

News story: Grayling and Burnham hail Greater Manchester tram network as model for new opportunities

- Transport Secretary and Mayor celebrate success of Metrolink tram network and commit to working on further proposals for expansion.
- Grayling underlines importance of close collaboration with Mayor to deliver HS2, Northern Powerhouse Rail and bus reform.
- Range of ideas for expansion of Greater Manchester tram network, including innovative tram-train, could see greater local control for Transport for Greater Manchester.

A shared commitment to expanding the Greater Manchester tram network through tram-train services, enabling faster, more reliable journeys across the network and cutting congestion, will be welcomed by the Transport Secretary and Greater Manchester Mayor today (25 January 2019).

Chris Grayling will announce on a visit to the new Wharfside Metrolink stop – part of the £350 million Trafford Park Line extension supported by government through the Greater Manchester Devolution Deal – that the Department for Transport, Network Rail and Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) are working to explore a range of proposals for expansion.

This could include an innovative tram-train system in Greater Manchester and underlines a shared agreement on the opportunity for greater local control of transport services. Proposals will be brought forward by TfGM before the summer.

Both the Transport Secretary and the Mayor will also agree on the need for a positive, collaborative approach to help unlock the potential of HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail, and continue to make real progress in reforming Greater Manchester's bus network.

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling said:

Metrolink has been transformative for Greater Manchester and I want to see the network expand.

A Greater Manchester tram-train also has the potential to seamlessly integrate our existing rail and tram tracks and services. We will work closely to explore proposals which would see Transport for Greater Manchester running more services, underlining our belief in greater local control.

Greater Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham said:

Greater Manchester is a growing city-region, but our transport network and infrastructure is holding us back. The people of Greater Manchester deserve a transport system that works for us both now and in the future.

Greater Manchester leaders recently shared our vision for the future of the city-region including our plan for jobs, homes and growth. Bringing innovative tram-train to Greater Manchester with greater local control and better integration of our transport system is a key part of this vision and I'm pleased that the government supports this ambition.

I also welcome the government's commitment to working together to deliver bus reform and secure the best possible outcomes for Greater Manchester and the north from both Northern Powerhouse Rail and High Speed 2.

Using existing rail and tram infrastructure, a Greater Manchester tram-train system could increase rail capacity, reduce congestion, improve air quality and deliver more seamless, frequent journeys for passengers across the city-region.