

# Bus Franchising Implementation Transport for Greater Manchester

Trafford Council Scrutiny Committee  
Wednesday 18 September 2024

# The Bee Network

The Bee Network is our plan for a high-quality, affordable and fully integrated public transport and active travel system for the people and businesses of Greater Manchester.

The Bee Network will be pivotal to delivering sustainable economic growth and the city region's objectives, set out in the Greater Manchester Strategy, by connecting people with education, jobs and opportunity, unlocking development, enabling housing growth, acting as a catalyst for regeneration, reducing carbon emissions and supporting social inclusion and active and healthy lifestyles.

Greater Manchester has led the way in reforming and improving its transport network, and we are now in the transition phase with some elements of the Bee Network already starting to change the way in which people travel across the city-region. As pioneers of bus franchising, we now have local control of our most-used form of public transport, in addition to the largest light rail network in the country – Metrolink, and we are delivering a world-class walking, wheeling and cycling network as part of a wider infrastructure investment programme with an aggregate value of up to ~£3.5bn.

This report provides an overview of Bus Franchising implementation.



# Buses

- Buses are the cornerstone of the Bee Network – accounting for around 75% of all public transport trips.
- The bus network provides a vital link to jobs and essential services, particularly for the 27% of GM households without access to a private car.
- However, the bus market has experienced a significant period of decline over recent decades – particularly in terms of patronage and mileage operated. Residents regularly point to the fragmented and confusing nature of the current system as reasons behind declining usage.
- This is why GM are undertaking the biggest reform to buses in nearly 40 years – bringing buses back under local control through franchising.
- Franchising is the system used to procure and co-ordinate bus services in many cities across Europe and the rest of the world. Under bus franchising, a transport authority - in this case, TfGM on behalf of the GMCA - contracts with transport operators to deliver services it specifies.
- Previously, franchising was only permitted in London in the UK; however, the Bus Services Act 2017 - introduced following direct pressure from Greater Manchester – gave the Mayor of Greater Manchester (and Mayors of other city regions) the power to introduce a franchising scheme, subject to an assessment of the existing bus market.

# A guide to franchising

Deregulated system (1986-2025)		Franchised system (2023-)	
TfGM/GMCA	Bus operators	TfGM/GMCA	Bus operators
Bus stops Interchanges Information (shared) Cost risk (limited) Local concessions Support for <b>socially necessary services*</b> <small>*TfGM sets the frequency and some specifications for supported services.</small>	Service delivery Fares/ticketing Service frequency Information (shared) Revenue/patronage risk Cost risk Branding and marketing Network design Customer relations Employment of staff Maintenance, specification and deployment of fleet Depot ownership Onboard technology	Bus stops Interchanges Information Fares/ticketing Local concessions Service frequency Revenue/patronage risk Cost risk (shared) Performance monitoring Branding and marketing Network design Customer relations Specification and deployment of fleet Depot ownership Onboard technology	Service delivery Cost risk (shared) Performance risk Employment of staff Maintenance of fleet

# The franchising roll-out

**T1 – 24 September 2023**

**(NOW LIVE):** covering Bolton, Wigan, and parts of Salford and Bury.

 North West

 DIAMND  
NORTH WEST



**T2 – 24 March 2024 (NOW LIVE):** covering Oldham, Rochdale, and parts of Bury, Salford and north Manchester.

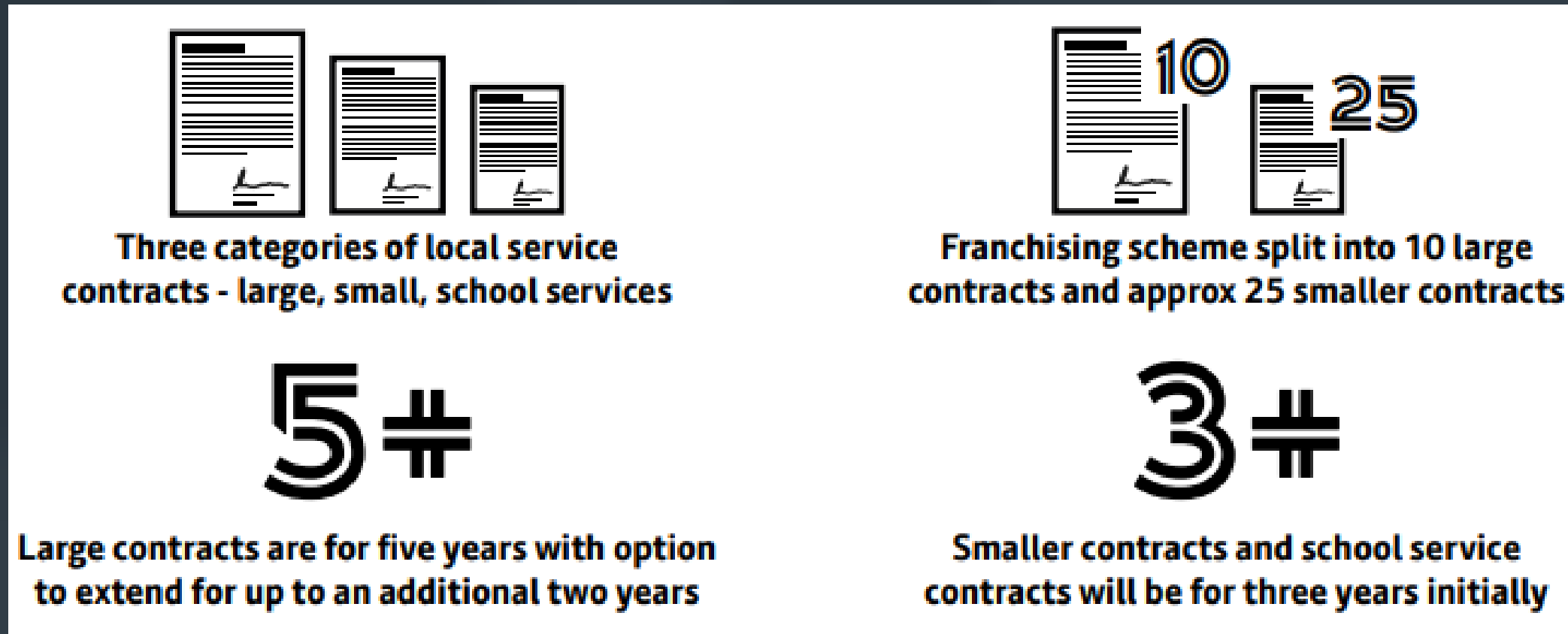
 Stagecoach

 DIAMND  
NORTH WEST

 First

**T3 – 5 January 2025:** covering Stockport, Tameside, **Trafford**, and the remaining parts of Manchester and Salford.

# Operators & contracts



- Local control and accountability are key elements of the Bee Network, and customer focused performance targets, including punctuality and reliability of services and levels of customer complaints, will be central to operators' contracts and help us to deliver continuous improvements to the bus network.
- To date, the costs for franchise contracts have been competitive, particularly when compared to the costs of tendering individual services. Increasingly, we cannot afford not to franchise.
- Employees at current bus operators will be protected by TUPE regulations during the transfer to new operators.
- Operators have provided strong social value plans, e.g. commitments in line with the Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter.

## Tranche Three

### Metroline

- Hyde Road large franchise
- Sharston large franchise
- Wythenshawe large franchise
- Tameside large franchise

### Diamond



- Tameside B small franchise
- Trafford small franchise
- Stockport small franchise

### Go North West



- Tameside A small franchise

### Stagecoach



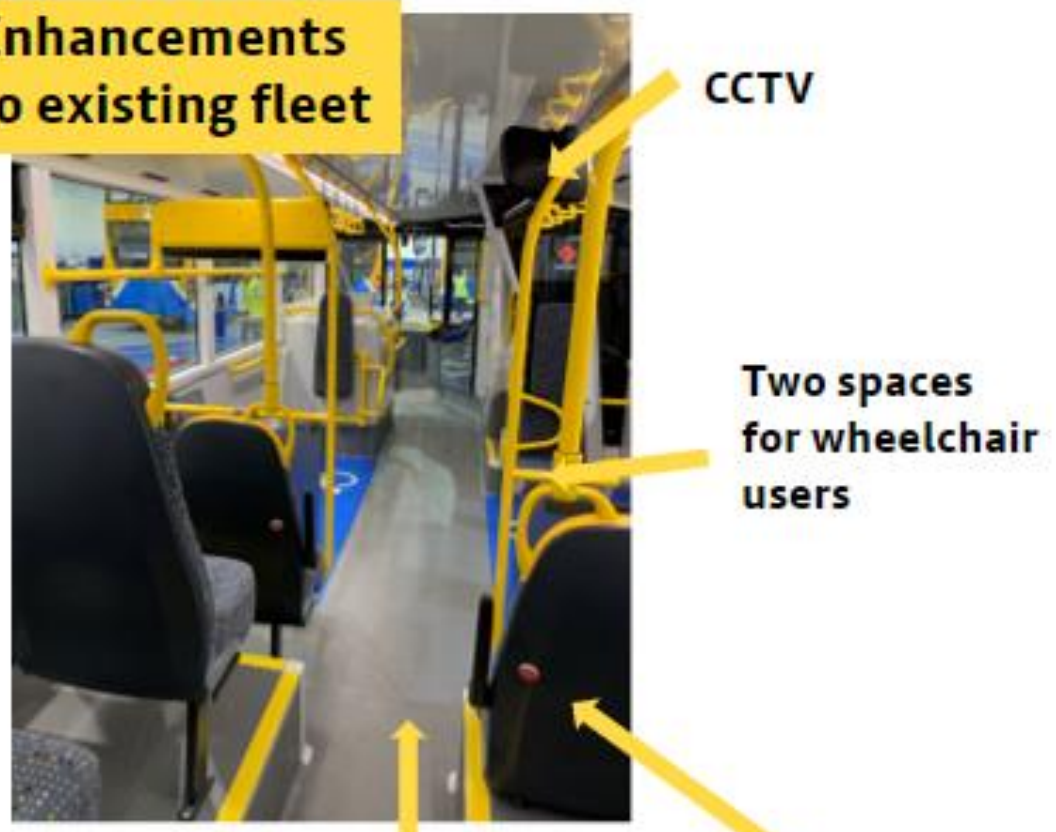
- Stockport large franchise

# Which Tranche 3 Bus Services operate in Trafford?

Franchise	Operator	Franchise Service Number	Route Description
Hyde Road Large	Metroline	15	Flixton - Davyhulme - Urmston - Manchester
Hyde Road Large	Metroline	250	Trafford Centre - Old Trafford - Manchester
Hyde Road Large	Metroline	255	Manchester - Stretford - Urmston - Partington
Hyde Road Large	Metroline	256	Flixton - Stretford - Hulme - Manchester
Sharston Large	Metroline	86	Manchester - Brooks's Bar - Chorlton
Stockport Large	Metroline	11	Altrincham - Wythenshawe - Cheadle - Stockport
Stockport Large	Metroline	23	Trafford Centre - Didsbury - Stockport
Stockport Large	Metroline	25	Stockport - Chorlton - Trafford Centre
Trafford Small	Diamond	254	Stretford - Davyhulme Circular
Trafford Small	Diamond	280	Sale - Partington - Altrincham
Trafford Small	Diamond	288	Manchester Airport - Altrincham
Wythenshawe Large	Metroline	18	Eccles - Trafford Centre - Manchester Airport
Wythenshawe Large	Metroline	19	Altrincham - Wythenshawe
Wythenshawe Large	Metroline	150	Trafford Centre - Chorlton - Gorton
Wythenshawe Large	Metroline	245	Trafford Centre - Stretford - Altrincham
Wythenshawe Large	Metroline	247	Trafford Centre - Flixton - Altrincham
Wythenshawe Large	Metroline	263	Manchester - Hulme - Sale - Altrincham
Wythenshawe Large	Metroline	281	Altrincham - Timperley - Sale
Wythenshawe Large	Metroline	282	Altrincham - Oldfield Brow circular
Wythenshawe Large	Metroline	283	Altrincham - Hale - Warburton Green circular
Wythenshawe Large	Metroline	285	Altrincham - Timperley circular
Wythenshawe Large	Metroline	287	Altrincham - Bowdon Vale Circular
Wythenshawe Large	Metroline	370	Altrincham - Sharston - Cheadle - Stockport

# Vehicles

## Enhancements to existing fleet



CCTV

Two spaces for wheelchair users

Anti-slip flooring

LED interior lighting

Audio-visual announcement system

Hearing induction loop



## New vehicles



White LED exterior destination displays

USB charging ports

High back seating



The transition to franchising includes a significant investment into improving GMs bus fleet. This includes:

- **New Zero Emission Buses**
  - 100 already delivered as part of T1 and T2 - provided by TfGM and leased to operators
  - A further 170 to come through ZEBRA programme, alongside additional vehicles purchased directly by operators
- **New Euro VI Buses** - provided by operators

*All new buses will be best in class standards – following consultation with representative groups.*

*A programme to upgrade much of the existing fleet is also underway*



# Results to date

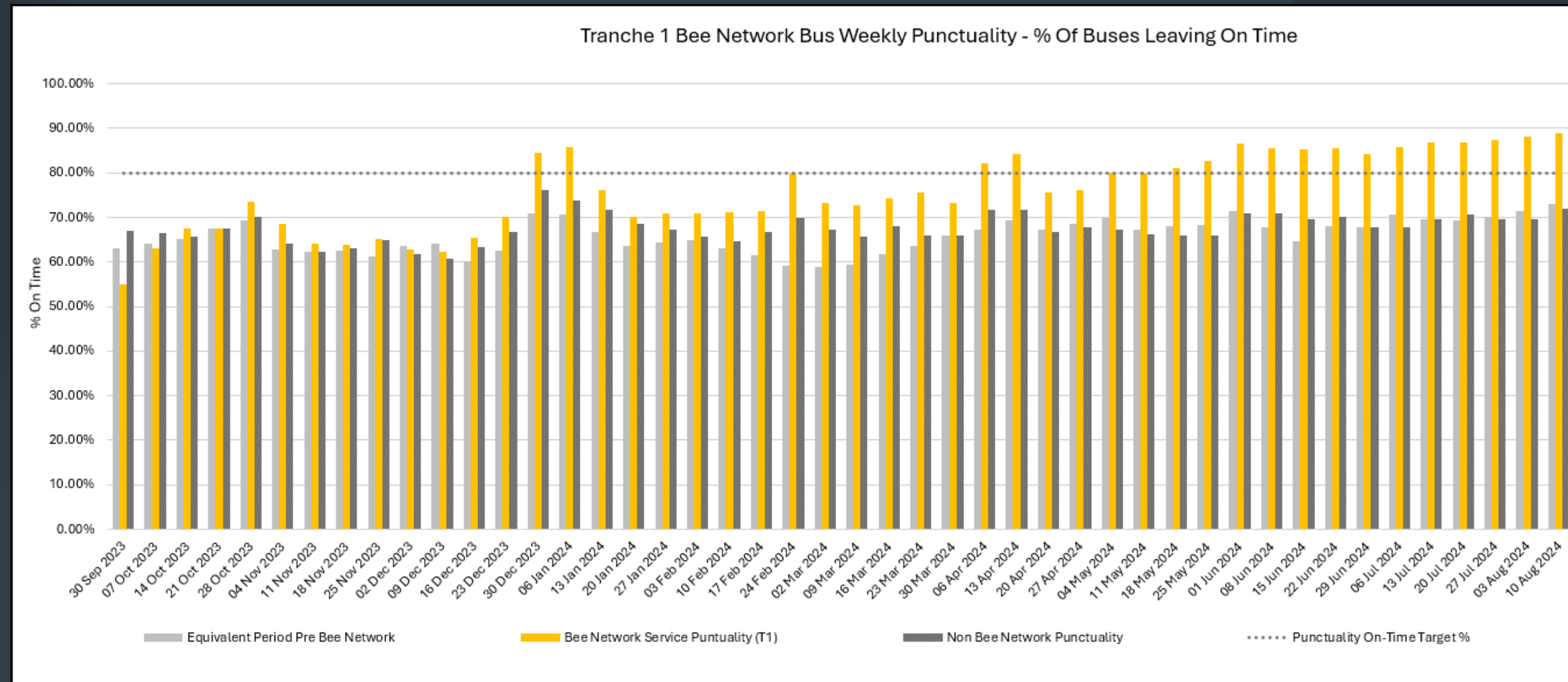
In the first franchised area:

- **Ridership has increased by 5%** the six months to July
- **Revenue is exceeding forecast**
- **Costs are circa a third lower per km** than intervening in the deregulated market
- **More than 80% of services (82.9%) are running on time**, compared with 68.7% over the same period last year

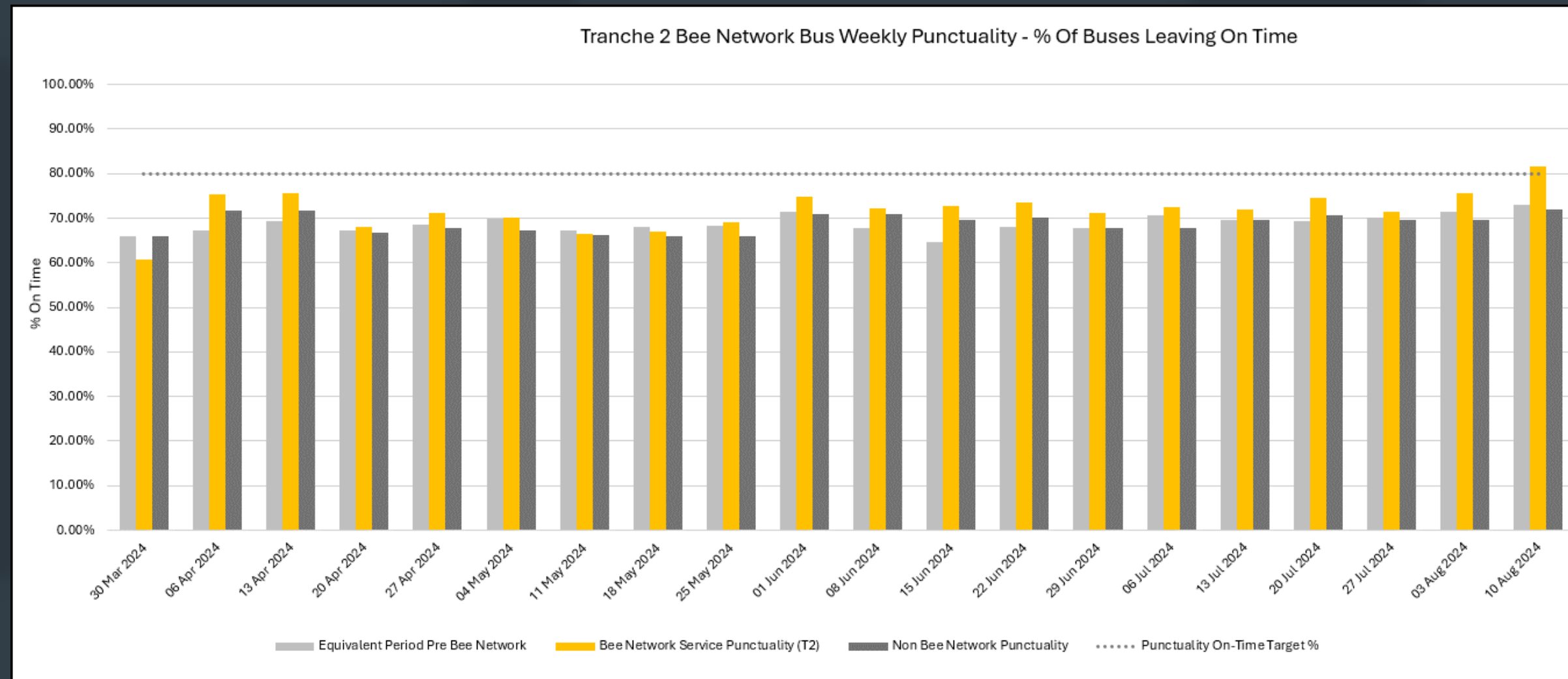
Across the network:

- 120 new TravelSafe Officers are being introduced
- Bee Network app has been rolled out
- Customers can Rate Their Journey and tell us how to improve

# Tranche 1



# Tranche 2



# Wider improvements planned for 2025

- A range of other, customer focused improvements planned for the new year, to coincide with the launch of tranche three including:
  - The cost of a 7-day adult Bee Any Bus ticket to reduce to £20, and the 28 day version to £80.
  - Launch of new hopper ticket
  - Deployment of additional TravelSafe Enforcement Officers
  - Additional functionality on the Bee Network app
- TfGM is also working with local Credit Unions to allow customers to spread the payment of an annual bus ticket, at no extra cost, throughout the year with a Credit Union loan - saving up to £240 a year
- Meanwhile, work continues towards the delivery of a contactless payment system which can be used across Metrolink and buses to travel across Greater Manchester

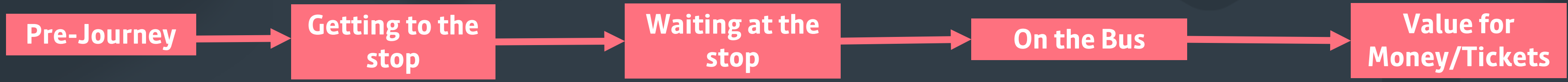
# What comes after franchising

The Greater Manchester Bus Strategy sets out a vision for better buses in Greater Manchester, including:

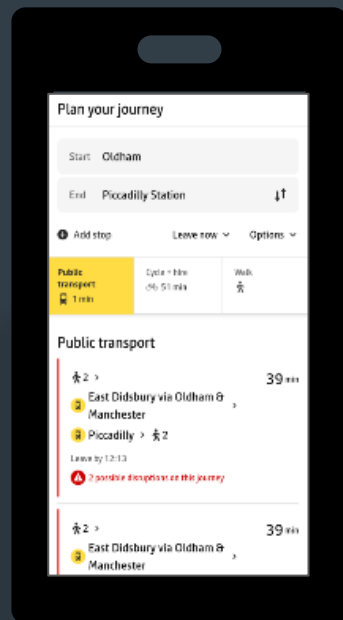
- Ambitions for the bus network beyond franchising.
- How the network will be designed and governed.
- How it will develop to 2030.
- The need for appropriate support and funding from government and others.
- **It is not a funded delivery plan. Full delivery is likely to require additional funding.**



# Our Plan for Improving Buses



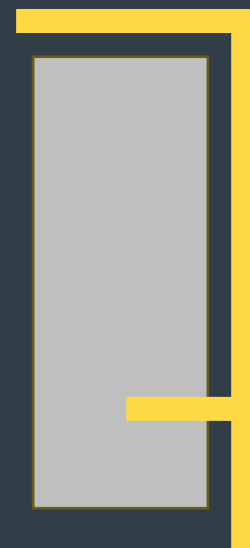
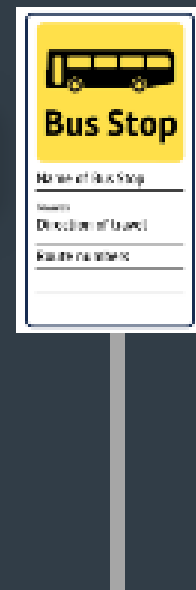
Improve routes and services connectivity



Real Time Customer Information



Bus Stop and Access improvements



High Specification Buses (transition to EV)



Bus Priority and network management

£2

Simpler, capped and multi-modal fares

← Passenger safety improved through driver training and roll-out of TravelSafe Support & Enforcement Officers →

# Initial targets to 2030

By 2030, we want our buses to carry over **200 million** journeys per year.

## Patronage

- A **30% increase in bus patronage** from 2022/23 levels, with Bee Network targets to be confirmed through LTP process.

## Frequency

- By 2030, we will aim for **buses to run at least every 12 minutes on key orbital and radial routes.**
- We will aim to provide **90% of the entire Greater Manchester population with a 30-minute frequency bus or Metrolink service** on weekdays within 400m of their home. Other options (e.g. DRT) will be put in place in parts of the city region where this is not possible.

## Infrastructure

- We intend to **deliver on-street bus improvements across 70km of high frequency, strategic bus routes** across Greater Manchester by 2030.

## Affordability

- We will **keep fares as low as possible** across the Bee Network and reinvest any surplus back into the transport system.

# Stages and Indicative Timeline for Network Reviews

## Initial Stages

1. Engagement & base data established. Objectives agreed

Up to 2 months

2.1 Analysis, option generation, & recommendations

Up to 2 months

Growth Opportunities / Non-Scheme Changes

EQIA and Options Review

Strategic / Scheme Changes

## Growth Network Reviews

3. Approval

Up to 1 month

4. Mobilisation

1-2 months (aligned to change dates)

## Strategic Network Reviews

2.2 Further Analysis and Modelling

Up to 2 months

3. Consultation

Up to 6 months

4. Review and Refine and gain Approval for Recommendations

5. Mobilisation

6+ months

THANK  
YOU

