

Bee Network Background

GMCA Audit Committee – Monday 22nd September 2025

- Steve Warrener, Managing Director, TfGM
- Matt Bull, Finance and Corporate Services Director, TfGM

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Bee Network Overview

The Bee Network...

- A fully-integrated transport network for the people of Greater Manchester.
- Bringing together bus, tram, active travel and ultimately rail services into one system with integrated ticketing, customer information, and a high-quality user experience.

The Bee Network will...

- Support more jobs, businesses, homes and inclusion.
- Support a shift to cleaner and greener transport to help meet our decarbonisation and air quality targets.



TfGM and GM objectives

Greater Manchester Strategy



Healthy homes for all



Safe and strong communities



A transport system for a global city region



A clear line of sight to high quality jobs



Everyday support in every neighbourhood



Digitally connected places and people

TfGM transport pledges

Together we are GM

We will develop the Bee Network as a transport system for a global city region

Keep the cost of travel on the Bee Network as low as possible, so everyone can afford to get where they need to go. We only change what we need to run a safe and comfortable service and to reinvest in the Bee Network, so that it keeps improving.

By 2030

90% of people in GM will be within a five-minute walk of a bus or tram that comes at least every 30 minutes

We will have the UK's first fully electric, integrated transport system across active travel, bus and tram services, supporting carbon neutrality by 2038.

By 2030, all local rail lines will be integrated with the Bee Network, with GM communities the first outside London to be served by fully joined-up bike, bus, tram and train travel. We will drive major improvements to stations, including making more of them fully accessible and introducing capped, tap-on-tap-off fares.

By 2040

We are aiming for no-one to be killed or seriously injured on our roads.



Bee Network Commitments

The Bee Network works towards six customer commitments:

Safe and secure



Accessible



Affordable



Reliable



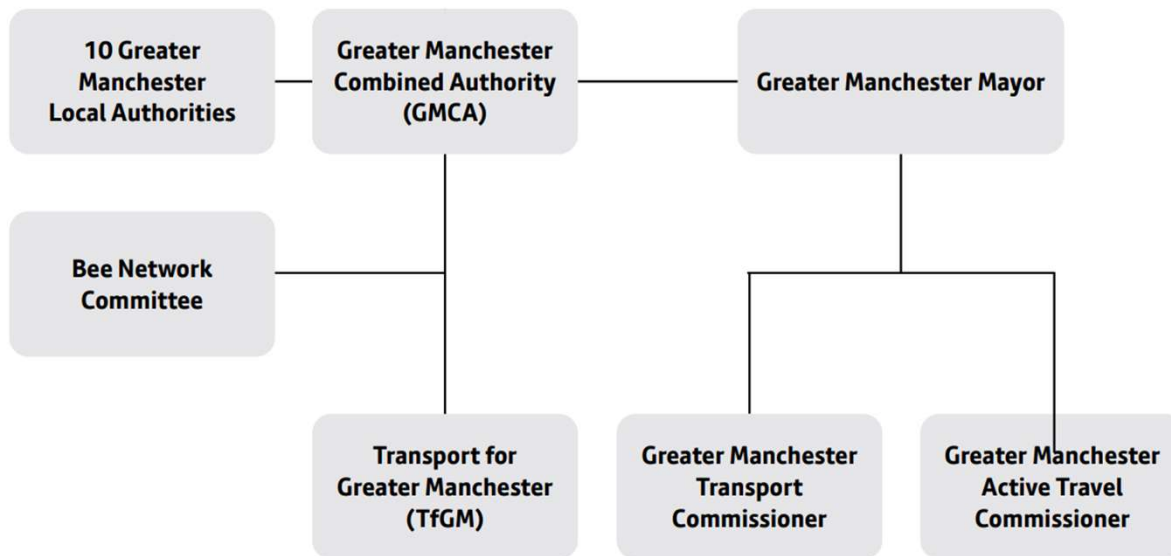
Sustainable



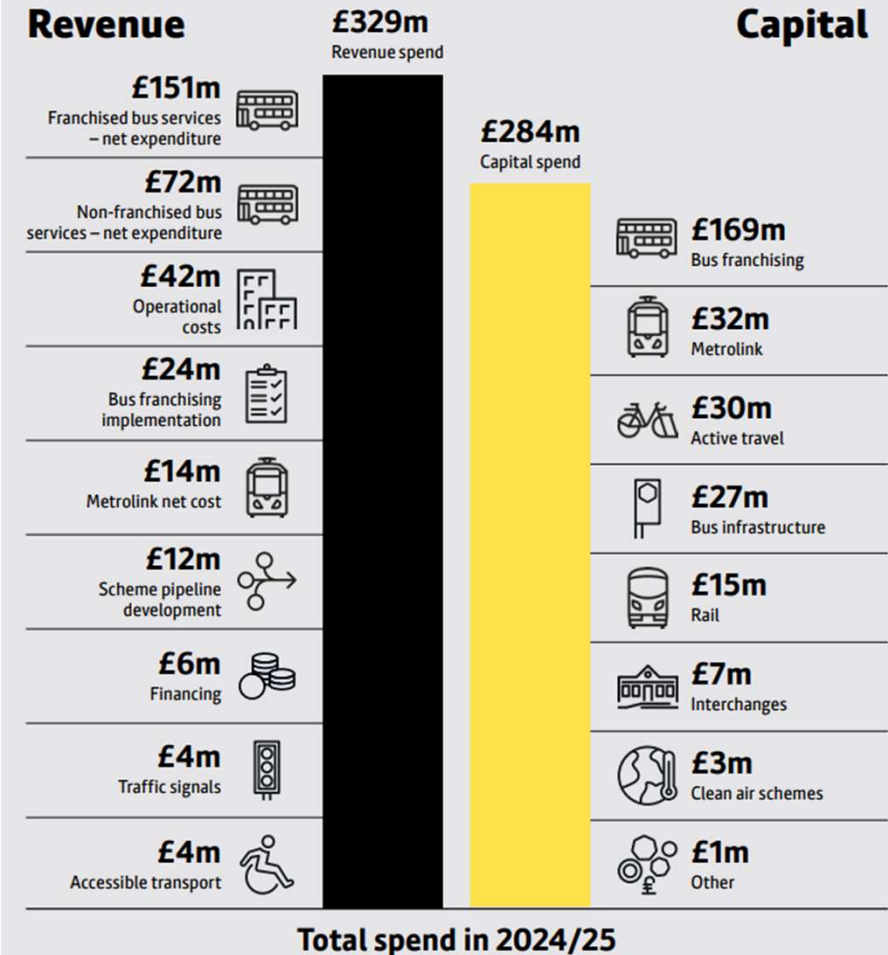
Accountable



Governance and budget



Spend at a glance



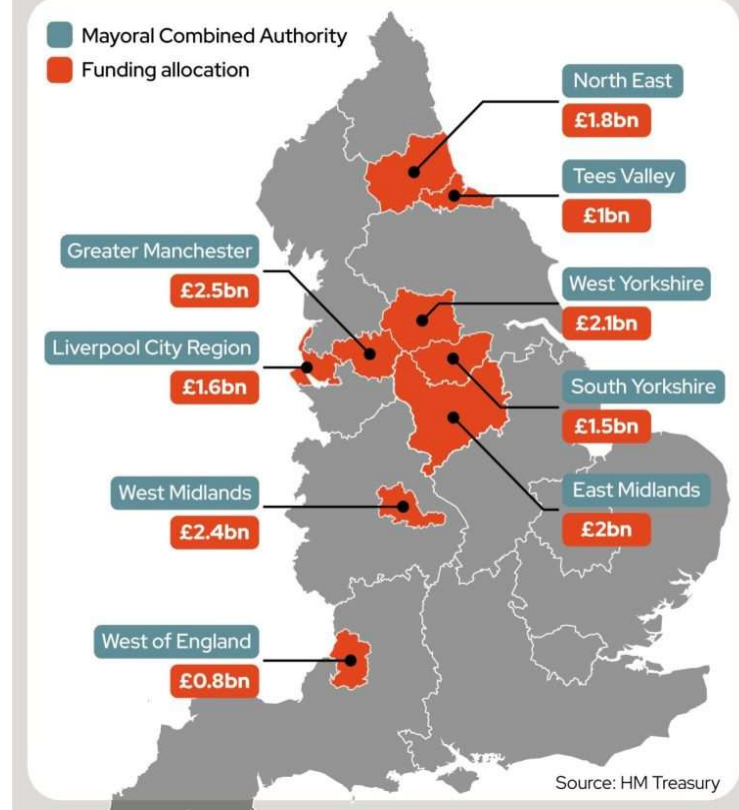
Transport for City Regions funding

The spending review 2025 confirmed **£15.6 billion** funding to provide Transport for City Regions settlements for 9 mayoral authorities.

GM will receive over £2.5bn of this funding to:

- **Create an all-electric local public transport network:** A fleet of a thousand new electric buses will form a 100% electric bus network serving its communities. Alongside trams powered by renewable energy and e-bikes for hire, this will deliver an entirely emission-free network, building on existing progress in cutting CO2 emissions and improving air quality.
- **Integrate rail into the Bee Network:** Local rail lines will be seamlessly joined with the Bee Network, making Greater Manchester the first area outside London to offer fully integrated bike, bus, tram, and train travel by the end of the decade. This move will also bring major improvements to stations, including making more of them fully accessible, and introducing capped fares.
- **Deliver major projects to drive green growth:** A pipeline of transformative transport projects is planned, including a tram line to Stockport and tram-train services connecting Oldham, Rochdale, Heywood, and Bury, alongside new Metrolink stops and modern new interchanges. These projects are designed to support the delivery of thousands of new homes, skilled jobs, and foster green economic growth.

Transport for City Regions funding



TfGM core responsibilities

Metrolink

Metrolink is the largest light rail system in the UK

- 147 trams
- 99 stops
- 102km of track
- Approx 46M journeys per year

The impact of the Metrolink has been significant:

Land values within ½ mile of tram stops quadrupled (400%) between 1995 and 2001. The average increase for the North West in the same period was 270%.



Bus

Almost all bus services in GM are locally controlled through franchising.

TfGM is responsible for bus services and their operation for the entire city region.

As a result of franchising GM has seen:

- A 14% increase in patronage year on year
- 170M journeys 2024/25
- Integrated ticketing
- More electric buses



Highways

TfGM works closely with highways authorities to help:

- Traffic management on key roads across GM
- Coordinating roadworks and reducing road closures
- Analysing projected traffic flows
- Manage permanent traffic signals



TfGM core responsibilities

Rail

Rail is not yet part of the Bee Network but we have a plan to integrate rail into the Bee Network by 2030

- Branding at stations and Bee Network customer service stands
- Fully accessible stations
- Network and service enhancements
- New rolling stock with better accessibility
- Pay as you go ticketing



Bee active network

Fully integrated, reliable and affordable transport system.

Proposed network of 2,734km by 2040

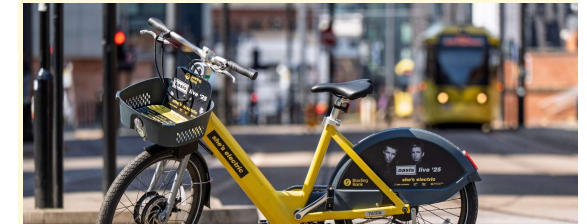
- Protected infrastructure for those cycling on busy roads
- Existing quiet streets and off-road routes connected with new crossings
- Tackling a legacy of poor provision for pedestrians.



Starling bikes

Bike hire scheme covering Trafford, Salford and Manchester City Centre

- As of 2024 the scheme has enabled over 1M rides and over 2M km of active travel.
- The scheme has given 200,000 residents access to bikes.

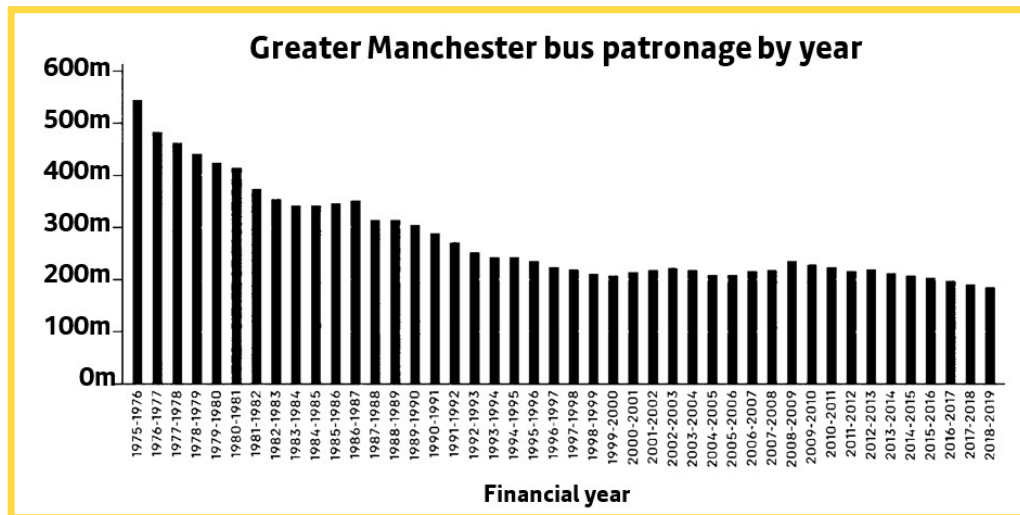


Why did we franchise our buses?

Buses are vital for Greater Manchester, accounting for 75% of public transport trips here.

Our bus network was:

- **Confusing** – Hundreds of tickets to choose from; tens of operators;
- **Expensive** – Single fares could cost up to £4.50; GMCA was supporting c. 20% of the network (and rising);
- **Shrinking** – in the four decades since deregulation, bus use in Greater Manchester fall sharply.



1977 - Buses in Greater Manchester travelled 137 million kilometres.

2022 - Buses in Greater Manchester travelled 85 million kilometres.

A 38% decrease.

Without reform, the bus system would not be able to support our ambitions for Greater Manchester.



Franchising results to date

As a result of bus franchising, we have seen:

- An increase in patronage of 12% year on year on Tranches 1 and 14% on Tranche 2
- 170M bus journeys taken in the last year (24/25)
- Improved reliability and more frequent services
- Reduced the per-km cost of operating Bee Network buses by a third
- Modernisation of bus infrastructure with new, zero emission buses and electrification of depots

Across the network:

- Over 100 new TravelSafe Officers
- Bee Network app customers can Rate Their Journey and tell us how to improve

Highlights

Since the first phase of Bee Network buses went live in September 2023:

14%

The Bee Network has seen a **14% increase in bus journeys** year on year in its first two franchising areas.

More affordable fares

Single fares have been **£2**, and day tickets **£5** since September 2022. Annual bus tickets for **£800** are available with a credit union loan at no extra cost. Weekly and monthly tickets are available for **£20** and **£80** respectively.

Punctuality is improving!

We are regularly exceeding our target of **80%**, compared to approximately **66%** pre-franchising, in the first franchising area.

Improved routes

Changes have already been made to around **75 routes** to provide earlier, later, more frequent and better connected services.

113

113 new TravelSafe Support & Enforcement Officers introduced, collectively providing a presence on board **60,000** buses.

Tap and go

Tickets are more convenient – customers can now **pay with just a tap** across both bus and tram services.

Better connected communities!

Approximately **84%** of residents are now within a five-minute walk of a half hourly service (Daytime, weekday bus or tram services, up from **78%** in November 2022).

50%

Nearly half of franchise network costs are covered by fare-paying passengers, with this figure rising to nearly **75%** when local taxation is added (2025/26).

24/7

Pilot of **24/7 bus services** launched, reinstating night time connectivity to the north-west of Greater Manchester for the first time in over a decade.

75%

75% of the Bee Network bus fleet is less than four years old (compared to an average fleet age of **9.5** years in 2019).

17%

of the fleet is **zero emission**, compared to below **2%** pre-franchising.

Without the changes we have made, our bus network would be smaller, less attractive and more expensive to run and use.



Local Transport Plan (LTP)

- The LTP is a statutory document setting out our long-term ambitions for transport between now and 2050.
- This will set out how transport can help achieve the priorities for the city region set out in the Greater Manchester Strategy.
- TfGM is developing a new LTP on behalf of GM and the draft will go to consultation in autumn-winter 2025 subject to GMCA approval.
- The LTP sets the strategic direction for transport in GM and our targets for sustainable modes. It demonstrates how the city region can improve mobility in line with the net zero 2038 target.
- The LTP delivery plan will set out the schemes and activities that will help to achieve this.
- Following consultation later this year, TfGM will submit the LTP for adoption by the GMCA in 2026.

