

Greater Manchester Local Transport Plan



A message from the Chairs of AGMA Council and the GMPTA

Greater Manchester Local Transport Plan 2001/02 – 2005/06

We are pleased to submit this, our first full LTP for Greater Manchester. The ten Greater Manchester Authorities and the PTA have developed their joint working arrangements to work even more closely with our partners and key stakeholders in the development of our transport strategy.

This year we have the added benefit that our transport strategy has been tested against public opinion. We held a series of formal consultation events early in 2000, including the publication of a newspaper distributed widely throughout the County. The newspaper contained a reply paid questionnaire and generated over 3000 returns.

Public consultation has resulted in an endorsement of our approach but we are aware that we must not stop here. We are committed to continuing to develop our partnerships and the dialogue with our communities.

The Greater Manchester Authorities are proud to have been recognised as a Centre of Excellence for our work in the integration of public transport. We now wish to build on our achievements and are seeking to be declared an overall Centre of Excellence in recognition of what we have also been able to deliver in terms of integrating our transport strategy with a consistent planning framework, ensuring widespread community support for our plans, building strong partnerships, changing attitudes to travel and concentrating on "seamless journeys". We are also working to make our transport network accessible to all and are proud of our Ring and Ride service, which has now been extended to cover the whole County.

The key elements of our strategy therefore aim to:

- sustain the success of the regional centre and town centres and regenerate our inner city areas by making them more attractive and accessible
- create a high quality, sustainable, and socially inclusive county-wide transport network, that integrates public transport with other sustainable modes such as walking and cycling and arrests the growing reliance on the private car, particularly in the peak period
- reverse the trend to decentralisation by making centres more attractive for jobs, shopping, leisure and housing and create a land use pattern that can be best served by sustainable transport modes

We are proposing a range of measures to take forward our strategy. Among these are proposals to upgrade our traffic control system, to implement a guided bus scheme along with other developments of our Quality Bus Corridor programme, and enhance the capacity of our existing Metrolink network.

Working with the Strategic Rail Authority, Railtrack and train operating companies we expect local rail services to carry considerably more passengers as a result of both service frequency improvements and infrastructure measures to improve stations and provide additional track capacity.

In addition we propose a small number of major road improvement schemes to improve the quality of life in some of our communities and to support sustainable regeneration. We also have a range of local schemes to improve facilities for walking and cycling. We have a strong focus in the plan on improving safety. We intend to address this not only through our programme of local safety schemes but also through developing new safer routes to schools initiatives and travel plans and by ensuring safety is fundamental to the design of our engineering projects.

Maintenance is a key priority and we are glad of the opportunity presented in the Ten-Year Plan to address the large backlog of maintenance that has built up across the conurbation on our principal roads, bridges and highway structures, including many retaining walls in our Pennine areas.

We very much welcome the Government's contribution of up to £250 million to extend the Metrolink system. We are also greatly encouraged by the Government's announcement of its Ten-Year Plan and the commitment to increase expenditure on transport. Our bid this year at £74 million predates the Ten-Year Plan and so represents a moderate level of investment compared to the scale of the challenges we still must address. Should more funding be made available we have considered how we could bring forward other priorities during the life of the LTP.

Once again we look forward to continuing to work with the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions and with Government Office North West in ensuring that our transport strategy can support our core objectives in a sustainable way and we look forward to a positive response to our Plan.

Peter Smith
Chair AGMA Council
(on behalf of Leaders of the Greater Manchester Councils)

Joe Clarke
Chair GMPTA