

**Minutes of the meeting of the Bee Network Committee
held on Thursday, 29th January 2026 at the GMCA Boardroom**

PRESENT:

Councillor Alan Quinn (in the Chair)	Bury
Councillor Hamid Khurram	Bolton
Councillor Tracey Rawlins	Manchester
Councillor Joshua Charters	Oldham
Councillor Mike McCusker	Salford
Councillor Grace Baynham	Stockport
Councillor Jon Byrne	Stockport
Councillor Peter Crossen	Stockport
Councillor Jacqueline Owen	Tameside
Councillor Aidan Williams	Trafford
Councillor John Vickers	Wigan

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Supt. Carl O'Brien	GMP
CFO Dave Russel	GMFRS
Dame Sarah Storey	GMCA

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

James Baldwin	TfGM
Chris Barnes	TfGM
Sarah Bennett	GMCA
Peter Boulton	TfGM
Martin Lax	TfGM
Richard Nickson	TfGM
Lee Teasdale	GMCA
Danny Vaughan	TfGM
Fran Wilkinson	TfGM

BNC/01/26 Welcome and Apologies

Apologies were received and noted from Mayor Andy Burnham (GMCA), Councillor Eamonn O'Brien (GMCA), City Mayor Paul Dennett (Salford), Councillor Phil Burke (Rochdale), Councillor Paul Prescott (Wigan), Councillor Stephen Homer (Tameside), Councillor Max Woodvine (Oldham) & Councillor Howard Sykes (Oldham).

BNC/02/26 Declarations of Interest

RESOLVED/-

1. That Councillor Jacqueline Owen declared a general interest by virtue of a family member being an employee of Transport for Greater Manchester.

BNC/03/26 Chairs Announcements and Urgent Business

The Chair opened by asking that Danny Vaughan provide an interim update on the current position with industrial relations. It was advised that local dialogue had continued to take place with the unions, as part of the bargaining group with West Yorkshire and the West Midlands. A revised offer had been put on the table, which had resulted in the postponement of strike action. This revised offer was currently being considered by the unions ahead of a further meeting in the following week.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the latest update on industrial relations be received.

BNC/04/26 Minutes of the Meeting Held on 11 December 2025

RESOLVED/-

1. That the minutes of the meeting of 11 December 2025 be agreed as a true and correct record.

BNC/05/26 Active Travel Annual Report

Dame Sarah Storey presented the Annual Active Travel Report for 2025 to members and asked that members agree the Active Travel Priorities for 2026.

Work that had taken place during 2025 was highlighted including:

- Since the inception of Active Travel in 2018, significant strides had been made. At that initial point, only 31% of GM residents agreed that the network allowed them to walk or cycle easily. By 2024 this figure had risen to 50%. However, the 2025 figure had seen this erode slightly to 47%, which showed the importance of maintaining the momentum of the early years and not allowing the progress made to be further impacted.
- To ensure this, the barriers to continuous development needed to be identified and addressed through the five pillars established in the Active Travel Plan.
- It was clear in the report that where suitable infrastructure was delivered, the number of walking and cycling journeys increased.
- The infrastructure pillar addressed the need to track the total number of kilometers of the network delivered so far. Whilst this now sat at 161km, it had been important to address how this progress had been delivered, so a decision had been taken to decouple walking and cycling and create a specific walking plan within the upcoming Local Transport Plan.
- The School Travel pillar included the work on School Streets and there were now 39 schemes active throughout the region, with an expectation of 60 by the end of the current academic year, and 100 by 2028.
- Opportunities for all who would like to cycle was being addressed in a number of ways, such as cycle libraries, cycle loans and the GM Inclusive Cycling Network. The Cycle Hire scheme continued to operate in the regional centre in the face of vandalism challenges and continued to break annual records despite this.
- Road safety was not just tackled through the Vision Zero approach, but also by addressing perceptions of road dangers. Women & girls were much more likely to cite safety as a reason for not choosing to walk or cycle, and the newly

created Safer Transport Command was a recent development aimed at tackle the issues highlighted.

Comments and Questions

Members thanked Dame Sarah and her team for delivering the work seen to date, and the possible expansion of micromobility was strongly welcomed as it was felt that this could be a game changer. Thanks were also expressed to all volunteers who contributed to the School Streets schemes, as the schemes could not run without their dedication.

Members referenced the inclusive cycling network, with an ask that monitoring take place of the use of the Stretford cycleway into the city centre similar to the monitoring work being undertaken on the Chorlton cycleway. This was important as work was taking place to link the two cycleways together through Seymour Grove in Old Trafford. Dame Sarah assured members that the relevant data capture would take place and work was taking place with local authorities to ensure that they maximise data collection and evaluation opportunities.

Members welcomed the commitment to further cycle storage, and the approval of CSTRS funding to allow for bids at new appropriate sites.

Members asked if it would be possible to provide year on year funding for an officer to directly lead on the school streets within each authority, building in work with schools around road safety and education to maximise their value. Officers advised that they were looking ahead beyond the current funding period, looking at how it would be funded from 2027 onwards with mechanisms that recognised the financial challenges within local authorities.

Members welcomed any possibilities around extending the cycle hire scheme to the outer boroughs of the region.

Members welcomed the announcements about more powers to address pavement parking issues but highlighted that there needed to be a set standard across the

region. Officers agreed, stating that there needed to be clear consistent rules that did not confuse the public.

Members noted that the latest statistics indicated that 49 people had been arrested or charged with bicycle theft across GM out of 2436 registered thefts. This was a concern and not helped by factors such as British Transport Police (BTP) stating that they would not investigate thefts of bicycles left at train stations for over 2 hours. However, following a campaign that included Cllr Peter Crossen and Mayor Burnham, BTP had announced that they would now change this policy. How could this be built upon to reassure the public that it was safe to cycle to join other active travel routes. It was advised that close work was taking place with GMP, and a very recent operation had seen the recovery of a number of bikes from properties. Work around theft was also taking place with train operators as they moved closer to integration into the GM Rail Network, which would allow for more powers over monitoring and reducing theft.

Members asked how soon they could see borough level statistics and dashboards to help inform the Walking Delivery Plan, particularly with regards to travel to and from transport hubs into the city. Officers advised that a workshop had taken place to specifically consider the way walking could be monitored on a service-by-service/route-by route/borough-by-borough basis to quantify and support future business cases. Officers would bring this plan to a future meeting of the Committee, as it was absolutely the plan to 'democratise' the data down to the granular level.

Members referenced how cycle parking design at railway stations needed to be integral to the success of Active Travel. It was highlighted that there was a designated transport hub within Salford run by Northern Rail, that had serious accessibility issues for micromobility. Officers advised that they would take away the details on this issue to raise it with Northern Rail.

Walking concerns for people with mobility issues were highlighted, with particular note to the timings on pedestrian crossings, that were often not green for pedestrians long enough for people with mobility issues to safely cross. Officers asked that any such crossings be identified and reported as crossing timings were regularly audited to ensure that they were of sufficient length.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the Greater Manchester Annual Active Travel Report be noted.
2. That the Commissioner's Mission Priorities as set out in the report be endorsed.
3. That the future priorities and the commitment to work more closely with the local authorities, national government, community partners and across TfGM to deliver the actions set out in Section 4 of this paper be noted.
4. That the thanks of the Committee be expressed to all volunteers who contributed to the School Streets schemes.

BNC/06/26 Vision Zero and Bee Network Safety Plan Update

Dame Sarah Storey, Superintendent Carl O'Brien (GMP) and Chief Fire Officer Dave Russel (GMFRS) were invited to present a report that provided an update on the Vision Zero Action Plan; seeking endorsement for the Bee Network Safety Plan (BNSP); and providing Department for Transport (DfT) road casualty figures for 2024 in Greater Manchester, as part of the existing commitment to report on casualty statistics.

The new Bee Network Safety Plan set out the approach to making the Bee Network one of the safest transport systems in the world. There was a significant focus within it on highways given the overwhelming number of journeys in the region taken by road (inc. bus, taxis, motorcycles, cycles, mobility aids and by foot in addition to car) and it was vital to ensure all were equally safe within this setting.

Unfortunately, statistics for 2024 had shown for the first time in GM that more people had died on the road than in the year before. 51 lives had been lost in 2024 and each and every one of them needed to be remembered. Whilst GM still had some of the lowest numbers of serious injuries and deaths per mile driven compared to other city regions in the UK, and that the overall trend remained downwards, there was still the caveat that it was owed to all the people who had died, and their families and friends

that had suffered as a result, to review the work across all relevant partners and renew the resolve and commitment to deliver on Vision Zero.

Dame Sarah Storey and Transport Commissioner Vernon Everitt had convened a meeting specifically to scrutinise the 2024 figures upon their receipt and this would be a consistent drumbeat behind the commitment to Vision Zero.

Despite the 2024 increase, early data indicated that the 2025 figures, following the adoption of Vision Zero, would see fewer people killed on GM's roads. However recent harrowing events, notably the recent collision in Bolton resulting in the loss of four lives, showed the absolute need to keep up the resolve and accelerate the work.

CFO Dave Russel highlighted some of the key work taking place via the Vision Zero Strategic Steering Group, which provided leadership and direction on how the Safer Roads Greater Manchester collaborated to work towards zero deaths on GM's roads by 2040. He advised that the action plan for Vision Zero (currently comprised of 32 actions) was a fluid document that was regularly reviewed to ensure it remained relevant and was always informed by an intelligence led approach. Not all plans were currently funded, and any further work required capital and revenue would be brought back before the Committee.

Education work taking place was highlighted. From the start of the coming academic year, every primary school in GM would receive an offer of Key Stage 2 education from GMFRS, delivered by firefighters. This was a significant step change, to provide life advice to primary school students who were about to make the transition to secondary school and gain greater independence. Recruitment work was also currently taking place for staff to join a young drivers education team – to work specifically on changing attitudes and positively influencing behaviours in a non-confrontational educational way.

Comments and Questions

Members referenced 20mph zones, and the increasing implementation of them within localities. Whilst these were welcomed, residents had frequently expressed concerns

that these were not adequately monitored and enforced, which led to many residents feeling that they were redundant if drivers knew that they would not be impacted by ignoring the limits. Officers stated that there needed to be a cultural change as speeding was seen as highly antisocial in the way that drink driving was now viewed. It was stated that Operation Snap was a helpful device for independently enforcing and reporting anti-social driving issues, these submissions had increased 114% since 2021, but there was still more work required to publicise this. It was advised that GMP was always undertaking targeted work resulting in a significant number of vehicle seizures where they were unlicensed/uninsured to be driven on the region's roads. 12,271 vehicles had been taken off the road in the last year.

Members stated that whilst they welcomed initiatives such as Operation Snap, it was important not to place the onus on the public as an alternative to police action and only act as a supplement to the police. Members also emphasised the need for the Operation Snap website to be user friendly as some had reported it being difficult to navigate and upload photos/videos.

It was advised that some local authorities also had road safety teams working with local primary and secondary schools and that it would be good for GMFRS to link in with them.

Members referenced the experience of bus drivers on the road network and the design of their cabs for safety. Was it being ensured that drivers were being engaged on safety work? Officers confirmed that there was a commitment with bus operators on procurement of the latest safety standards. Work was taking place to emulate the London model which engaged well with drivers and had undertaken work that cabs were also comfortable for women drivers as well as men.

Members asked if there were any plans to emulate the graduate driver schemes introduced in Northern Ireland. It was advised that GM had put a recommendation forward to government that this should form part of the national road safety strategy, and a consultation on young drivers would be part of the strategy.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the DfT Road Casualty Figures for 2024 be noted.
2. That the update on delivery of Vision Zero Strategy and Action Plan be acknowledged.
3. That the Bee Network Safety Plan, which has been developed to make the Bee Network one of the safest transport systems in the world be endorsed.
4. That support be given to progression of enforcement, education, training and publicity and engineering which are included in the Safe Systems change mechanisms; and
5. That the Committee advocates for engagement in partnership working across GM organisations and Vision Zero.

BNC/07/26 Transport Infrastructure Pipeline

Chris Barnes (Network Director Infrastructure, TfGM) introduced a report setting out progress on delivering a pipeline of transport infrastructure improvements to support the Bee Network. The report made a number of recommendations for members to support the continued development and delivery of the pipeline programme.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the current position, recent progress and key milestones on the transport infrastructure pipeline be noted; and
2. That approval be given to the drawdown of Integrated Settlement (CRSTS) and associated scheme progression as follows:
 - Bee Network Rail Integration: £2m; and
 - Rapid Transit Extensions Package: GM Tunnelled Metro: £0.375m.

BNC/08/26 Date of Next Meeting

Members were advised that the next meeting of the Committee would take place on Thursday 26th February 2026.