bury Rural

Patronage Jan-Mar 10: 1163  
Patronage Jan-Mar 11: 1782  
Difference between quarter to Mar 11 and quarter to Mar10: 53.2%  
Cost per journey: £2.42
Dane Bank

Patronage Jan-Mar 10: 1353
Patronage Jan-Mar 11: 1503
Difference between quarter to Mar 11 and quarter to Mar10: 11.1%
Cost per journey: £3.29

Deane and Daubhill (Includes Hunger Hill journey figures)

Patronage Jan-Mar 10: 1281
Patronage Jan-Mar 11: 1048
Difference between quarter to Mar 11 and quarter to Mar10: -18.2%
Cost per journey: £5.64
Deeplish

Patronage Jan-Mar 10: 1745
Patronage Jan-Mar 11: 2102
Difference between quarter to Mar 11 and quarter to Mar10: 20.5%
Cost per journey: £3.83

East Bolton

Patronage Jan-Mar 10: 5023
Patronage Jan-Mar 11: 5951
Difference between quarter to Mar 11 and quarter to Mar10: 18.5%
Cost per journey: £3.15
East Manchester

Patronage Jan-Mar 10: 4800
Patronage Jan-Mar 11: 6080
Difference between quarter to Mar 11 and quarter to Mar10: 26.7%
Cost per journey: £5.93

Hattersley

Patronage Jan-Mar 10: 2935
Patronage Jan-Mar 11: 2491
Difference between quarter to Mar 11 and quarter to Mar10: -15.1%
Cost per journey: £10.04
Cost per journey to Transport For Greater Manchester: £7.53

A sample of customers who have stopped using the service have been contacted as a result and have given very positive feedback regarding the performance of the service. Most have stopped using the service due to a change in circumstances.
Heywood

Patronage Jan-Mar 10: 4073
Patronage Jan-Mar 11: 3834
Difference between quarter to Mar 11 and quarter to Mar10: -5.9%
Cost per journey: £6.63

Hindley

Patronage Jan-Mar 10: 5386
Patronage Jan-Mar 11: 4829
Difference between quarter to Mar 11 and quarter to Mar10: -10.3%
Cost per journey: £4.69
Hollinwood

Patronage Jan-Mar 10: 1593
Patronage Jan-Mar 11: 1544
Difference between quarter to Mar 11 and quarter to Mar10: -3.1%
Cost per journey: £4.73

Horwich

Patronage Jan-Mar 10: 2910
Patronage Jan-Mar 11: 2708
Difference between quarter to Mar 11 and quarter to Mar10: -6.9%
Cost per journey: £3.65
Hulme

Patronage Jan-Mar 10: 1941
Patronage Jan-Mar 11: 1937
Difference between quarter to Mar 11 and quarter to Mar10: -0.2%
Cost per journey: £8.94

The service is being enhanced for three months to provide a morning shuttle service for Trafford MBC employees as part of a morning commute from Old Trafford Metrolink stop to Trafford Quays whilst Trafford Town Hall is refurbished, funded in part by Trafford MBC.

Kingsway and Newbold

Patronage Jan-Mar 10: 71
Patronage Jan-Mar 11: 514
Difference between quarter to Mar 11 and quarter to Mar10: 623.9%

Externally funded service currently operating at £43.98 per journey
Little Lever and South Radcliffe

Patronage Jan-Mar 10: n/a
Patronage Jan-Mar 11: 761
Difference between quarter to Mar 11 and quarter to Mar10: n/a%
Cost per journey: £13.14

This service was expanded to include journeys to Bolton in November 2010 and Redvales in January 2011 and patronage has increased as a result. However, the cost per journey is still high in comparison to other services. The operator is currently undertaking his own leafleting campaign and publicises the service locally.

Marple Mellor

Patronage Jan-Mar 10: 424
Patronage Jan-Mar 11: 776
Difference between quarter to Mar 11 and quarter to Mar10: 83%
Cost per journey: £5.80

The service was extended to cover Greavefold, Lane Ends and Romiley from the end of July 2011 to replace withdrawn evening bus service 380/1.
Middleton

Patronage Jan-Mar 10: 4577  
Patronage Jan-Mar 11: 3219  
Difference between quarter to Mar 11 and quarter to Mar 10: -29.7%  
Cost per journey: £9.20  
Cost per journey to Transport For Greater Manchester: £9.20

80% of customers use this service for work journeys.

Mottram (Includes Hyde and Gee Cross figures)

Patronage Jan-Mar 10: 4103  
Patronage Jan-Mar 11: 3814  
Difference between quarter to Mar 11 and quarter to Mar 10: -7.0%  
Cost per journey: £3.18

The service area was expanded in June 2011 to cover Woodland, Mottram Rise and the Broadbottom area of Tameside which should improve patronage.
North Bolton

Patronage Jan-Mar 10: 515
Patronage Jan-Mar 11: 676
Difference between quarter to Mar 11 and quarter to Mar10: 31.3%
Cost per journey: £5.55
Cost per journey to Transport For Greater Manchester: £4.31

The contract was renewed in January 2011 to operate within a reduced time period of three days per week due to withdrawal of PCT funding.

North Manchester

Patronage Jan-Mar 10: 3994
Patronage Jan-Mar 11: 4746
Difference between quarter to Mar 11 and quarter to Mar10: 18.8%
Cost per journey: £5.59
Cost per journey to Transport For Greater Manchester: £4.19

This service is still being used as a test site for cost allocation between different operators in support of the EU funded ICMA project. Further promotional work is scheduled to be undertaken in promoting online booking of the service amongst regular users as a result of the upgrading of the web booking website.
Offerton

Patronage Jan-Mar 10: 870
Patronage Jan-Mar 11: 1470
Difference between quarter to Mar 11 and quarter to Mar10: 69%
Cost per journey: £9.50
Cost per journey to Transport For Greater Manchester: £4.75

The service has been promoted throughout the whole area in recent weeks and a new operator took over the service in May 2011 at a lower contract cost as the external funding for this service has now expired.

Oldham Shopping

Patronage Jan-Mar 10: 3076
Patronage Jan-Mar 11: 2574
Difference between quarter to Mar 11 and quarter to Mar10: -16.3%
Cost per journey: £4.61
Cost per journey to Transport For Greater Manchester: £3.11

This Service is 33% funded by Oldham MBC.
Partington

Patronage Jan-Mar 10: 4935
Patronage Jan-Mar 11: 4923
Difference between quarter to Mar 11 and quarter to Mar10: -0.2%
Cost per journey: £6.35

The service is due to be moved to Transport for Greater Manchester's scheduling centre at the end of July 2011.

Rochdale Shopping

Patronage Jan-Mar 10: 1085
Patronage Jan-Mar 11: 1381
Difference between quarter to Mar 11 and quarter to Mar10: 27.3%
Cost per journey: £6.61
Salford (Includes Clifton and Moorside journey figures)

Patronage Jan-Mar 10: 3137
Patronage Jan-Mar 11: 3623
Difference between quarter to Mar 11 and quarter to Mar10: 15.5%
Cost per journey: £8.81

Standish and Shevington

Patronage Jan-Mar 10: 767
Patronage Jan-Mar 11: 807
Difference between quarter to Mar 11 and quarter to Mar10: 5.2%
Cost per journey: £10.84

The service was approved for withdrawal from October 2011 at the July meeting of this Committee.
Tameside Shopping

Patronage Jan-Mar 10: n/a
Patronage Jan-Mar 11: 844
Difference between quarter to Mar 11 and quarter to Mar10: n/a%

Externally funded service currently operating at £8.89 per journey

This service is fully funded by Tameside MBC.

Uppermill and Mossley (Includes Denshaw and Pennine Meadows)

Patronage Jan-Mar 10: 8475
Patronage Jan-Mar 11: 8066
Difference between quarter to Mar 11 and quarter to Mar10: -4.6%
Cost per journey: £4.80
Wythenshawe (Includes Timperley and Heald Green journey figures)

Patronage Jan-Mar 10: 9384
Patronage Jan-Mar 11: 10385
Difference between quarter to Mar 11 and quarter to Mar10: 4.6%
Cost per journey: £5.28

Work is taking place with Wythenshawe regeneration team to increase passenger growth.

Ring and Ride

Patronage Jan-Mar 10: 254,842
Patronage Jan-Mar 11: 270,224
Difference between quarter to Mar 11 and quarter to Mar 10: 6%
Cost per journey: £5.89

However, costs have increased by 9.7% thus increasing the cost per journey.