Appendix C: Meeting with TfGM: 04.12.2023

TfGM responded to the questions the group had presented them.

Has bus usage increased in Trafford? Has the £2 fixed price had an impact within Trafford? How are people being encouraged to use buses?

The £2 bus fare offer contributed to an increase in bus patronage of 10% across GM between September and November 2022. 5% of those using the bus fare offer in the first 3 months of the scheme had not travelled by bus before. This may be partly due to returning to pre pandemic levels. They are carrying out a further evaluation. There is no data yet available on the increased uptake in Trafford. They are optimistic of the impact of the bus franchising and once it is fully rolled out, it will enable people to make travelling by bus their first choice, as buses will be more frequent and reliable.

Bee Network committees will be set up in advance of the bus franchising in January 2025 to facilitate consultations on new routes, with the aim of 90% of residents living within 40 minutes of a service that runs every 30 minutes. The target is 30% growth in patronage by 2030. Part of the vision is demanding responsive bus services, which will have light touch Bee Network branding, and night buses. The hope is that with a strengthened commercial network children will use the bus network to travel to school.

What is the situation regarding 24-hour transport?

They have a Nighttime Economy Strategy in which they are piloting improving late night transport options. In Trafford there are no night buses, but Metrolink runs until 1 am on Friday and Saturday and cycle hire is available 24/7.

Bikeability: Councillors were concerned about the catch up of delayed Bikeability sessions due to Covid.

They are working with LAs and the Bikeability Trust to review the delivery of Bikeability in GM as there is a backlog. There is a government objective for it to reach a greater audience by 2025.

Right to the Streets: how is the work in Trafford linking up with GM active travel?

They support, but are not directly involved in, GM Moving, which is the initiative running in Trafford, that aims to help people to become more active, and which includes the Rights to Streets initiative. They have launched the Is this Ok campaign. Other safer streets funding initiatives are supported by TfGM.

What is the situation regarding bikes on trams?

They are carrying out a pilot on bikes on trams.

Public engagement: how are you appealing to people from different backgrounds and engaging with demographics who are less likely to want to do active travel?

A TfGM annual report was presented to the Bee Network Committee in December, and this covers how they engage with diverse groups and sections of the community in support of behaviour change, with LAs encouraged to follow best practice guidance in developing their transport schemes in liaison with communities.

What is the situation regarding the Workplace Parking Levy?

Funding for public transport in Greater Manchester is overly reliant on fares and this has resulted in a vicious cycle of higher fares, and lower usage. As part of devolution, they are asking for more powers to be devolved to GM that would allow them to raise more funds locally. They consider that implementing a Workplace Parking Levy scheme would be too controversial, but they can do more with existing powers such as introducing parking charges on all highways as there is specific legislation on this.

How do you work with Trafford on these issues? What autonomy does Trafford have?

Trafford Council is the local highway authority and TfGM works to support the Council in delivering their active travel programme. In some cases, they manage whole schemes, or they provide infrastructure support and activation, on a case-by-case basis. They work closely with the Council to deliver the Bee Network. There is comprehensive best practice engagement and consultation guidance in place to help ensure seldom heard voices are considered and brought into planning and delivery from the earliest opportunities. Trafford officers regularly attend meetings such as the Transport Strategy Group and the Highways Group. Trafford also has political representation on the Bee Network Committee.

Car Clubs: how is forming a GM wide car club progressing? Can Trafford look to do their own which would link into the wider scheme?

They are looking at solutions regarding procurement for a GM wide EV car club with a central contract through GMCA or TfGM. Districts are being advised that they can start to look at their own solutions regarding procurement in their local area, if they engage with TfGM, and they suggested that Trafford can set one up autonomously.

How are you encouraging changing mindsets re using public transport, such as marketing and design of public spaces?

Get on Board is a campaign encouraging people to use public transport and active travel that was launched in September 2022. It builds on the low bus fares and directs people to sources of information that can help them to access the best value for money for their journey, promoting all sustainable travel.

Inclusive Street Design aims for streets to work for everyone, including making neighbourhoods universally accessible, pleasant, safe, and welcoming places, making it easier to walk, ride and scoot, and integrating all public transport. The aim is to create green, vibrant streets that are welcoming and safe spaces to spend time in. This includes:

- Streets that enable people to drive less.
- Goods are delivered on time with minimal impact on local communities.
- A reliable, integrated, and accessible public transport network.
- A safe and connected cycling experience.
- An attractive and inclusive walking and wheeling environment.
- A future proofed street network.

The GM Streets for All design guide was adopted by GMCA in November 2023. This sets out design and infrastructure options aiming for inclusive street design which seeks to minimise barriers or issues faced by different people in using streets, the aim being that no one is excluded from using our streets. Measures include reducing street clutter, creating places to sit and rest, socialise, and meet as a community, greener, healthier streets, and introducing cycle facilities that accommodate adapted cycles. They aim to introduce a variety of measures to reduce the attractiveness of driving and change the unrestricted access of cars, with pedestrians being championed. Streets for All aims to balance conflicting needs and conflicted space, and they acknowledge that the balance needs to shift away from roads.

What is the situation regarding pedestrian prioritisation at crossings?

They review traffic signal timings on an ongoing basis. Where there are opportunities, where they are aware of changing circumstances or where they are advised of a particular issue, they do give additional priority to pedestrians. They must balance this with their requirement to balance the competing demands of other road users (including public transport) in supporting LAs in their network management duties. If there are locations, they can look at these. They suggested that Trafford Council could be pushing for more pedestrian prioritisation at crossings.

What is the situation regarding 20mph zones?

They informed us that implementing 20mph is still within Local Authority jurisdiction. They suggested that it would be good to have a consistent approach in GM.

Summary of meeting with TfGM

It appears that TfGM share the group's aspirations, and are slowly beginning to implement actions, but with caution. They seem to be heavily reliant on the impact of the buses on their ambitions. They stressed that Trafford Council have the option to set things up autonomously rather than waiting for GMCA to deliver but it appears unclear whether GMCA prefers a consistent approach.