

TRAFFORD COUNCIL

Report to: Executive
Date: 6 January 2020
Report for: Decision
Report of: Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration

Report Title

GMCA Proposed Franchising Scheme for buses

Summary

This report provides information on the Proposed Franchising Scheme for buses in GM as set out in the 'Doing Buses Differently' consultation. This report sets out the background to the consultation, a summary of the proposals, the key issues for Trafford and the next steps. The proposed Trafford response to the consultation is appended to the report.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that the Executive:

- (i) Notes the consultation being carried out by GMCA 'Doing Buses Differently'.
- (ii) Notes the potential benefits to Trafford of the proposed franchising scheme.
- (iii) Approves the consultation response as attached to the report as Appendix 1.
- (iv) Delegates authority to the Corporate Director of Place to make minor amendments to the response as necessary.
- (v) Approves that the Decision is deemed to be urgent and not subject to call-in for the reasons set out in the Report.

Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

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Jonny Pannell x 4874

Appendix 1: Trafford Council Response to Consultation

Background Papers: None

Relationship to Policy Framework/Corporate Priorities	The Proposed Franchising Scheme will contribute to a number of Corporate Priorities, in particular: Health and Wellbeing, Successful and Thriving Places, Children and Young People and Green and Connected.
Relationship to GM Policy or Strategy Framework	The Scheme is being proposed by GMCA for adoption across the whole of Greater Manchester. The Franchising scheme will contribute to meeting objectives set out in the GM Transport Strategy 2040.
Financial	The estimated net cost of the Scheme is c£134.5m and 58% (£78m) will come from government through the 'earn back' model, £11m from existing Mayor's precept, £22.7m from future Mayor's precept, £5m from existing and forecast business rates pooling and £17.8m in total from the GM LA's as a one-off increase in their statutory contribution. In the consultation response Trafford is seeking clarity on this one-off contribution and how this would be allocated and funded by each of the Greater Manchester local authorities.
Legal Implications:	The Council/AGMA must adhere to the requirements of the Transport Act 2000.
Equality/Diversity Implications	The implications of the Proposed Franchising Scheme have been assessed through an Equality Impact Assessment.
Sustainability Implications	One of the purposes of the Proposed Franchising Scheme is to encourage the use of sustainable transport modes
Resource Implications e.g. Staffing / ICT / Assets	GMCA has the responsibility for making a decision on the Proposed Franchising Scheme. If adopted, Transport for Greater Manchester will implement the Scheme on behalf of GMCA.
Risk Management Implications	GMCA has the responsibility for managing risk implications regarding the Scheme.
Health & Wellbeing Implications	The Proposed Franchising Scheme seeks to improve the health and wellbeing of Greater Manchester residents, for example through improving air quality.
Health and Safety Implications	None arising directly out of this report.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Since 1986, bus services in GM have been deregulated with services being run by commercial bus companies who decide routes, timetables, fares and standards. This has resulted in complex fares and ticketing since standard tickets can only be used on buses run by the same operator, a lack of a single source of travel information, differing customer standards and routes being determined based on commercial reasons rather than meeting local need. This deregulated system means that the GMCA, and its constituent local authorities, are unable to integrate buses with the rest of the public transport network and cannot deliver an effective long-term transport strategy for the sub-region.
- 1.2 In June 2017 the GMCA decided to consider the use of powers under the Transport Act 2000 (as amended by the Bus Services Act 2017) to address the problems associated with bus deregulation, reduce car use and to deliver the GM Transport Strategy 2040 with the aim of 50% of all journeys being made by foot, bike and public transport (including bus), The Act gives Mayoral Combined Authorities powers to improve bus services by reforming the current bus market through franchising and other partnership models. The GMCA instructed Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) to prepare an Assessment of a proposed bus franchising scheme for Greater Manchester, along with options of a partnership, whereby the GMCA would work with bus operators to improve services either through a voluntary agreement or through a legal scheme.
- 1.3 The Assessment concluded that a bus franchising scheme would be the preferred option to deliver the GM Transport Strategy 2040 Vision for Bus to deliver network integration, simplified and integrated fares system, consistent customer experience and value for money. The Proposed Franchising Scheme therefore forms the basis of the 'Doing Buses Differently' consultation that was launched on 14 October 2019 and ends on 8 January 2020 (see link to document - <https://www.gmconsult.org/strategy-team/gmbusconsultation/> .

2.0 Proposed Franchising Model - Benefits

- 2.1 The Proposed Franchising Scheme has very clear benefits for the future of bus services and provision in GM since, in simple terms; it takes bus services under the control of the GMCA. TfGM, on behalf of the GMCA, would then set routes, timetables, fares and standards and bus companies would competitively bid for contracts to run services on GMCA's behalf. This control means that GM Vision for Bus, part of the 2040 Strategy, can be delivered to provide a much needed integrated transport network for GM since a strategic approach to investment can be taken. The Proposed Franchising Scheme would enable the integration of the bus network both across bus services and with other modes of transport to deliver an efficient transport system. This will encourage increased use of the system and help reduce car usage and congestion.

- 2.2 The Scheme would allow for the introduction of integrated ticketing, a unified bus brand and a single point of information for customers which are all lacking under the current deregulated system. Through having control, standards and quality will be raised through the franchising process and clean air issues can be addressed since the Proposed Franchising Scheme can provide the mechanism to help deliver GM's priorities under the Clean Air Plan; particularly in reducing emissions, car use and providing 'cleaner' vehicles.
- 2.3 The Proposed Franchising Scheme would allow for the bus network to be planned as a single network improving performance, efficiency and integration. Fundamentally, it would enable services to be designed to balance affordability with social and economic objectives, such as access to employment. This is of particular importance in Trafford where areas such as Partington and Sale West are poorly served, hindering residents ability to access job opportunities in the borough and beyond.
- 2.4 The estimated net cost of the Scheme is c£134.5m and 58% (£78m) will come from government through the 'earn back' model, £11m from existing Mayor's precept, £22.7m from future Mayor's precept, £5m from existing and forecast business rates pooling and £17.8m in total from the GM LA's as a one-off increase in their statutory contribution. However, the government has indicated that it will support GM to 'deliver a London style bus system in the area' which could include revenue funding. This could negate the need for any local contribution including council tax/precept requirement. GM is committed to secure additional government funding for bus services on an ongoing basis.

3.0 Trafford's consultation response – key issues

- 3.1 The detailed response to the 'Doing Buses Differently' consultation is found as Appendix 1. For the reasons identified in section 2 above, the Proposed Franchising Scheme will provide for a wholesale and fundamental improvement to the current deregulated bus system which is not fit for purpose. It will not only support delivery of GM's Transport Strategy 2040, but also support the Council's Corporate Priorities of Health and Wellbeing, Successful and Thriving Places, Children and Young People, Greener and connected and Targeted support. A bus network that is controlled by the GMCA can therefore be shaped to better meet local need and deliver an integrated and effective service.
- 3.2 There are a number of areas in Trafford that are currently poorly served by bus in terms of available routes and the frequency of bus services. These include Partington, Sale West and the rural areas of Carrington, Warburton and Dunham Massey. The Proposed Franchising Scheme does provide the mechanism for addressing these issues and to provide services based on social and economic need which is absent from the current deregulated system.
- 3.3 Public transport, including the bus network, will be an integral component of delivering sustainable travel options for new development. Trafford will experience significant residential and employment growth under the Greater

Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF), both in relation to the existing urban area and the proposed allocations at New Carrington and Timperley Wedge. This growth will require higher frequency and improved bus services, and new routes to effectively meet this increase in population and employment. By covering GM and linking into GM's strategic plans and priorities, of which each local authority helps to deliver, the Proposed Franchising Scheme will be able to future proof and accommodate for growth which the current deregulated system does not.

3.4 Due to the size of GM and to ensure a smooth transition from the current deregulated system, the Proposed Franchising Scheme will be introduced in stages covering three sub-areas (see map on p.138 of consultation document). The proposed dates for entering into franchise contracts for the sub-areas are:

- Sub-Area A – 2 April 2021
- Sub-Area B – 25 March 2022
- Sub-Area C – 10 March 2023

3.5 The majority of Trafford is within sub-area C and a section to the north including Trafford Park and the Trafford Centre is within sub-Area A. Transitional arrangements will be implemented and these must ensure that any disruption to routes is minimised and connections between sub-areas are . In addition, there are currently limited radial routes around the city centre and therefore it is necessary to travel into Manchester city centre to access destinations east/west of Trafford. The Proposed Franchising Scheme should be used as the opportunity to provide new radial routes to improve connectivity and deliver an integrated transport network, properly connecting bus to rail and tram.

3.6 It is recognised that the Proposed Franchising Scheme will need to be funded and there will be additional costs to transition from the broken deregulated system to the Scheme. As identified in 2.4 above, a one-off increase in the statutory contribution from LA's of £17.8m is required and further clarity is needed on how this contribution will be allocated and funded, and whether the governments support for GM to deliver a London style bus system will result in funding that would reduce the contribution identified.

4.0 Wider Corporate Linkages

4.1 The Proposed Franchising Scheme meets the Corporate Priorities of Health and Wellbeing, Successful and Thriving Places, Children and Young People and Greener and Connected. It also helps to address key issues of reducing congestion and measures to meet clean air requirements.

5.0 Next Steps

5.1 Following the close of the consultation on 8 January 2020, all consultation responses will be independently assessed. They will then be reported to

GMCA when it considers its response to the consultation and whether any changes are proposed to the Franchising Scheme. The decision on whether to introduce the Proposed Franchising Scheme is currently expected in early March 2020. However, this is subject to change depending on the progress and outcome of the consultation and any subsequent decision-making process.

6.0 Other Options

6.1 Trafford Council could choose to object to the Proposed Franchising Scheme or choose not to respond to the consultation. Trafford Council is a statutory consultee therefore it is important that Trafford's views are taken into account as part of the consultation process. The assessments of the benefits of the Proposed Franchising Scheme are clear and these will improve the bus network in Trafford to benefit residents, visitors and businesses alike.

7.0 Reasons for Recommendations

7.1 The Executive is asked to approve Trafford's response to the Proposed Franchising Scheme for GM so that an integrated bus network can be delivered in GM that improves service delivery, costs and fares while addressing the need for more sustainable modes of transport to address clean air and climate change issues.

8.0 Urgency of Decision

8.1 This report should be considered as 'urgent business' and the decision exempted from the 'call-in' process for the following reason(s): (specify reasons)

That the date of the Executive on 6 January is only two days prior to the end date for the 'Doing Buses Differently' consultation of 8 January, therefore the report is considered urgent business and exempted from the call-in process.

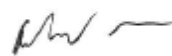
Key Decision: Yes

If Key Decision, has 28-day notice been given? Yes

Finance Officer Clearance.....PC

Legal Officer Clearance.....TR

CORPORATE DIRECTOR'S SIGNATURE



To confirm that the Financial and Legal Implications have been considered and the Executive Member has cleared the report.

Appendix 1: Trafford Council's response to the GMCA consultation on the Proposed Franchising Scheme

The Proposed Franchising Scheme will provide for a wholesale and fundamental improvement to the current deregulated bus system which is not fit for purpose. It will not only support delivery of GM's Transport Strategy 2040, but also Trafford Council's Vision of 'Working together to build the best future for all our communities / everyone.' Under the Vision, the Scheme helps support the Council's Corporate Priorities of:

- Health and Wellbeing – Trafford has improved health and wellbeing, and reduced health inequalities.
- Successful and Thriving Places – Trafford has successful and thriving town centres and communities.
- Children and Young People – All children and young people in Trafford will have a fair start.
- Greener and connected – Trafford will maximise its green spaces, transport and digital connectivity.

A bus network that is controlled by the GMCA can therefore be shaped to better meet local need and deliver an integrated and effective service.

There are a number of areas in Trafford that are currently poorly served by bus in terms of available routes and the frequency of bus services. These include Partington, Sale West and the rural areas of Carrington, Warburton and Dunham Massey. The Proposed Franchising Scheme does provide the mechanism for addressing these issues and to provide services based on social and economic need which is absent from the current deregulated system.

Public transport, including the bus network, will be an integral component of delivering sustainable travel options for new development. Trafford will experience significant residential and employment growth under the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF), both in relation to the existing urban area and the proposed allocations at New Carrington and Timperley Wedge. This growth will require higher frequency and improved bus services, and new routes to effectively meet this increase in population and employment. By covering GM and linking into GM's strategic plans and priorities, of which each local authority helps to deliver, the Proposed Franchising Scheme will be able to future proof and accommodate for growth which the current deregulated system does not.

Trafford Council believes that the Proposed Franchising Scheme will deliver real benefits by fundamentally changing and improving bus services in GM and the borough. The current deregulated system is not fit for purpose and is profit not people centred which results in swathes of communities not well served by bus services. The Proposed Franchising Scheme will provide for an integrated bus network that can properly connect to other public transport provision, deliver simplified and unified ticketing and information, improve standards and set a platform for investment to meet current and future need. It will also play a key role in increasing the use of public transport, reducing congestion and improving air quality.

Q1. Do you have any comments on the corrections and changes made to the Proposed Franchising Scheme?

N/A

Q2. Do you have any comments on the proposal that the Proposed Franchising Scheme should apply to the entirety of Greater Manchester?

Trafford Council supports the proposal for the Franchising Scheme to apply to the entirety of Greater Manchester. This will ensure a coordinated and consistent bus network across the City Region, and will help to make bus a more attractive sustainable travel mode.

Although the franchising scheme applies to Greater Manchester, it is essential that there is coordination with bus routes which cross the GM boundary. This would include bus services between Trafford and Warrington Borough and services between Trafford and Cheshire East Borough. A coordinated approach will improve the connectivity of the network and assist in increasing bus patronage. Where possible, opportunities for integrated ticketing with these services should also be explored.

In addition, there is a further opportunity to integrate bus fares across a range of different public transport modes such as Metrolink and rail. This would enable passengers to easily interchange between different modes, improving the usability and attractiveness of the network and developing a proper integrated transport system.

Q3. Do you have any comments on the local services that are proposed to be franchised?

Trafford Council supports the local services which are proposed to be franchised. It is understood that the only routes which will be excluded from franchising are those which are exclusively school services, any services which provide transport for pupils to and/or from schools as well as to the general public will be included in the franchise scheme.

In terms of school transport GMCA needs to consider how future routes to/from school will be planned and whether new routes will also form part of the franchising scheme. Trafford Council considers that there is a significant opportunity to improve sustainable transport modes to schools, which will help to reduce the number of private car trips to/from schools. This would assist in easing congestion on the wider highway network as well as improving air quality.

Q4. Do you have any comments on the proposal that the Proposed Franchising Scheme would be split into three sub-areas and on the other arrangements proposed for the purposes of transition?

Trafford Council supports the phased approach of implementing the Scheme by sub-area. The majority of Trafford is in Sub Area C, although an area in the north of the borough around Trafford Park is in Sub Area A. It will be important that appropriate

transitional arrangements are in place to manage connections between the sub areas and ensure there is no worsening of bus service provision during this period.

Q5. Do you have any comments on the services which have been excepted from regulation under the Proposed Franchising Scheme?

According to the list of excepted services in Appendix 4, the services relevant to Trafford 'Wythenshawe – Sale- Stretford – Eccles' and 'Failsworth – NMGH – Salford – intu Trafford Centre' will be temporarily excepted from regulation under the Scheme during the transition period. The Council requests clarity on the reasons for why these services are to be temporarily excepted and assurance that any disruption to the service would be minimised.

Q6. Do you have any comments on the date on which the Proposed Franchising Scheme is currently proposed to be made?

Trafford Council has no specific comments on the date for the Proposed Franchising Scheme to be made and recognises that a phased approach is prudent in light of the scale of the Proposed Franchising Scheme. However, consideration must be given to the significant scale of new housing and employment development which is expected to be delivered by March 2023, when the proposed Franchising Scheme will be fully in place.

This new development is likely to generate a need for new bus routes and increased frequencies of existing services. In particular, the draft Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF) proposes sites for significant new housing and employment development, both within the existing urban area and on sites which are currently on the edge of the urban area; these will need to form part of the planning of any future bus network. Trafford has identified two large development sites at New Carrington and Timperley Wedge (a total of 8,500 dwellings and 470,000 sqm of employment floorspace), as well as significant housing and employment growth in the urban area. The timing of the franchise contracts should therefore have regard to the housing and employment growth across Greater Manchester in terms of the likely increase in demand for bus transport, both in terms of the frequency of the services as well as new routes.

Q7. Do you have any comments on the dates by which it is proposed that franchise contracts may first be entered into?

Trafford Council recognises the complexity of implementing the Proposed Franchising Scheme.

Q8. Do you have any comments on the nine month period it is proposed will expire between entering into a franchise contract and the start of a service under such a contract?

Trafford Council recognises the complexity of implementing the Proposed Franchising Scheme.

Q9. Do you have any comments on the proposals for how GMCA would consult on how well the Proposed Franchising Scheme is working?

Trafford Council supports the proposals set out in the consultation document in terms of consultation arrangements with organisations representing bus users. This engagement will be important in gauging the success of the Proposed Franchising Scheme.

Consideration should also be given to engaging with a wider bus passenger audience on the Proposed Franchising Scheme. This could assist in identifying the key priorities for passengers in terms of investment in the bus network once a franchising scheme is in place.

Trafford Council would wish to support the GMCA/TfGM in the consultation process.

Q10. Do you have any comments on GMCA's plans for allowing small and medium sized operators the opportunity to be involved in the Proposed Franchising Scheme?

Trafford Council supports the opportunity for small and medium operators to access the Proposed Franchising Scheme.

Q11. Do you have any comments on the proposal that it would be appropriate for GMCA to provide depots to facilitate the letting of large franchise contracts under the Proposed Franchising Scheme?

Trafford Council supports the GMCA position on the provision of depot facilities. However, in identifying locations for new depots full regard must be had to the wider impact of a depot facility on the local area in terms of local traffic levels, air quality, noise disturbance etc. In addition, GMCA must work with the relevant local authority at the start of the process in identifying potential depot locations.

Questions about the Assessment

**Q12. The Strategic Case sets out the challenges facing the local bus market and says that it is not performing as well as it could. Do you have any comments on this?*

Trafford Council agrees with the Strategic Case which clearly sets out the challenges facing the bus market in Greater Manchester and the current, as well as projected, decline in bus patronage.

In Trafford there are a number of areas which are currently poorly served by bus in terms of available routes and the frequency of bus services. These include:

- Partington - currently an infrequent bus service, with particularly limited options in the evening. There are no alternative public transport modes available, meaning that for many the only viable option is private car travel.
- Sale West – currently poor, infrequent bus service. The main bus route along Firs Way is perceived to be somewhat disconnected from the residential area.

- Partington and Sale West have high levels of deprivation and the current bus services are not adequately supporting access to jobs for local people.
- Rural areas of Carrington, Warburton and Dunham Massey have limited and infrequent bus services.

Trafford Council would expect the Proposed Franchising Scheme takes these issues into account and GMCA/TfGM works with the Council and local community to implement a fit for purpose bus network to meet local need.

In addition, road congestion is a particular issue in some areas of Trafford, such as the A56, which can impact on the reliability and journey times associated with travelling by bus.

Route options could also be improved in Trafford and the wider city region, particularly in relation to radial routes around the regional centre which are currently limited. In some cases it is necessary to travel via the regional centre in order to access destinations east/west of Trafford, this is not an attractive journey option and adds considerable time delay and costs to a bus journey. Trafford Council supports the need for more radial routes around Greater Manchester rather than the current hub and spoke model of going through Manchester City Centre.

The provision of new routes with higher frequency bus services will help to address many of the issues outlined above. The Proposed Franchising Scheme needs to use the opportunity to deliver a proper integrated bus network with other sustainable travel modes such as Metrolink, which if integrated ticketing can also be provided, may encourage more sustainable multi-modal trips.

**Q13. The Strategic Case says that reforming the bus market is the right thing to do to address the challenges facing the local bus market. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this? Why do you say this?*

Trafford Council fully agrees with the conclusion that reforming the bus market is needed in Greater Manchester to make it fit for purpose for the future. This will help to address the current challenges of declining bus passengers, road congestion, increasing fares, a lack of co-ordination of public transport networks and complex ticketing arrangements.

Q14. Do you have any comments on GMCA's objectives for the future provision of bus services as set out in the Strategic Case?

Trafford Council supports GMCA's objectives for the future provision of bus services. The achievement of these objectives will make bus travel more attractive by providing a more accessible and integrated network. The achievement of the objectives will also help meet social and economic needs by better connecting people to services and employment. This is of particular important to Trafford Council for areas such as Partington, Sale West and rural parts of the borough where connectivity is poor and local residents are disadvantaged by the current service provision.

Q15. Do you have any comments on how the Proposed Franchising Scheme might contribute to GMCA's objectives for bus services as set out in the Strategic Case?

Trafford Council agrees with the assessment in the consultation document of how the Proposed Franchising Scheme might contribute towards GMCA's objectives for bus services.

The Proposed Franchising Scheme will improve efficiency of the network, simplify fares, improve the customer experience and provide better value for money.

Trafford Council believes that the Proposed Franchising Scheme should be used as a mechanism to address clean air and particulates through requiring the move to higher environmental standards for buses including electric powered vehicles.

Q16. Do you have any comments on how a partnership option might contribute to GMCA's objectives for bus services as set out in the Strategic Case?

Trafford Council believes the Proposed Franchising Scheme is the preferred option.

**Q17. The Economic Case concludes that the Proposed Franchising Scheme provides the best value for money compared to the partnership options because it would:*

- offer a 'high' ratio of benefits to the cost to GMCA, one which is broadly comparable with the partnership options,*
- provide the most economic value (Net Present Value), and*
- create the best platform from which further economic value could be delivered.*

Do you have any comments on this?

Trafford Council supports the Economic Case for the Proposed Franchising Scheme.

Q18. Do you have any comments on the packaging strategy for franchising contracts under the Proposed Franchising Scheme, as set out in the Commercial Case?

Trafford Council supports the split between large franchises and small franchises to support small and medium sized operators.

Q19. Do you have any comments on the length of franchise contracts under the Proposed Franchising Scheme, as set out in the Commercial Case?

Trafford Council defers to the analysis detailed in the Assessment.

Q20. Do you have any comments on the proposed allocation of risk between GMCA and bus operators under the Proposed Franchising Scheme, as set out in the Commercial Case?

Trafford Council defers to the analysis detailed in the Assessment.

Q21. Do you have any comments on the potential impact of the Proposed Franchising Scheme on the employees of operators, as set out in the Commercial Case?

Trafford Council defers to the analysis detailed in the Assessment and the need to support employees through TUPE arrangements where applicable.

Q22. Do you have any comments on the approach to depots under the Proposed Franchising Scheme, as set out in the Commercial Case?

See response to Question 11.

Q23. Do you have any comments on the approach to fleet under the Proposed Franchising Scheme, as set out in the Commercial Case?

Trafford Council defers to the GMCA position in terms of the commercial case for the bus fleet but would reiterate that the Proposed Franchising Scheme provides a unique opportunity to address clean air/particulates issues through using higher environmental standards for buses including electric powered vehicles. The proposal for GMCA to specify emissions standards of vehicles and use of electric power is supported. This will help to reduce air pollution and will contribute towards the implementation of the Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan, improving air quality and reducing carbon emissions that contribute towards climate change.

Q24. Do you have any comments on the approach to Intelligent Transport Systems under the Proposed Franchising Scheme, as set out in the Commercial Case?

Trafford Council supports the approach to Intelligent Transport Systems. An integrated system will help to improve the passenger experience by providing a more reliable network as well as integrated, consistent ticketing. This will provide an improved passenger experience and make the bus network a more attractive sustainable travel mode.

The Intelligent Transport System could also be utilised in terms of providing real time information to passengers. This could be provided through digital information screens at bus stops, or potentially through a mobile phone app.

Q25. Do you have any comments on GMCA's approach to procuring franchise contracts under the Proposed Franchising Scheme, as set out in the Commercial Case?

Trafford Council defers to the analysis detailed in the Assessment and is pleased that the approach has been shaped with operators.

Q26. Do you have any comments on the impacts of the options on the achievement of the objectives of neighbouring transport authorities, as set out in the Commercial Case?

Trafford Council considers the continued operation of cross-boundary bus services to be essential. This will ensure continued links between Greater Manchester and neighbouring districts. GMCA working with neighbouring authorities and cross-boundary operators to put in place new ticketing arrangements is supported and opportunities should be sought to integrate ticketing with cross boundary services.

Q27. Do you have any comments on the Commercial Case conclusion that GMCA would be able to secure the operation of services under franchise contracts?

Trafford Council agrees with the conclusion.

Q28. Do you have any comments on the assessment of the commercial implications of the partnership options as set out in the Commercial Case?

Trafford Council defers to the analysis detailed in the Assessment.

Q29. Do you have any comments on the potential impact of the partnership options on the employees of operators as set out in the Commercial Case?

Trafford Council defers to the analysis detailed in the Assessment.

**Q30. The Financial Case concludes that GMCA could afford to introduce and operate the Proposed Franchising Scheme. After completing the Assessment and in advance of this consultation, GMCA has proposed how it would fund the introduction of a fully franchised system. Do you have any comments on these matters?*

Trafford Council defers to the analysis detailed in the Assessment but seeks clarity on the proposed one-off increase in the statutory contribution in 2020/21 of £17.8m and how this would be allocated and funded by each Greater Manchester local authority.

Q31. Do you have any comments on the conclusion in the Financial Case about the affordability of the partnership options?

See above.

Q32. Do you have any comments on the approach to managing franchised operations under the Proposed Franchising Scheme as set out in the Management Case?

Trafford Council defers to the analysis detailed in the Assessment.

Q33. Do you have any comments on the approach to the transition and implementation of the Proposed Franchising Scheme, and the conclusion that TfGM would be able to manage franchised operations on behalf of GMCA, as set out in the Management Case?

Trafford Council agrees with the conclusion that TfGM would be able to manage franchised operations on behalf of GMCA.

In the franchising transition period bus journeys between Area A and Area C will be particularly relevant to people who live and/or work in Trafford. Where possible, short-term complexity in terms of fares and ticketing should be minimised and a requirement for customers to purchase additional tickets when travelling between franchised and non-franchised areas should be avoided.

Trafford Council welcomes the identification of commercial arrangements to protect routes/services if a current operator reduces services or entirely exits the market during the transition period. The priority should be to keep disruption to passengers to a minimum.

Although the franchising transition period is referred to as 'short-term', it would span from 2020 -2023. Areas of Trafford would be directly affected in 2021 as part of Sub-Area A and 2023 as part of Sub-Area C. Any permanent disruption during this period should be avoided, this will help to minimise disruption to current passengers who may change their travel behaviours to avoid the network in the event that bus travel is made more difficult/complex during the transition period.

Q34. Do you have any comments on the proposed approach to the implementation and management of the partnership options, and the conclusion that TfGM would be able to manage and implement partnerships on behalf of GMCA, as set out in the Management Case?

Trafford Council believes that TfGM would be able to manage and implement partnerships on behalf of GMCA.

Q35. Do you have any comments on the impacts of the Proposed Franchising Scheme on passengers, as set out in the sub-section Impacts of the different options?

Trafford Council agrees that the Proposed Franchising Scheme would have the positive impacts on passengers through improvements to the network, reduced fares, simplified and interoperable tickets, and improved customer service.

Q36. Do you have any comments on the impacts of the partnership options on passengers as set out in the sub-section Impacts of the different options?

Trafford Council supports in principle the Proposed Franchising Scheme model.

Q37. Do you have any comments on the impacts of the Proposed Franchising Scheme on operators as set out in the sub-section Impacts of the different options?

Trafford Council defers to the analysis in the Assessment.

Q38. Do you have any comments on the impacts of the partnership options on operators, as set out in the sub-section Impacts of the different options?

Trafford Council defers to the analysis in the Assessment.

Q39. If you currently operate local bus services in Greater Manchester, do you anticipate any positive or negative impacts that the different options may have on your business? If so, please explain what you think those positive or negative impacts would be.

n/a

Q40. Do you have any comments on the impacts of the different options on GMCA, as set out in the sub-section Impacts of the different options?

Trafford Council defers to the analysis in the Assessment.

Q41. Do you have any comments on the impacts of the different options on wider society, as set out in the sub-section Impacts of the different options?

Trafford Council agrees that the Proposed Franchising Model will benefit and have a positive effect on economic growth and environmental considerations such as clean air.

**Q42. Taking everything into account, the Assessment concludes that the Proposed Franchising Scheme is the best way to achieve GMCA's objectives to improve bus services. Do you have any comments on this?*

Trafford Council supports the Proposed Bus Franchising Scheme for GM. The information set out in the consultation documents demonstrates that bus franchising provides the greatest benefits and will have a positive impact on the bus network. However, it must be recognised that the future success of the bus network is dependent on other issues (outside of the bus service operations) being addressed to deliver a successful bus network and to reverse the projected decline of bus passengers. This includes securing new infrastructure which can help improve the reliability of bus services and reduce journey times, such as Priority Bus measures, Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) routes and initiatives to reduce congestion on the highway network.

Linkages to new development will also be important and large development schemes could also help to deliver bus infrastructure improvements. Linkages to the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework and individual district Local Plans will therefore be essential in planning and delivering the future bus network.

Q43. Do you have any other comments on the Assessment of the Proposed Franchising Scheme?

N/A

Q44. GMCA's draft Equality Impact Assessment identifies the potential impact of the Proposed Franchising Scheme on persons with protected characteristics. Do you have any comments on it?

The Equality Impact Assessment should consider the impacts on people during the phasing in of the Franchising Scheme factoring in the potential loss or reduction of

bus services during this time. This could have a significantly negative effect on people, particularly on specific groups.

Final questions

**Q45. To what extent do you support or oppose the introduction of the Proposed Franchising Scheme? Why do you say this?*

Trafford Council supports the introduction of the Proposed Franchising Scheme for the reasons identified above.

**Q46. Are there any changes that you think would improve the Proposed Franchising Scheme? Please provide further details as to the changes you think would improve the Proposed Franchising Scheme.*

N/A

**Q47. If you oppose the introduction of the Proposed Franchising Scheme, how likely would you be to support it if the changes you suggested in answer to the previous question were made?*

N/A

**Q48. Finally, do you have any other comments you want to make?*

N/A