

Consultation Question	Response
<p>Q1: In looking at the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on the decision about whether or not to implement the Proposed Franchising Scheme, TfGM has used a number of scenarios which illustrate a wide range of potential longer-term outcomes for travel demand in Greater Manchester. Do you have any comments on this scenario-based approach?</p>	<p>Stockport Council supports the use of the scenario based approach to consider the potential long term trends for travel in Greater Manchester, particularly in light of Covid-19. Stockport Council recognises that Covid-19 has and continues to have a major impact on public transport usage and behaviours. As bus travel is only one part of the transport network, it is important that the impacts of other interventions and investments in the transport network (i.e. through delivery of the MCF programme and Clean Air Plan) be considered as part of the scenarios when looking at the potential impacts of Covid-19 on bus services.</p>
<p>Q2: Do you have any comments on the conclusion that the Proposed Franchising Scheme is likely to perform better than the partnership option in achieving GMCA's objectives, notwithstanding Covid-19?</p>	<p>The evidence put forward in the report suggests that the Proposed Franchising Scheme best achieves the GMCA and local authority objectives.</p> <p>Whilst the partnership option would improve the existing customer experience of the bus service in Greater Manchester, it would not provide the flexibility to manage the network to support the wider Greater Manchester Objectives. The economic benefit is also outweighed by the Proposed Franchised Scheme.</p> <p>Stockport Council acknowledges that previous partnership working has provided improvements in the borough on key routes.</p> <p>As Stockport is in the last phase of the franchising process, Stockport Council would like to work with TfGM to understand the phasing profile and how this correlates with the realisation of benefits from this approach. This includes opportunities to realise benefits sooner, and to manage any risks.</p> <p>Alongside TfGM, Stockport Council would want to ensure that there is no deterioration of services in sub-area C during the transition period, especially with Stockport borough entering into the agreement at the latest date. Stockport Council would like to work with TfGM from an early stage to jointly develop a plan to manage services that continued to operate.</p> <p>There is also a clear opportunity for any franchising activity to coincide and support wider efforts to electrify the bus fleet and contribute to air quality improvements. Stockport Council would like to work</p>

	with TfGM to understand how the proposed timescales for bus franchising fit in with the desire to electrify the bus fleet and replace or retrofit non-compliant buses.
Q3: Do you have any comments on the consideration of the impact of Covid-19 on the value for money of the Proposed Franchising Scheme and partnership option?	<p>Stockport Council notes that the latest consultation report identifies the challenges of future funding of the bus industry because of Covid but this is not considered a reason for pausing franchising. We hope that approval of any scheme by government will be supported by additional funding support and investment.</p> <p>The Scenario analysis highlights the importance that the franchise specifications must include suitable uncertainty management strategies to address any resilience issues which may arise in respect to value for money. As part of this, Stockport Council would like to work with TfGM to put in place monitoring of those areas without the franchise in the early phases to ensure that benefits are realised early and any risks minimised.</p>
Q4: Do you have any comments on the conclusion that the commercial arrangements described in the Assessment for franchising and the partnership option remain appropriate, notwithstanding Covid-19?	<p>As stated in the Council's previous consultation response, Stockport Council supports the strategy and proposed mix of large and small/medium contracts as it provides continuity and depth of experience for managing the larger contracts and economies of scale whilst the use of small/medium sized contracts encourages other operators to develop in this field after bringing innovation to the market.</p> <p>The Council also supports the proposal to franchise school services on a resource basis rather than as part of large or small franchises to enable greater flexibility to respond to changing pupil demand (subject to statutory requirements relating to SEND school transport provision in particular). The Council would like to continue to work with TfGM to deliver a coordinated approach between dedicated school services and the wider bus network so that provision for pupils is as comprehensive as possible in all areas, and that there continues to be a coordination of school bus service provision with wider activities around cycling and walking improvements around schools.</p>
Q5: Do you have any comments on the affordability to GMCA of the Proposed Franchising Scheme and partnership option in the light of Covid-19?	Stockport Council would like to actively work with TfGM to monitor those areas without the franchise in the early phases to protect services...and identify any package of measures needed to support this. This should be factored into the financial case for the proposals, albeit the exact costs will not be known at this stage.
Q6: Do you have any comments on the approach to the transition and implementation of the Proposed Franchising	Franchising provides a positive opportunity for communities to be more closely involved in decision making around bus services, and for local accountability to increased. The Council is fully supportive of this and would like to work closely with TfGM to identify mechanisms through which this can be achieved.

<p>Scheme, including the proposed approach to managing the risks associated with Covid-19 (as set out in the Management Case of the Covid-19 Impact on Bus Franchising Report) and whether TfGM would be able to manage and implement a partnership on behalf of GMCA, notwithstanding Covid-19?</p>	<p>As Stockport is in the later phases of the roll out of franchising, Stockport Council would like to work with TfGM to review the potential impact on bus companies and their employees before franchising comes into effect in our area and how local staff can be supported.</p>
<p>Q7: Do you have any comments on the conclusions of the Covid-19 Impact on Bus Franchising Report about how Covid-19 is likely to affect the impacts of the Proposed Franchising Scheme, partnership and Do Minimum options on (a) passengers, (b) operators, (c) GMCA and (d) wider society?</p>	<p>Travel to and from Stockport to neighbouring authority areas beyond the GM boundary is a key feature of the transport system in Stockport. The Council would like to work with TfGM to look at the impact of the proposed franchising scheme and any transitional period on cross boundary services coming in and out of Greater Manchester. This is an especially pertinent issue for residents who rely on buses for both commuting and leisure trips.</p> <p>Stockport Council would want to work actively with TfGM to ensure that cross-border journeys that can be made now will still be able to be made once the franchising model is in place and during any transitional period, particularly if operators running these services are impacted by the patronage and financial challenges caused by Covid-19. A potential disjuncture between services in GM and those crossing the border to other areas is likely to be exacerbated by the impacts of Covid-19 and Stockport Council would like to work with TfGM to understand the actions which could be taken to positively support cross boundary services.</p>
<p>Q8: Do you consider that the Proposed Franchising Scheme (attached at Appendix 3 of the Consultation Document) would not require any further modification beyond those already contemplated and included in the draft scheme?</p>	<p>Stockport Council is supportive of the Proposed Franchising Scheme set out in Appendix 3 and welcomes early engagement and dialogue with TfGM to review opportunities around realising benefits sooner, increasing community and Council involvement, and supporting cross-boundary services.</p>
<p>Q9A: Did you respond to the previous consultation?</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Q9B: If you did respond to the previous consultation, please explain in what ways, if at all, your views about the introduction of the Proposed Franchising Scheme have</p>	<p>The Council's overall view has not changed since the last consultation and the Council welcomes early engagement and dialogue with TfGM to review opportunities around realising benefits sooner, increasing community and Council involvement, and supporting cross-boundary services.</p>

changed as a result of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. If your views have not changed then there is no need to provide any additional information.	
Q10: Taking everything into account, do you have any comments on the conclusion that this is the right time to make a decision about whether or not to proceed with the Proposed Franchising Scheme?	No
Q11A: To what extent do you support or oppose the introduction of the Proposed Franchising Scheme?	Stockport Council is supportive of the Proposed Franchising Scheme and welcomes early engagement and dialogue with TfGM to review opportunities around realising benefits sooner, increasing community and Council involvement, and supporting cross-boundary services.
Q11B: Why do you say this?	N/A
Q12: Finally, do you have any other comments you want to make	No