



Consultation response

## **What can a mayor do for your city?**

Department of Communities and Local  
Government

**December 2011**

---

Jonathan Bray  
Director

*pteg* Support Unit  
Wellington House  
40-50 Wellington Street  
Leeds – LS1 2DE  
0113 251 7445  
info@pteg.net



## Content

1. Summary .....	1
2. Public Transport in the major conurbations .....	2
3. Efficiency and VfM Considerations .....	6
4. Mayors and Transport .....	6

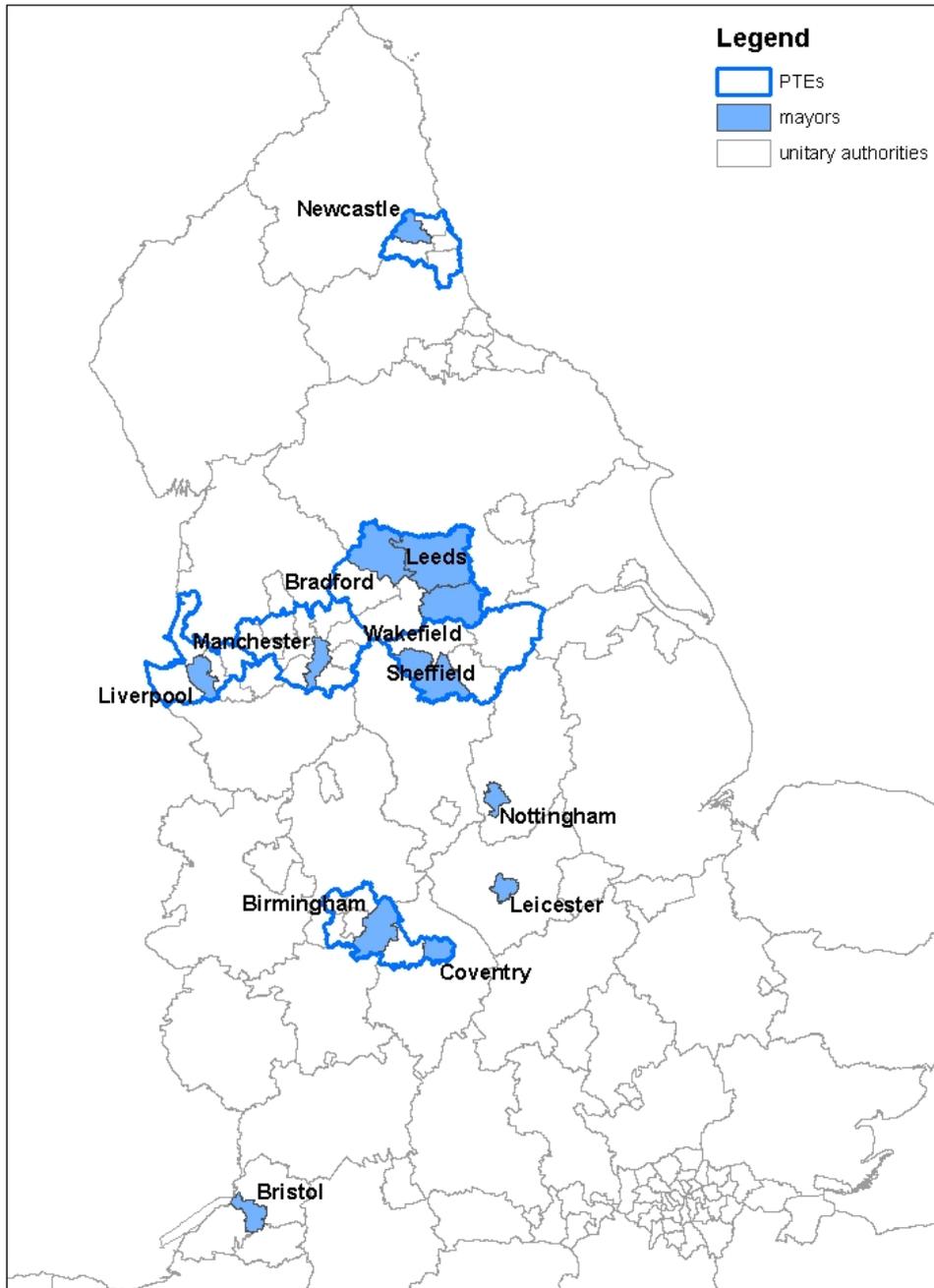
## 1. Summary

- 1.1. Nine of the cities where there will be referenda for Mayors are in the Metropolitan (“Met”) areas which are served by Integrated Transport Authorities (ITAs) and their Passenger Transport Executives (PTEs). The Met areas, like London, are large conurbations made up of a series of Metropolitan Districts.
- 1.2. These large conurbations have transport networks and commuting patterns that fit with their economic geography. Often, as in London, there will be continuous built up areas that cross District boundaries. Strategic highways, bus routes, trams and rail services will also often be cross District.
- 1.3. There are very strong economic and transport planning reasons why these functions should be retained at the city region level (ie ITA and PTE level). In addition, the removal of such collaborative arrangements for key functions at the city region level (concessionary fares administration, bus shelters and interchanges, supported bus services) would also have knock on effects for those Districts that remained within the pooled arrangements in that they would bear the additional costs that would arise from lost economies of scale.
- 1.4. However, although in our view public transport powers should remain at the city region scale, this in no way precludes any elected Mayor from pursuing a transport agenda for the area they represent. Not least because these aspirations are likely to be outcome based (ie. focussing on particular schemes or a pledge on fares for example) rather than administrative based (eg. wanting to administer bus stops or concessionary fares).

## 2. Public Transport in the major conurbations

- 2.1. Nine of the cities where there will be referenda for Mayors are in the Metropolitan (“Met”) areas which are served by Integrated Transport Authorities (ITAs) and their Passenger Transport Executives (PTEs).

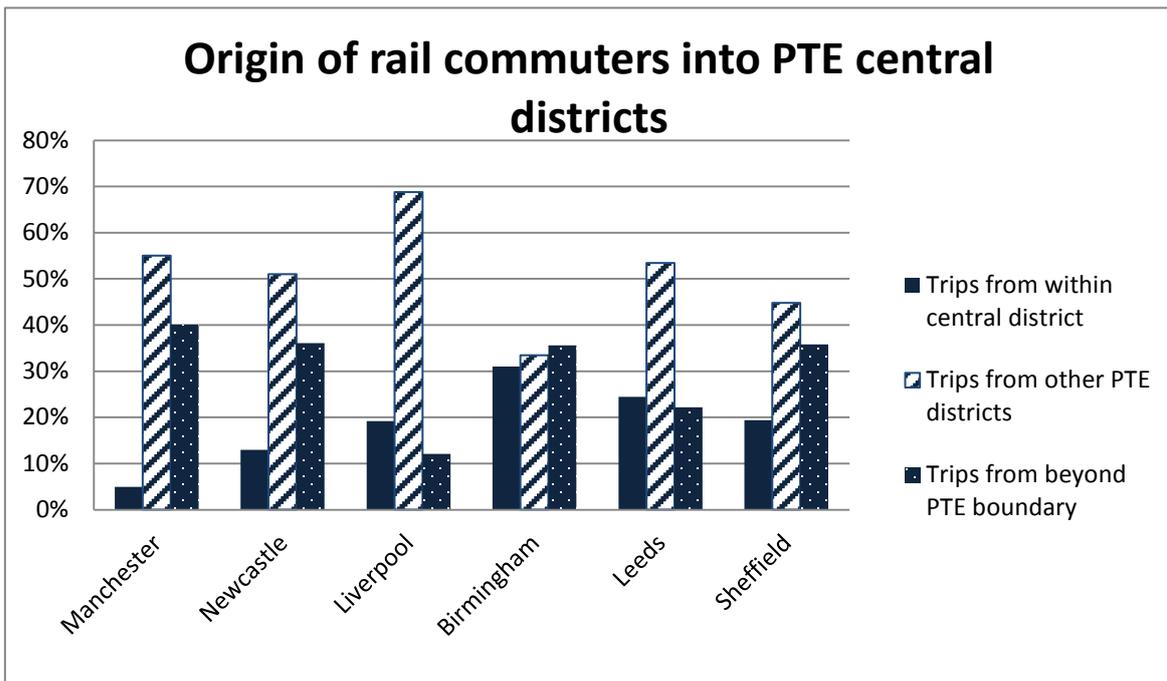
### Local authorities, mayors and PTE areas



- 2.2. The powers to plan, develop and administer public transport in the six largest city regions currently sit at the level of the conurbation (as does responsibility for the overall Local Transport Plan). This is done through Integrated Transport Authorities (ITAs) made up of elected representatives of constituent Districts whose policies are carried out by Passenger Transport Executives (PTEs). These effective collaborative arrangements reflect the fact that the large conurbations have transport networks and commuting patterns that fit with their economic geography.
- 2.3. This logic is also reflected in the Government’s creation of LEPs whose focus is on economic development. In the Met areas, all LEPs have been created to address economies that are always larger than single Districts, and in the majority of cases, map onto PTE areas. It is further reflected in the creation of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (approved by the current Government) which combines the strategic city region transport role of the PTE (now known as Transport for Greater Manchester) with wider and associated economic development functions specifically in order to help realise the full economic potential of the Greater Manchester conurbation.
- 2.4. Often, as in London, the Met areas will be continuous built up areas that cross District boundaries. Strategic highways, bus routes, trams and rail services will also often be cross District. For example all conurbation light rail and tram systems are cross-border, as are many bus routes. The table below shows how the majority of rail commuting crosses the boundary of the central district. The graph below that shows the origin of rail commuters into PTE central districts.

**Origin of rail commuting trips into central district**

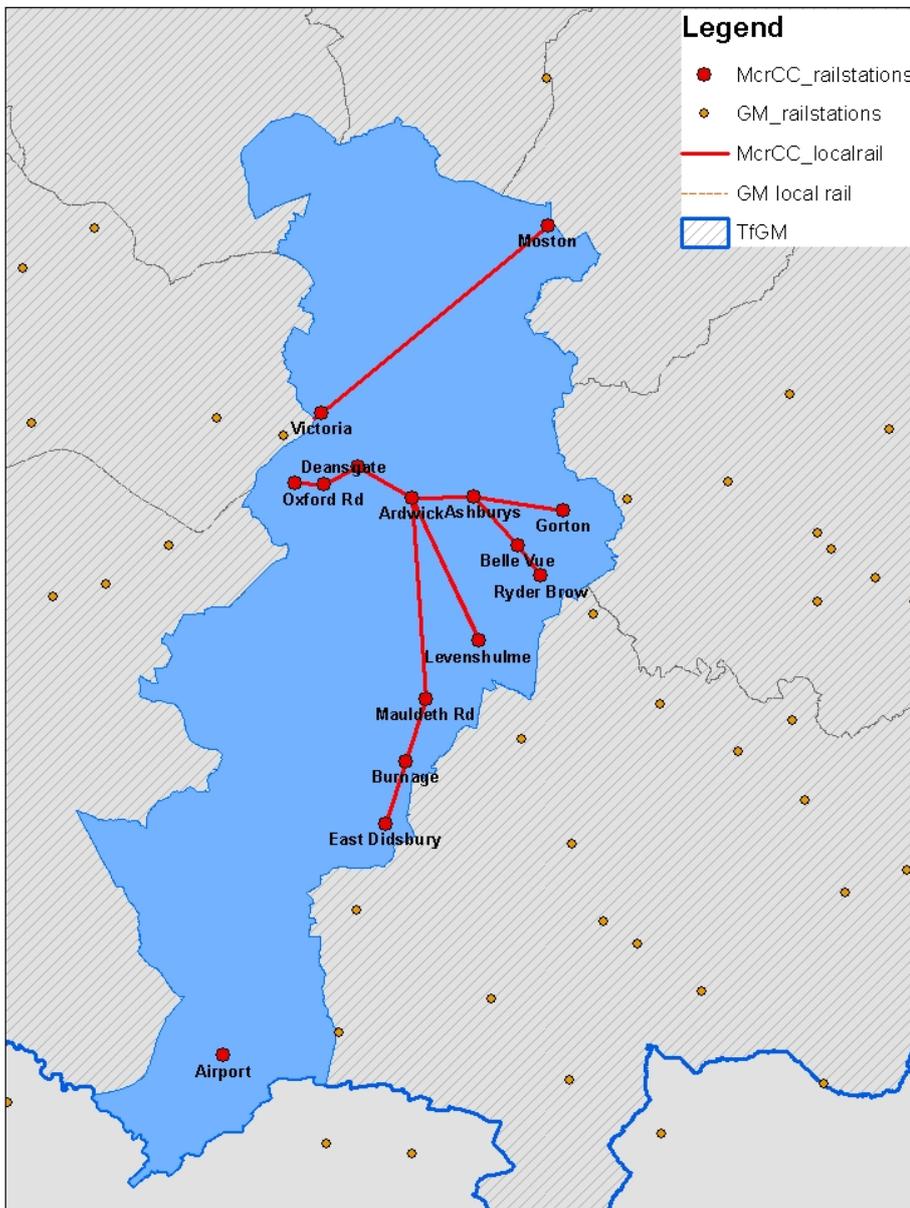
	Manchester	Newcastle	Liverpool	Birmingham	Leeds	Sheffield
Trips from within central district	5%	13%	19%	31%	24%	19%
Trips from other PTE districts	55%	51%	69%	33%	53%	45%
Trips from beyond PTE boundary	40%	36%	12%	36%	22%	36%

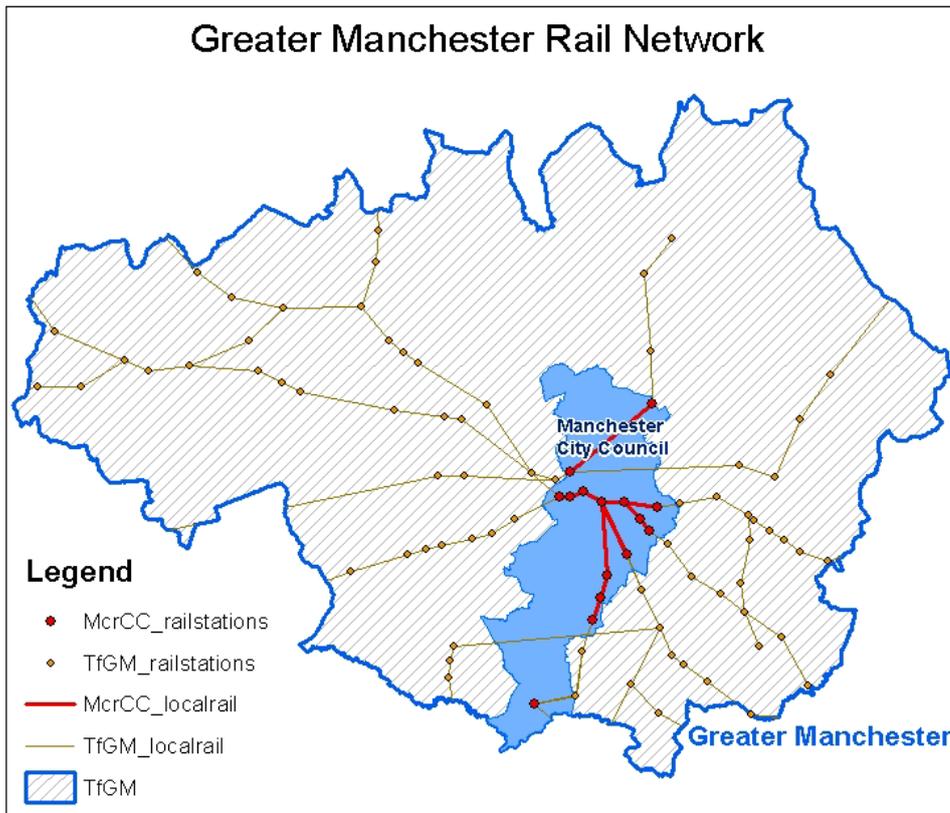


Source: Census 2001 Travel to Work Survey

2.5. The ITAs and their PTEs, have been very successful at developing and promoting local rail networks that have helped facilitate the growth in core city economies. They have done this at the city region scale by: investing in new and refurbished trains and stations; fares promotion and marketing campaigns; and investing in additional services. A District level approach could not achieve the scale of impact that has been seen in our main conurbations as a core city District typically contains the major terminating stations or hubs and a handful of inner city stations, but not the commuter stations that shape travel patterns from an origin perspective. The map below illustrates the point for Manchester.

### Manchester City Council rail network





- 2.6. As the maps show the Manchester City rail network is in not of a meaningful scale to develop or manage when compared with the Greater Manchester network. It should also be noted that the core city District itself is often also a key hub for the wider national rail network and local influence over that station will always need to be balanced with wider regional and national need.
- 2.7. The same background has shaped our success as promoters of light rail schemes, with the majority of light rail kilometres in operation outside London lying in ITA/PTE areas.
- 2.8. Similarly, we have strong evidence to demonstrate the impact of our collective power in developing working arrangements with major bus operating companies that can only be achieved through the economies of scale that a full conurbation can command.
- 2.9. Breaking up the oversight, investment and promotion of those networks would clearly result in increased costs, bureaucracy and lost opportunities.
- 2.10. Given the inter-relationships between City Region District economies, transport networks and travel patterns, the Local Transport Plan is currently the formal responsibility of the ITA and PTE. However, prior to this change (in the Local Transport Act 2008) in the Mets the Local Transport Plan was still produced in the form of a single city region-wide document. This reduced administrative complexities; enables trade-offs between District priorities to be managed in a cohesive way and allows for focus on city region-wide priorities (such as light rail systems, or bus priority networks).
- 2.11. Therefore, as in London there is a compelling case for planning, developing and managing public transport at the conurbation level. Just as it would not be sensible to carve out these responsibilities for London's core, it would be similarly counter-productive for wider efficiency and wider economic goals to do so in the next tier of major city regions.

### 3. Efficiency and VfM Considerations

- 3.1. The Government supports the pooling of local authority service provision across local authority boundaries in order to deliver efficiencies. For example when the London Boroughs of Hammersmith and Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea, and Westminster agreed in principle to merge their services, Secretary of State Eric Pickles said: *'These councils are leading the way in local government and voters will expect others to get on board and follow suit. This is exactly the sort of innovation that will help councils to protect hard-working families and the most vulnerable. By sharing back-office services, they'll be able to protect the front line - and even improve the choice and services that's on offer to local residents.'*
- 3.2. This pooling of services is not new in the Metropolitan areas in that it already happens (via the ITA/PTE) in key areas including:
  - bus stop, shelter and bus station infrastructure and maintenance
  - tendered bus service network specification and funding
  - preparation and brokering of the Local Transport Plan
  - concessionary travel administration and funding
  - public transport information (by phone, internet and hard copy)
  - rail network development, funding and oversight
  - light rail system development and management
  - ferries and tunnels (in some PTEs)
  - promotion of public transport and cross-sector coordination with health, employment and education provision
  - local public transport infrastructure scheme planning, funding and development
- 3.3. If any of these functions were to be taken over by one or Mayors within a city region then it is difficult to see how this could be done without increasing overall costs. An additional financial burden would also fall on the remaining Districts who would then face proportionally higher costs for maintaining the remaining pooled service.
- 3.4. **Our estimate of the additional administrative cost of providing a PTE's services at a District level at between £40 and £60 million pounds** (costs vary due to the differing sizes and number of constituent Districts of each PTE).

### 4. Mayors and Transport

- 4.1. Transport will no doubt be a significant issue in any Mayoral contests. It's safe to assume that Mayoral candidates will set out significant transport aspirations in their manifestos. However, this does not require the breaking up of existing Met area transport arrangements in order to facilitate these aspirations which are most likely to be outcome focussed (eg in favour of specific schemes, or objectives on fares regimes rather than administrative (eg who has management responsibility for bus shelters).