

The Implications of the Carriage of Bicycles on Trams

Terms of Reference for Joint Working Group

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1. Background

In October 2002 GMPTE issued a statement that indicated “in line with national and local policies on integrated transport, GMPTA has given its backing to the principle of allowing bicycles on Phase 3 trams during non peak hours, subject to resolving a number of important concerns”.

Under the current Manchester Metrolink By-laws, bicycles are not permitted at any time on any part of the Metrolink network unless they are folded and fully encased.

Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive (GMPTE), as the Promoter of Metrolink, continues to receive representations from cycling groups to permit the carriage of bicycles on trams and recognises the importance and growing interest in cycling but needs to consider safety and operational implications.

GMPTE engaged consultants, who have previous knowledge and understanding of this issue, to undertake a study to assess readily available information in relation to this subject, identify the issues which may arise and discuss viable measures that may help address the issues.

The study concluded that the current policy on Metrolink should remain unchanged as the measures possible to mitigate the risks of injury, damage and operational problems are not guaranteed to reduce the risk significantly enough to warrant a change in policy regarding the carriage of bicycles on trams and would incur additional costs.

It was also recommended through the Capital Sub-Committee that GMPTE continues to incorporate and enhance cycling facilities at all stops to encourage cyclists to use the Metrolink system, whilst leaving their cycles at their boarding point, and GMPTE should continue to provide investment for cycle facilities on the Metrolink network.

A meeting of the Capital Projects Committee reviewed the report on 15th January 2010 and accepted the findings passing a motion to continue with the current arrangements regarding cycles on Metrolink by a majority of 7 to 5.

At a meeting of the Integrated Transport Authority (ITA) on Friday 12th February 2010 passed the following resolution;

“The authority, mindful of the Capital Project report relating to the carriage of cycles on trams, wishes to set up a small working group of two Conservative members, two Liberal Democrat members and two Labour members (which will also call on advice from the Greater Manchester Cycle Campaign and the Love Your Bike Campaign and the ten district councils and local transport user groups) to discuss the contents of the Mott MacDonald report and examine any safe ways in which cycles can be carried on trams and to report back to the Policy and Resources Committee of the Authority in due course”

In addition a resolution was put forward at the same meeting as follows;

“Officers to be instructed to report to Policy and Resources Committee:

1. An evaluation of the experience of European light rail systems with similar vehicles operating in similar circumstances to those found in Greater Manchester on Metrolink and which permit the carriage of bicycles;
2. The estimated cost of providing facilities to enable the M5000 trams to carry bicycles;
3. Costed options for modifying the T68 and T68a trams as part of their mid life refurbishment to provide facilities to enable them to carry bicycles;
4. A plan for the experimental introduction of off peak bicycle carriage, and

5. Undertake full consultation with representatives of the cycling organisations and the ten district councils.

2. Objectives

The objectives of the working group will include:

- To provide GMITA and the Policy and Resources Committee with more information around the risks, costs and attitudes associated with the safe carriage of bicycles on trams.
- To establish the associated costs of the carriage of bicycles on trams.
- To provide information relating to the impact of the carriage of bicycles on trams.
- To report the results of the consultation in relation to this issue.
- To ensure consultation takes place with other interested groups and that a broad view of opinions is taken into account.
- Identify risks with possible mitigation measures.

3. Scope

The scope of the review is to include the following areas;

- Evaluation of a number of systems, similar to Metrolink.
- Document which external organisations and user groups will be consulted with.

- To review the suitability and costs of M5000 and T68/68a trams for carrying bicycles in a safe manner.
- To assess the safety and operational implications for the carriage of bicycles on trams.
- Make subsequent recommendations to the Policy and Resources Committee.

4. Work Steps

This work stream will involve several steps as follows;

- To determine the consultation process to be followed.
- Conduct consultations in controlled conditions and document response.
- Conduct evaluation exercise on group of systems identified.
- Review cost, operational and safety implications.
- Produce report and present findings to Policy and Resources Committee.

5. Deliverables

Produce a report of findings and recommendations, with agreed action plans.

6. Timescales

The following is an estimation of the timescales for the main activities that need to be undertaken to prepare a final report to the Policy and Resources Committee:

1	Officers to provide information and undertake consultation as requested	3.5 months
2	Review and discussion by Joint Working Party	1.5 months
3	Feedback/discussion with interested parties/district councils	1 month
4	Final assessment by Joint Working Party	1 month
5	Present findings and recommendations to Policy and Resources Committee	1 month

7. Group Members

A joint working group comprising six councillors; two Liberal Democrat, two Conservative and two Labour.

In addition it is envisaged that a small number of officers would be required to assist with planning, consultation process, evaluation process, safety compliance advice and tram adaptation costs.