

**Manchester City Council
Report for Resolution**

Report To: Executive – 30 June 2010
Subject: Summary of Cross City Bus Consultation
Report of: The Chief Executive

Summary

This report informs the Executive of the consultation exercises undertaken regarding the Cross City Bus scheme, summarises the responses and consequential scheme modifications and outlines the next steps.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to:

- 1 Note the extensive public consultation carried out as part of the Cross City Bus scheme, and the main issues raised in the consultation
 - 2 Note the proposed changes to the scheme that respond to these issues
 - 3 Note that the a report on the outcome of the public consultation will also be submitted to the GMITA Capital Projects Committee on 2 July
 - 4 Re-affirm the Executive's support for the scheme
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Wards Affected: All, but particularly those containing or adjacent to elements of the scheme including: City centre, Miles Platting and Newton Heath, Cheetham, Harpurhey, Crumpsell, Charlestown, Higher Blackley, Hulme, Ardwick, Moss Side, Rusholme, Fallowfield, Withington, Old Moat, Didsbury West and Didsbury East.

Community Strategy Spine	Summary of the contribution to the strategy
Performance of the economy of the region and sub region	The Cross City Bus scheme will provide significantly improved connectivity across the Regional Centre. In particular it will provide enhanced public transport access to employment and services, and specifically the education and healthcare opportunities afforded in the Oxford Road area from across the conurbation.
Reaching full potential in education and employment	The scheme will provide enhanced accessibility to the Higher Education precinct and the Central Manchester Hospital complex to a large number of residents.

Individual and collective self esteem – mutual respect	N/A
Neighbourhoods of Choice	By enhancing sustainable connectivity and the accessibility of employment, education and healthcare provision, the scheme will support neighbourhoods across the city

Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

Financial Consequences – Revenue

None

Financial Consequences – Capital

None

Contact Officers:

Howard Bernstein	h.bernstein@manchester.gov.uk	0161 234 3006
Simon Warburton	s.warburton@manchester.gov.uk	0161 234 3775

1 BACKGROUND

1.1 This report details the findings of the public consultation exercise on the proposed Cross City Bus Package which was undertaken between 2nd October and 24th December 2009.

1.2 This scheme is being promoted as part of the Greater Manchester Transport Fund and developed by GMPTE, in partnership with the relevant highway authorities; namely Manchester City Council, Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council and Salford City Council. It is designed to implement bus priority measures to provide the scope for cross-city bus services across Manchester city centre using three of Greater Manchester's busiest bus corridors:

- Oxford Road/Wilmslow Road – from Parris Wood in Didsbury to Manchester City Centre.
- East Lancashire Road (A580)/A6 (Salford) – from the Boothstown area just beyond the M60 junction to A6 entry into Manchester City Centre
- Manchester New Road/Rochdale Road (A664) – from Middleton to Manchester City Centre.

In doing so, the scheme would open up significantly improved opportunities for access to employment and services, in particular the education and healthcare opportunities afforded in the Oxford Road area.

1.3 In addition to these corridors, the proposals include a series of bus priority measures in Manchester city centre, designed to enable bus services to travel between the three corridors above as quickly and efficiently as possible with reliable journey times. The GMPTE and bus operators are of the view that such reliability of operation, throughout the day, is critical to ensuring that high quality bus services are able to operate on cross-city routes.

1.4 Programme Entry for the scheme was achieved with DfT in March 2010, and was to be followed by a Conditional / Full Approval submission in summer 2010. Further to the announcement of the Government spending review this will now be deferred until at least October 2010.

2 THE CONSULTATION

2.1 The full Cross City Package consultation was carried out during the twelve week period prior to Christmas 2009 with a further four week period until 22nd January 2010 being utilised to allow local MPs and ward councillors to make further representations on behalf of their constituents. The consultation engaged with local residents, businesses and road users with 74,281 brochures being delivered to properties within 400m of the Cross City Bus Package routes.

2.2 The aims of the consultation were to:

- Provide information and raise public awareness of the proposals

- Provide the opportunity for the public and stakeholders to comment on the proposals
- Identify areas where there were likely to be pockets of objection
- Yield information from local knowledge that would usefully inform the final design of the scheme

2.2 The consultation was designed and delivered by specialist independent consultants commissioned by GMPTE, with reference to the Government's Code of Practice on Consultation (Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform, 2008) with the aim of engaging with as wide a spectrum of residents, local interests and stakeholders as possible. With this in mind, a range of communication media was used and these are detailed in the Appendix 1 to this report.

3 OVERALL RESULTS OF CONSULTATION

3.1 In total, across the proposed area as a whole, 1898 responses were received, detailing the public's issues, views and priorities for improvement. 1,600 feedback forms and online questionnaires were completed and returned to GMPTE. A further 151 emails, 87 letters and 60 text message responses were also received. The consultation website received a total of 20,670 page views from 4,894 visitors during the 12-week consultation period.

3.2 This represents a significant number and provides a firm basis for drawing conclusions from the consultation and formulating potential amendments to the scheme. Overall it corresponds to a response rate of approximately 2.5%, which is similar to previous bus priority consultations that GMPTE has carried out.

3.3 The total response yielded 2,295 individual 'comments' which have been analysed and are informing the detailed design of the proposals. In terms of the demographic characteristics of the respondents, the results indicated:

- 97% of respondents lived close to the route. 3% owned a business close to the route
- An approximately equal gender balance was evident amongst respondents
- A significant number of responses were received from all age groups. However, more responses were received from older people, with 32.7% of respondents aged over 60, and 56.6% over 45.
- The majority of respondents (56.1%) indicated that the bus was their most commonly used mode of transport along the affected routes
- Most respondents stated that their most common reason for travelling along the route to be either travelling to work (37.5%), accessing district/city shopping and leisure facilities (27.7%) or accessing shops, businesses and amenities along the route (18.2%)
- 1,511 of the 1,600 feedback form respondents indicated which of the four affected routes they used most frequently. Approximately half of these (49.4%) indicated that they most frequently used the Oxford Road/Wilmslow Road corridor. The remaining 50.6% was split

approximately equally between Manchester City Centre (19.0%), A580/A6 (17.4%) and A664 (14.2%).

3.4 Of the 2,295 individual comments, 1,024 concerned specific locations along the routes. These can be broken down between the four routes as follows:

- 107 comments were made along Manchester New Road/Rochdale Road (A664)
- 586 comments were made about Oxford Road/Wilmslow Road
- 148 comments were made along East Lancashire Road (A580)
- 183 comments were made about a number of locations within Manchester city centre

3.5 The broad themes arising from the consultation overall were:

- Concern over existing levels of congestion. 184 comments.
- Specifically supporting the overall scheme. 98 comments.
- Lack of existing bus services. 81 comments.
- Concerns over parking issues along the routes. 79 comments.
- Issues over the interaction between buses and cyclists along the dedicated cycle lane on Oxford Rd. 34 comments.
- Outright opposition to the scheme. 21 comments.
- Concerns about the negative impact of vehicles 'rat running' through residential areas. 13 comments.

3.6 In addition to the direct consultation responses, 95 responses were received via Graham Stringer MP, which contained the same form of words: 'I am very concerned about the Cross City Travel Proposals and believe that the consultation period should be extended for two months and that full traffic impact assessments should be carried out on every community that is likely to be affected by the proposals'. A further ten letters were received through Graham Stringer's constituency office dealing mainly with the consultation period and the potential for rat-running.

3.7 The number and spread of responses demonstrated that the consultation process was effective in communicating the proposals across the affected areas. Given the public consultation was designed in accordance with the Government's Code of Practice on Consultation, it was not appropriate to extend the public consultation beyond the twelve week period. The points made in the ten letters have been taken into account in the ongoing design development of the scheme and are the subject of further public consultations.

3.8 The specific comments received by route are considered in more detail below.

4 MANCHESTER NEW ROAD/ROCHDALE ROAD (A664)

4.1 Of those 107 comments made about specific locations on the A664 route, the majority (96) were concerned with locations north of the Factory Lane / Moston Lane junction. A large proportion of these referred to concerns regarding potential congestion and loss of parking.

- 4.2 Representations were also received from Graham Stringer, MP for Manchester Blackley, regarding a number of concerns about the proposals on Rochdale Road. These centred on concerns regarding loss of parking, the potential diversion of traffic onto parallel residential streets and the regulatory arrangements for bus services. Mr Stringer also forwarded around 200 pro-forma style responses slips from his constituents expressing similar concerns. The Executive has engaged in separate correspondence with Mr Stringer with a view to addressing these concerns.

5 OXFORD ROAD/WILMSLOW ROAD

- 5.1 Of the 586 comments concerning the Oxford Road / Wilmslow Road route, the majority focused on specific issues on Oxford Road (196 comments) or in Rusholme (178 comments). These most commonly highlighted specific junction locations and roads that respondents felt would need to be considered, traffic flow/congestion issues and safety measures for cyclists.
- 5.2 The proposals for a bus lane between Cotton Lane and Palatine Road in Withington resulted in some concerns being expressed during the consultation. Further to this, discussions were also undertaken with Withington Civic Society. The Society expressed the view that there are some concerns within the community in Withington that the area is already heavily congested, that Wilmslow Road has insufficient capacity to accommodate a bus lane, and that the changes would result in disproportionate negative effects on traffic flow.
- 5.3 A small number of comments also raised concerns about the potential for through traffic to divert from the Oxford Road corridor to Lloyd Street, through Moss Side. Representations were also received on this issue from Tony Lloyd, MP for Manchester Central, and a number of ward Councillors. Separate meetings with Mr Lloyd and local Members have taken place and a scheme has been designed to address these concerns.

6 EAST LANCASHIRE ROAD (A580)

- 6.1 Of the 148 comments made about specific locations on the A580/A6 route, the majority (115) concerned the section of the A580 between the M60 and the A6. Many of these comments referred to cycle facilities and bus lanes. It should be noted that this area sits outside that governed by Manchester City Council, but is reported simply for completeness.

7 CITY CENTRE

- 7.1 The 183 comments made about specific locations in Manchester city centre were wide ranging and many did not relate specifically to the Cross City proposals. The majority (106) concerned roads in the southern part of the city centre, particularly Princess Street, Whitworth Street and Sackville Street. These often focused on the need to consider improvements to help the city centre manage with increased traffic flows from Upper Brook Street.

- 7.2 A number of concerns were raised by residents of Sackville Street that the proposals will increase levels of traffic on Sackville Street, and in particular the impact that this could have in terms of traffic noise due to the poor road surface on Sackville Street.
- 7.3 The remainder of the 2295 individual comments concerned issues which were not location specific. These can be broken down as follows:
- 473 of these were classed as general comments regarding the proposals which were not specific to a particular location
 - 798 were comments relating to bus services and the facilities currently provided for bus passengers. These included 60 comments received by text message.

8 NEXT STEPS – SCHEME REVISIONS IN RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Officers have sought to ensure that, where appropriate, the scheme has been reviewed to meet the needs identified through consultation. The issues raised in the consultation have been discussed between the GMPTE and the relevant local authorities highway sections, including the City Council, who are responsible for the detailed scheme design. A number of changes are proposed as a result of this process and are detailed below.

Rochdale Road

- 8.2 In response to the issues raised by Graham Stringer MP and local residents on Rochdale Road, the following amendments to the proposals have been made along the Rochdale Road corridor:
- Removal of the central reservation on Rochdale Road between the Hilldale Avenue and Victoria Avenue junctions. This will enable the proposed northbound bus lane to be accommodated whilst retaining the existing parking provision on the footway on the western side of the road.
 - Reductions in the length of a number of bus lanes on Rochdale Road
 - Providing some additional marked parking bays
- 8.3 In order to offset the slight reduction in the scheme benefits which results from the above amendments, highway engineers are currently reviewing two further junction improvements to provide additional capacity:
- At the Rochdale Road / Factory Lane / Moston Lane junction; and
 - At the Rochdale Road / Victoria Avenue junction
- 8.4 In both cases, these additions to the scheme will increase capacity at the junctions concerned, thus improving journey times for both buses and general traffic, providing additional benefits to the scheme and maximising the value for money which it delivers.

A580/A6 Corridor

- 8.5 The majority of comments received regarding the East Lancashire Road related to deficiencies in the current bus service and the potential for additional congestion that could be caused by the Cross City proposals. The proposals on the A580 have previously been the subject of a widespread public consultation as part of the Leigh – Salford – Manchester Busway proposals and concerns and comments raised as part of that consultation had already been incorporated into the scheme prior to the Cross City consultation. There are no significant changes to the proposed measures on the A580 as public concerns have been addressed during the previous consultation on these proposals.

Oxford Road / Wilmslow Road

- 8.6 Further to the concerns raised by Tony Lloyd MP and local councillors in Moss Side, a meeting was held with Tony Lloyd and ward councillors to discuss their concerns. This has resulted in the preparation of a traffic calming scheme to be implemented as part of the Cross City proposals on Lloyd Street in Moss Side between the junctions with Hart Road and Denmark Road. The scheme includes additional 20mph speed restrictions, gateway features, pedestrian crossings, formalised parking provision, speed cushions and kerb build outs. These measures will complement existing measures on Lloyd Street, and provide a traffic calmed area of approximately one mile in length. Traffic modelling forecasts that, with the full Cross City package in place, including the additional traffic calming measures, levels of traffic on Lloyd Street can be restricted to 2006 levels and traffic speeds will be reduced. Plans of these proposals will be made available to members on request.
- 8.7 Following the receipt of a number of concerns from residents in Withington, and the Withington Civic Society, regarding the proposed bus lane on Wilmslow Road between Cotton Lane and Palatine Road, this is no longer proposed to be constructed and this will have no material impact on the scheme benefits.
- 8.8 Consultation with the Corridor Manchester Partnership has emphasised the importance of improving east-west pedestrian connectivity in the Higher Education Precinct (HEP). As a result of this, additional opportunities have been taken to increase pedestrian permeability of Oxford Road through improved pedestrian crossing provision in the HEP.
- 8.9 In response to concerns raised by residents on Sackville Street in the city centre, it is now proposed to resurface the complete length of Sackville Street as part of the Cross City package.
- 8.91 The above amendments have been specifically targeted at those aspects of the scheme regarding concerns which were expressed by a number of respondents and which previously delivered the least benefit. Thus, the proposed revised scheme delivers high value for money, whilst addressing the principal concerns raised at the consultation. The extensive twelve week consultation generated significant interest from members of the public,

members, MP's, Corridor Manchester Partners, businesses and local interest groups. A large amount of effort has gone into responding to concerns, addressing issues and carrying out additional design and modelling work to resolve these.

9 MINI CONSULTATIONS

9.1 In addition to the GMPTE package-wide consultation, local "mini" consultation on scheme specifics has been undertaken by the Council's Highways Services Department, which can be summarised as follows.

Upper Brook Street

9.2 The mini-consultation for the Upper Brook street proposals commenced on Friday 15 January 2010, with a closing date of 29 January 2010. Late responses received by 10 February 2010 have also been included in the analysis. The consultation used a range of techniques to engage with members of the public. These included:

- Consultation leaflets and response slips distributed to a total of 1,588 properties.
- 35 Community Access Points, which were carefully selected local shops and amenities in the area, provided copies of the consultation leaflets and response slips.
- 10 (1m x 2m) advertising posters promoting the consultation were displayed at strategic points around Upper Brook Street.
- A half page colour advertisement was placed in the Manchester Evening News newspaper on Thursday 21 January 2010.
- A dedicated website (www.manchester.gov.uk/consultations) provided further information about the consultation, the opportunity to view detailed plans and the option to complete an online response slip.
- A telephone information line (0800 917 8808) was available for any further enquiries.

9.3 14 hard copy and 17 online response slips were completed and 9 emails were received. Some of the respondents who filled in response slips also emailed extra comments to the consultation. In total, there were 37 respondents.

Portland Street

9.4 The mini-consultation for the Portland Street proposals commenced on Friday 15 January 2010, with a closing date of 29 January 2010. Late responses received by 10 February 2010 have also been included in the analysis. The same range of techniques to engage with the public was used as for the Upper Brook Street Consultation with consultation leaflets and response slips being distributed to 488 properties.

9.5 4 hard copy and 4 online response slips were completed and 2 emails were received. Some of the respondents who filled in response slips also emailed extra comments to the consultation. In total, there were 10 respondents.

Rochdale Road

- 9.6 The mini-consultation for the Rochdale Road proposals were split into two sections. Thompson Street to Topley Street and between Blackley Fire Station and Victoria Avenue. The middle section of Rochdale Road from Topley Street to Blackley Fire Station is proposed to be the subject of a further mini-consultation. The two consultations took place between 5 March and 26 March 2010. Late responses received by Friday 2 April 2010 have also been included in the analysis. The same range of techniques to engage with the public was used as for the Upper Brook Street.
- 9.7 The two consultations took place between Friday 5 March and 26 March 2010. Late responses received by Friday 2 April 2010 have also been included in the analysis. The same range of techniques to engage with the public was used as for the Upper Brook Street Consultation with consultation leaflets and response slips being distributed to 1389 and 433 properties respectively.
- 9.8 In response to the Thompson Street to Topley Street consultation 7 hard copy response slips and 4 information line calls were received from a total of 11 respondents.
- 9.89 In response to the Blackley Fire Station to Victoria Avenue consultation 10 hard copy response slips, 4 online response slips, 5 information line calls and 1 email were received from a total of 20 respondents.
- 9.10 Detailed design work for the proposals is being undertaken by Highway Services, working with the GMPTE, who have taken into account comments raised and incorporated these into the design, where practical. . In developing the design work the Highways Services will ensure the best scheme outcomes are delivered taking account of highway users and local residents and businesses. Following the mini-consultations the formal Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) advertisement procedures are being carried out and once the statutory advertisement periods have ended, objections to the proposals will be considered through the standard process.

10 CONCLUSION

- 10.1 The Cross City Bus Package public consultation exercise was carried out over a twelve week period between October and December 2009. A further four week period followed this initial consultation to allow for local MP's and Ward Councillors to make further representation on behalf of their constituents. The level of response to the consultation was good, with a total of nearly 1900 responses being received via a variety of media. In addition to this, the consultation website took close to 5,000 hits, leading to over 20,000 page views during the consultation period.
- 10.2 The healthy level of response indicates that the approach adopted to the consultation was appropriate, and that a large number of local people and organisations were able to have their say regarding the proposals.

- 10.3 The consultation was not primarily intended to seek people's view on the merits of bus priority in general, but to identify specific areas of concern so that any problems could be minimised before designs were finalised. The feedback received has been extremely helpful in this regard.
- 10.4 A number of specific changes to the scheme are proposed as a result of the successful public consultation exercise. These amendments are described in section 8 of this report. They respond appropriately to the feedback received at the consultation and have been designed to maximise the value for money obtained from the scheme.
- 10.5 Since the completion of the consultation, GMPTE has been successful in obtaining 'Programme Entry' status for the Cross City proposals from the Department for Transport. GMPTE is now proposing to develop the scheme proposals as far as necessary within revised Government Major Scheme guidance to progress the scheme towards Full Approval, pending the Government spending review.

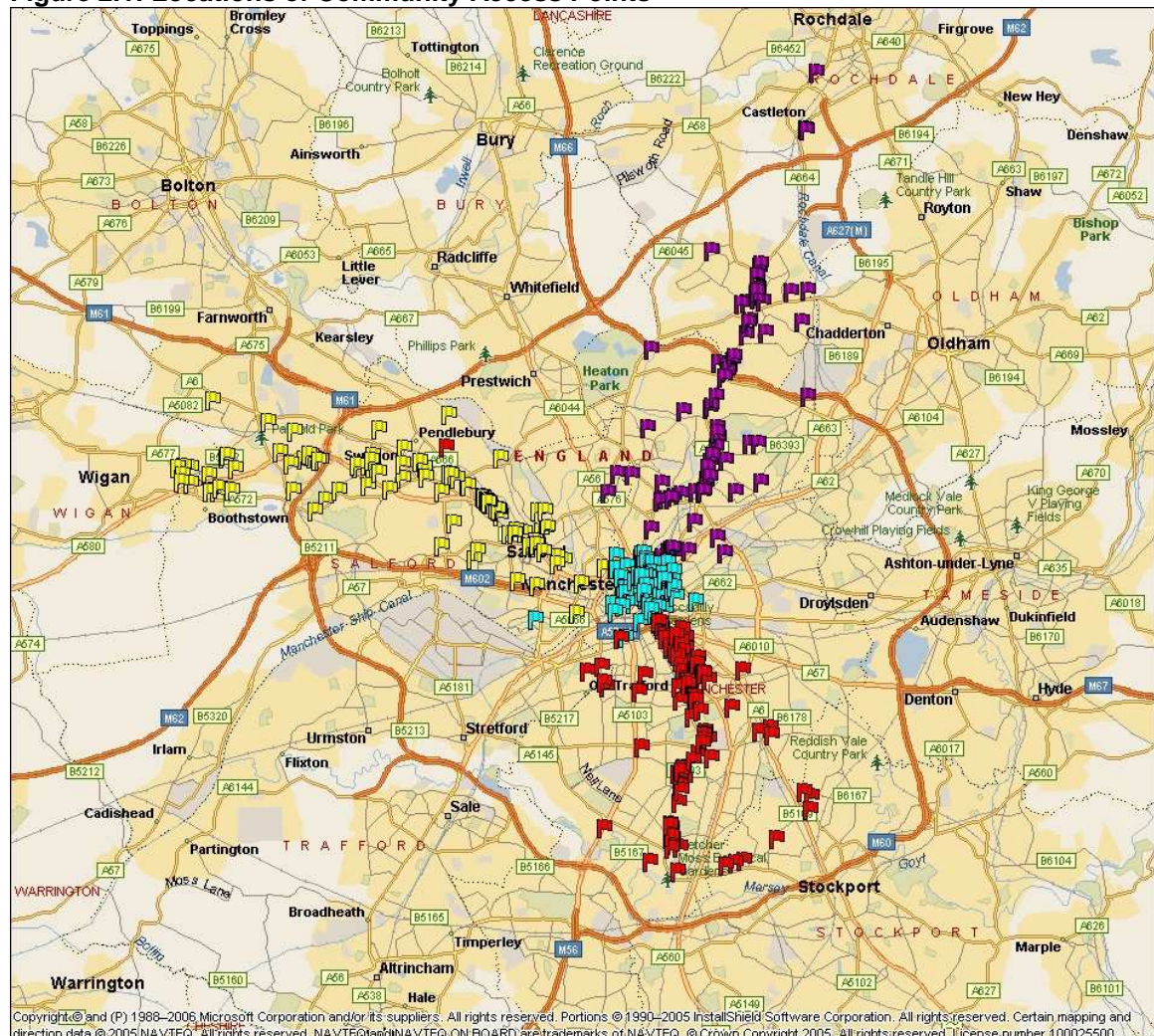
11 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 A full set of recommendations is set out on the report cover sheet.

Appendix 1: Details of Consultation Media

- Consultation booklets and feedback forms, distributed to 74,281 properties within approximately 400m of all three routes within Manchester city centre. This distance is consistent with previous consultations undertaken by GMPTF regarding bus and Metrolink proposals.
- A short film was produced introducing the proposals. A DVD of this film, as well as copies of the consultation booklets, were sent to local members and were available to the public on request. The film was also available on the consultation website (see below).
- 400 Community Access Points (approximately 100 for each route and 100 for Manchester city centre). These were carefully selected local shops and amenities in the area, and were provided with copies of the information booklets and response forms. A plan of the locations of the Community Access Points is shown in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1: Locations of Community Access Points



- A website (linked from www.gmptf.com/haveyoursay) which provided further information about the consultation, gave the opportunity to view the short film

of the proposals, and the opportunity to view more detailed plans and complete an online response form.

- A community email newsletter, detailing the consultation, was sent to 224 local community groups.
- 5,000 consultation leaflets for bus passengers, which included the feedback form, were made available on local bus services travelling along all three routes and within Manchester city centre.
- Eight exhibitions staffed by GMPTE (two close to each route and two within Manchester city centre), where the public had the opportunity to talk to members of the project team about the proposals, were held between 20th October and 5th November.
- Two Video Booths were available at each exhibition so that visitors could watch the film and record their feedback electronically.
- A freephone telephone information line (0800 917 8808) was provided during office hours throughout the consultation period.
- A text message service was provided, predominantly intended for bus passengers to comment by text message about any issues they experience using the buses on the routes affected by the proposals.
- On-street advertising was used, consisting of:
 - 20 (1m x 2m) advertising posters displayed at strategic points along all three routes and in Manchester city centre;
 - 50 exterior bus advertisements; and
 - 85 interior bus advertisements on local buses on all three routes.
- A 30 second advertisement was produced and played on five radio stations.
- Two quarter page advertisements were placed in the Manchester Evening News (MEN) and Metro newspapers, as well as three other local newspapers. An online advertisement was also in place on the corresponding newspaper websites for the final 5 weeks of the consultation period.
- A series of consultation meetings was held with a number of key stakeholders. In particular, the Corridor Manchester Partnership, a number of hotels on Great Portland Street, bus operators, NCP, cycling groups and a number of automotive dealerships on Upper Brook Street.