

GREATER MANCHESTER INTEGRATED TRANSPORT AUTHORITY**REPORT FOR RESOLUTION/INFORMATION**

COMMITTEE: Bus Network and GMPTE Services
DATE: 13th November 2009
SUBJECT: Yellow School Bus Development
REPORT OF: Interim Bus and Rail Director, GMPTE

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform Members of the current status of the Yellow School Bus project and the various approaches being pursued to increase the number of Yellow School Buses in Greater Manchester.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are recommended to:-

1. Welcome the increased patronage and positive effects on modal shift and antisocial behaviour resulting from the Yellow School Bus scheme.
2. Note the approach that officers are taking to expand the fleet and develop bidding options for Yellow School Buses within the DfT's Green Bus Fund.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Reports to Transport Network Committee - 27th March 2009 and 20th February 2009

Report to Bus Network Committee - 7th August 2009

CONTACT OFFICERS

Paul Lucas: 0161 244 1645 paul.lucas@gmpte.gov.uk

Steve Wurr: 0161 244 1653 steve.wurr@gmpte.gov.uk

Michael Mitchell: 0161 244 1732 michael.mitchell@gmpte.gov.uk

1. Background

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the total usage of Yellow School Buses.
- 1.2 This report also provides Members with details of the various approaches that are being pursued by officers in order to increase the number of Yellow School Buses operating in Greater Manchester.

2. Home to School Journeys

Table 1 Yellow School Bus Indicators

Indicator	As At Dec 2006	As At Dec 2007	As At Dec 2008	As At Oct 2009
Number of new vehicles purchased during the financial year	5	2	3	2*
Number of YSB in operation	34	36	39	41*
Number of passes issued	1934	2169	2220	2285
% change in passes issued	-	+12.2	+2.3	+2.7
Average number of passes issued per bus**	57	60	57	56
Estimated number of passenger trips (000s)	-	561	635	763

*:- As previously reported a 42nd bus was introduced in Stockport on 3rd November 2009, data for which is incomplete and excluded from this table

**:- Does not include Samuel Laycock SEN Yellow School Bus

- 2.1 Appendix 1 shows the estimated additional car miles saved from new user registrations in October 2009. This indicates that Yellow School Buses are predicted to reduce car miles by an estimated 264,000 car miles, or over 6,435 miles per vehicle, in the current 2009/10 school year. A full breakdown of the travel survey results is also attached in Appendix 1.
- 2.2 In addition, reported anti-social behaviour incidents have reduced from 175 to 49 (a reduction of 72%) between the last complete school year prior to introduction of each individual Yellow School Bus service and the last 2008/9 school year (see Appendix 2). These statistics relate to all home to school services, whether yellow or conventional, at schools where Yellow Buses have been introduced. In addition some schools have suggested that the use of Yellow School Buses can improve

attendance because students are more willing to use the bus to school owing to reductions in anti-social behaviour on board.

- 2.3 The number of pass renewals (72% of total) and new pass applications (28% of total) received (and allocated) to date for the current (2009/10) school year totals 2,281 for 41 vehicles.
- 2.4 This shows an average take up per bus of 56 seats out of a total capacity of 67 with 15 vehicles fully subscribed. All services will shortly be subject to their annual review with appropriate service changes introduced and promotion work to increase take-up on those not fully subscribed.
- 2.5 Buses may not always operate full owing to sickness absence, pre and after-school activities, work experience and examination study leave. There are 7 Yellow School Buses with current waiting lists and officers are working with schools to identify non and partial users so that their seats can be re-allocated to students on the waiting list. To assist in this process, GMPTE are currently trialling an electronic pass system on 2 Yellow School Buses.
- 2.6 In addition, the reasons for partial use will be analysed to seek to overcome this issue going forward.

3. Outline Proposals for Expansion of Yellow School Buses

- 3.1 Officers are investigating potential sources of funding which could be used to provide further Yellow School Buses. It is likely that Wigan Council will allocate mini-TIF funding for two more vehicles in 2010/11; other sources of funding are also being investigated including consideration of a submission to the DfT's Green Bus Fund.

4 Summary

- 4.1 Yellow School Bus home to school services continue to produce very successful results, reducing ASB, and increasing mode shift to public transport.
- 4.2 Officers are developing proposals to use various funding sources, including, if any bid is successful, DfT Green Bus Fund monies; in order to further increase the number of Yellow School Buses in the County.

5 Recommendations

- 5.1 Please see front sheet for recommendations.

Michael Renshaw
Interim Bus and Rail Director

Appendix 1 **2009/10 Yellow School Bus Travel Survey**

The following data is an interim summary ahead of in-depth analysis of the 2009/10 new user travel survey as at October 2009. Out of **616** new users **588 (95%)** completed the travel survey questionnaire. **465 (80%)** were completed by new year 7 pupils transferring from primary to secondary school, **44 (7%)** were existing year 8, **25 (4%)** existing year 9, **35 (6%)** existing year 10 and **19 (3%)** existing year 11.

A breakdown of the questions and responses is as follows:

In **Question 1** the student states the days/times of the they plan to use the Yellow School Bus. **566 (96%)** stated that they plan to use the service Monday to Friday in both directions every day, while **10 (1.5%)** stated that they plan on using the service on the afternoon journey only, where the morning journey is part of a linked parental journey.

Question 2 asked which mode is most used to get to and from school prior to applying to use the Yellow School Bus. The following answers were received:

- **Car** - **196 (33%)**
- **Walk** - **194 (33%)**
- **School Bus** - **82 (14%)**
- **Local Bus** - **70 (12%)**
- **First year at school/ no response** **30 (5%)**
- **Taxi** - **6 (1%)**
- **Car/Walk** - **5 (1%)**
- **Bicycle** - **3 (0.5%)**
- **Multi-mode (varies day to day)** - **2 (0.5%)**

Question 3 asked parents using car to identify one main reason why they travelled to and from school by this mode. A number of responses were received including safety, distance from school and 'on route as chained journey'.

Question 4 asked how many school run car miles would be saved by using the Yellow School Bus. **243 (42%)** answered this question giving a total daily mileage of **1633.7** saved. When multiplied by all users this implies a yearly mileage saving of **310,400**. At an estimated use at 85% this implies an estimated reduction of **264,000** car miles.

Question 5 asked parents to identify which alternative mode of their child would use if the Yellow School Bus service was not available. The following answers were received:

• Local Bus	-	258	(44%)
• Car	-	176	(29.8%)
• Unable to attend school	-	75	(12.7%)
• Walk	-	40	(6.8%)
• Taxi	-	10	(1.7%)
• Car/ Local Bus	-	4	(0.7%)
• Bicycle	-	4	(0.7%)
• Walk/Car	-	2	(0.3%)
• No response	-	19	(3.3%)