

**REPORT FOR INFORMATION**

**COMMITTEE:** Rail and Metrolink Networks  
**DATE:** 28 January 2011  
**SUBJECT:** Rail Service Development Issues  
**REPORT OF:** Bus and Rail Director, GMPTE

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**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To provide an update on the development of Sunday rail services.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members are recommended to:

- i) note the contents of the report;
- ii) note the cost estimates for the enhancement of Sunday services to Marple/Chinley and Stoke-on-Trent;

**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Previous reports to Policy & Resources and Rail & Metrolink Committees and the Authority held on file in the Authority's Policy Unit Office.

**CONTACT OFFICERS**

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. This report provides Members with an update on rail service development issues.
- 1.2 At the 21 January meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee, Members were appraised of advice on experimental services received from the Department for Transport and asked to approve the extension to two years for the trial period for rail services. This followed the consideration of this issue at the Rail and Metrolink Networks Committee held on 26 November 2010
- 1.3 Additionally, Members of the Policy and Resources Committee were also asked to consider the funding of additional services on Sundays on the Manchester – Marple/Chinley and Manchester – Macclesfield Stoke-on-Trent routes. It was necessary to seek a funding decision on these issues at the Policy and Resources Committee before they had been considered by this Committee in view of the deadline to ensure the timetable changes could be implemented in December 2011. This was before the next scheduled meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee in March and the next Rail and Metrolink Networks Committee.
- 1.4 Members of the Rail and Metrolink Networks Committee will be verbally updated on the decisions of the Policy and Resources Committee. A copy of the report presented to the Policy and Resources Committee is appended to this report.

## **2. Enhancement of additional Sunday rail services**

- 2.1 The general policy of GMITA is that those lines which do not have a Sunday train service, and on which a demand can be identified, should, wherever practicable, be provided with one. This is particularly important given that levels of rail travel on Sundays often equate to, and sometimes exceed, that of weekdays.
- 2.2 The level of Sunday services varies considerably and the Rail and Metrolink Networks Committee (on 1 October 2010) requested that officers have detailed discussion with Northern Rail to enhance Sunday services on the busiest corridors.
- 2.3 Northern Rail has, as a result, subsequently provided cost estimates for Sunday train service enhancements on the Manchester–Marple/Chinley and the Manchester/Stockport/Bramhall/Stoke-on-Trent routes. Details of these proposals are contained in the appended Policy and Resources Committee report. Officers are continuing to seek funding contributions from Derbyshire and East Cheshire in view of the cross boundary nature of the services.

### **3. Other potential service enhancements**

- 3.1 Officers are continuing to pursue with Northern Rail a number of service improvements, as set out in the October Rail and Metrolink Committee Report, which are anticipated to have no or very limited additional costs. These include;
- increasing the number of trains running through Manchester Victoria by linking services which currently terminate at Victoria from the east or west;
  - improving the structure of the Kirkby line service to better meet passenger requirements; and
  - improvements to the Goyt Valley peak service at busier stations on the route.

### **4. Recommendations**

- 4.1 A full set of recommendations appears at the start of this report.

**Michael Renshaw**  
**Bus and Rail Director**

**GREATER MANCHESTER INTEGRATED TRANSPORT AUTHORITY**

**REPORT FOR RESOLUTION**

**COMMITTEE:** Policy & Resources  
**DATE:** 21 January 2011  
**SUBJECT:** Rail Service Development Issues  
**REPORT OF:** Bus and Rail Director, GMPTE

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**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To seek approval for the extension of the trial period of previously approved service developments; and to provide an update on the development of Sunday rail services.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members are recommended to:

- iii) note the contents of the report;
- iv) approve the extension of the trial period for the Atherton Sunday service and Rose Hill weekday off-peak enhancement for an additional year; and
- v) note the cost estimates for the enhancement of Sunday services to Marple/Chinley and Stoke-on-Trent; and determine whether, given existing and future budgetary pressures, these enhancements should be progressed.

**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Previous reports to Policy & Resources and Rail & Metrolink Committees and the Authority held on file in the Authority's Policy Unit Office.

**CONTACT OFFICERS**

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. This report seeks approval for the extension of the trial period for the Atherton Sunday service and Rose Hill weekday off-peak enhancement for an additional year; and provides an update regarding the possibility of further improvements to local Sunday train services.
- 1.2 At the 26 November 2010 meeting of the Rail and Metrolink Networks Committee, Members were provided with an update on train service development issues and were appraised of advice on experimental services received from the Department for Transport.
- 1.3 Members were advised that because of the lengthy railway timetable planning process, it was not practicable to limit the trial period of any new service development funded by GMITA to only one year, as the railway timetable planning process has lead times of up to one year. This means that for trials of less than two years a decision must be made on the continuance (or not) of any new service within a few months of that service having commenced. This would mean that the effectiveness of the trial could not be adequately assessed.
- 1.4 It was therefore accepted by the Rail and Metrolink Committee that the standard experimental period for new rail service developments should therefore be for a minimum of two years. However, this does not preclude early termination of a trial if the change was clearly not fulfilling its purpose or meeting public demand.

## **2. Extension of existing service enhancements**

- 2.1 The 2011/12 cost of continuing to support the Atherton Sunday service and Rose Hill weekday off-peak enhancement services for a further year are currently estimated to be £105,000 and £18,000 respectively. These amounts are included within the draft budgets for 2011/12. Discussions are however ongoing with Northern to review and challenge the passenger and cost assumptions.

## **3. Enhancement of additional Sunday rail services**

- 3.1 The general policy of GMITA is that those lines which do not have a Sunday train service, and on which a demand can be identified, should, wherever practicable, be provided with one. This is particularly important given that levels of rail travel on Sundays often equate to, and sometimes exceed, that of weekdays.
- 3.2 The level of Sunday services varies considerably and the Rail and Metrolink Networks Committee (on 1 October 2010) requested that officers have detailed discussion with Northern Rail to enhance Sunday services on the busiest corridors.
- 3.3 Northern Rail has, as a result, subsequently provided cost estimates for Sunday train service enhancements on the Manchester–Marple/Chinley and the Manchester/Stockport/Bramhall/Stoke-on-Trent routes.

### **Manchester – Marple/Chinley**

- 3.4 Northern were requested to provide costs for the same level of local train service on winter Sundays from Manchester to Sheffield via Marple as is provided on Summer Sundays.
- 3.5 Various options were examined and the most cost effective solution appears to be to run the extra services between Manchester and Chinley only. This option would involve running 8 extra trains on each winter Sunday. Northern Rail has provided costs for this option. The total net financial support costs required from GMITA to the end of the current Northern Rail franchise in 2013 would be approximately £75,000. The current estimated cost profile is as follows:

- 2011/12 - £13,600
- 2012/13 - £41,600
- 2013/14 - £19,600

An alternative, or additional option, would be to introduce 16 additional trains each Sunday between Manchester and Marple throughout the year. This would give a half hourly frequency. The total net financial support costs required from GMITA to the end of the current Northern Rail franchise in 2013 would be approximately £77,000. The current estimated cost profile is as follows:

- 2011/12 - £12,800
- 2012/13 - £43,500
- 2013/14 - £20,600

### **Manchester – Macclesfield – Stoke-on-Trent**

- 3.6 Northern were requested to provide costs for to supplement the existing Sunday train service to Macclesfield via Stockport and Bramhall; and to increase it from 3 to 5 local trains in each direction. The total net financial support costs required from GMITA to the end of the current Northern Rail franchise in 2013 would be approximately £38,000. The current estimated cost profile is as follows:

- 2011/12 - £ 9,500
- 2012/13 - £19,700
- 2013/14 - £ 8,700

- 3.7 These service supplementations would bring appreciable passenger benefits and support the GMITA stated objective to improve Sunday train services. Neighbouring authorities have been asked to indicate whether they are in a position to make appreciable contributions to services that benefit their residents as much as they do GM residents. Members are requested to determine whether, given existing and future budgetary pressures, these enhancements should be progressed.

3.8 If Members do consider that they wish to support the services financially it should be borne in mind that the availability of funds would have to be reviewed in the context of the overall budget settlement in February.

#### **4. Other potential service enhancements**

4.1 Officers are continuing to pursue with Northern Rail a number of service improvements, as set out in the October Rail and Metrolink Committee Report, which are anticipated to have no or very limited additional costs. These include;

- increasing the number of trains running through Manchester Victoria by linking services which currently terminate at Victoria from the east or west;
- improving the structure of the Kirkby line service to better meet passenger requirements; and
- improvements to the Goyt Valley peak service at busier stations on the route.

#### **5. Department for Transport revenue share**

5.1. The Northern Rail Franchise Agreement requires that 40% of all additional Northern revenue over and above a threshold is paid to the DfT. Northern's revenues are such that all additional revenue is now subject to the 40% topslice to DfT. GMPTE officers have argued that this provision is inappropriate for services that are part-funded by the ITA. As a result, the DfT has therefore been asked to waive their 40% revenue share agreement for all GMITA funded service enhancements.

5.2 DfT has indicated recently that they are prepared to consider, on a case by case basis, the relaxation of this provision. Officers are involved in continuing discussions with DfT to finalise the position on this issue.

#### **6. Recommendations**

6.1 A full set of recommendations appears at the start of this report.

**Michael Renshaw**  
**Bus and Rail Director**