

TRANSPORT FOR GREATER MANCHESTER COMMITTEE REPORT FOR INFORMATION

Sub Committee: Bus Networks and TfGM Services
Date: 17 November 2017
Subject: TravelSafe Partnership Update
Report of: Customer Director

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update Members on the Travel Safe Partnership's approach to tackling anti-social behaviour on the bus networks.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to:

- i. Note the TravelSafe Partnership's additional frontline support and the enhancements to the approach to tackling anti-social behaviour on the transport networks.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Previous report to Bus Network & TfGM Services Sub Committee –
10 March 2017

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1. Background

- 1.1 On 10 March 2017 members were briefed on the proposed improvements to the TravelSafe Partnership's (TSP) approach to tackling anti-social behaviour (ASB) on the bus networks and at bus stations. This report is an update on progress made since that report.

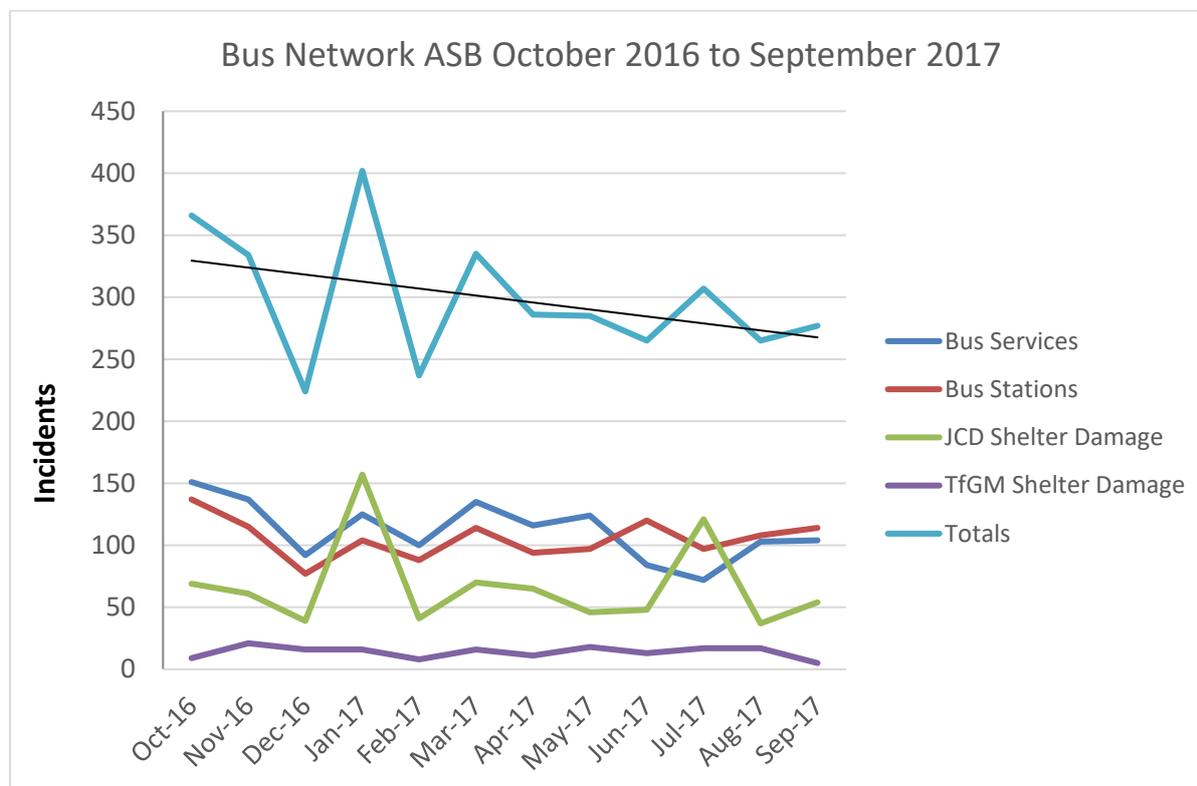
2. TravelSafe Partnership Enhancements

- 2.1 TSP governance arrangements have been strengthened, the Strategic Steering Group (TSSG), chaired by GMP, now meets on a quarterly basis providing greater strategic oversight and direction to the TSP. The TSSG is supported by a Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour working group (CASBR) that meets monthly. This sub group has proven effective in facilitating the exchange of information between partners in a constructive, transparent manner, thereby enabling problems to be dealt with more effectively. For example, in October, Stagecoach shared information on counterfeit £20 notes in circulation, and First Bus made partners aware of the fraudulent use of mobile phone tickets. Partners were able alert drivers, revenue protection officers and TravelSafe Unit (TSU) officers to the risk, preventative measures and enhanced monitoring was put in place.
- 2.2 A Communication sub group has been established with the goal of raising awareness of the TravelSafe Partnership and in doing so provide greater assurance to bus passengers that the bus network is safe. Communications officers from all TSP members have agreed a Communications Plan to deliver this aim. To date two high profile awareness activities have been delivered; the first was the Mayor's announcement, on 14 July, of additional frontline support in the form of 50 Police Community Support Officers and 23 TravelSafe Officers to be deployed on the bus and tram networks. Secondly, there is an ongoing TravelSafe Awareness Campaign, comprising a mix of marketing collateral, high profile policing deployments and supporting communications activity.
- 2.3 To date 23 TravelSafe Officers and 19 Police Community Support Officers have been deployed and are patrolling the transport networks. A further 12 PCSOs are currently in training and will join the TravelSafe Unit on 27 November 2017. These additional resources reinforce the existing police inspector, police sergeant, six police constables and seven employer supported police officers. Anecdotal feedback from passengers, drivers, staff and the local community has been positive.
- 2.4 In addition to the dedicated TSP resources, GMP have made additional officers available to respond to spikes in ASB. This has enabled the TSP to employ 'surge' tactics in the form of focussed deployments to contain ASB before the behaviour becomes embedded. In recent months there

have been deployments of tactical aid units, mounted police, off road motorbikes and divisional police officers & PCSOs. Mountain bike patrols on Leigh Guided Busway have proven particularly successful in facilitating community engagement, extending the footprint of patrols and deterring ASB before it occurs. The number of reported ASB incidents on the Leigh Guided Busway has fallen from 12 in March to 9 in total in the last five months since the implementation of this particular initiative.

- 2.5 The rapid assimilation and analysis of data is key to informing effective, targeted operational deployments. This is challenging given the need to consolidate data from multiple sources; to address this a GMP Crime Analytics Officer, with the necessary skills, experience and security clearance to consolidate and analyse data from all partners, and to plot trends (including crime types, locations, and methods of operation) is currently being recruited. This capability will complement the increase in frontline support, enabling intelligence led, proactive operational deployments. Increasingly therefore, TSU deployments will be targeted at crime and ASB hotspots. These targeted deployments will generate further intelligence, creating a virtuous circle of analysis and operations.
- 2.6 Community engagement continues to be a tenet of the TSP; youth engagement, in particular, is a key priority. Transport tickets have been made available to detached youth teams in Oldham and Tameside to enable officers to work more effectively with local youths as they move about the transport network. The 'Crucial Crew' programme works with 10-11-year olds, educating them on how they can keep safe on the public transport networks; how to be considerate and their social responsibilities when using transport services.
- 2.7 TSU officers also undertake school liaison visits, aimed at 11-14 year olds, making the pupils aware of how ASB affects passengers, residents and bus drivers, particularly on school buses. Officers also raise awareness of the consequences of the actions of those engaged in ASB. Schools close to ASB hotspots are routinely engaged as part of any wider operational response to contain ASB whenever and wherever it occurs.
- 2.8 There has been a renewed emphasis on engagement with residents and businesses. For example, the TSU also undertook a 'hearts and minds' campaign with local residents and bus drivers on the Leigh Guided Busway in April and May 2017. During this exercise officers cleared the garden of an elderly resident who had had objects thrown into her garden and damage to a fence was reported and subsequently repaired preventing unauthorised access to the rear of the properties.
- 2.9 Focus has also been given to improving the communication and coordination between the TSU and bus station staff. Doing so has led to a greater appreciation of the challenges and frustrations experienced by the frontline staff and has enabled the TSU to address these challenges working in a closer, more collegiate fashion.

3. Current Trends



3.1 The above graph shows ASB reported to TfGM affecting the two major bus operators, all bus station staff and all bus shelters in Greater Manchester over the twelve month period from October 2016 to September 2017. During that time a total of 3,583 ASB incidents were reported and, encouragingly, the overall trend for ASB reports is downwards.

3.2 In January 2017 there was a spike in ASB which comprised of damage to a significant number of bus shelters, damage to buses and bus stations, and also ASB involving groups of teenagers. “Break glass” hammers were stolen from buses and these were used to damage vehicles and shelters. The groups were often made up of the same individuals and the ASB was predominantly focussed in Stockport and south Manchester areas. Targeted “surge” operations were put in place and TSU Officers liaised closely with neighbourhood policing teams (NPTs), which ultimately led to those responsible being identified and convictions and criminal behaviour orders (CBOs) being secured.

3.3 Rough sleeping, and negative behaviours associated with it, increased at Shudehill and Bolton Interchanges in the early months of 2017. This was addressed by a combination of working with local authority homelessness teams, the voluntary sector and improving security measures at the locations.

3.4 The Leigh Guided Busway had numerous incidents in February, March and early April, including a tree being deliberately felled across the busway. A

surge response was implemented and as previously mentioned a new initiative of Police Officers patrolling the busway along the multi-user path on bicycles proved particularly successful. This tactic enables officers to cover the entire “off road” section of the busway several times in one shift and approach the perpetrators of ASB in a less obvious way, which has resulted in reports of ASB along the busway being significantly reduced.

- 3.5 Following the MEN Arena bomb on 22nd May, TSU deployments were altered to focus on public reassurance in and around Manchester city centre, although some deployments were still tasked with dealing with ASB on the network. Rochdale experienced significant issues with a group of teenagers between April and June; a multi-agency approach involving GMP/TSU/Metrolink/local authority children’s services/Youth Offending was adopted to address this. Additional TSU patrols were deployed and NPTs put extra Police Officers in the town centre, which culminated in the main ringleader being served a CBO banning them from the town centre and transport hubs. As a result of these interventions problems at Rochdale Interchange have been substantially reduced.
- 3.6 The lighter nights and school summer holidays saw a significant increase in damage to bus shelters in July, especially in Manchester and Bury. In August, the last two weeks of the month saw a sharp increase in the number of reports being made by bus services that were particularly targeted in an area of north Manchester and along the A6 corridor by youths throwing missiles and subsequent criminal damage. TSU has responded by increasing the patrolling presence in the Stockport and Moston areas, and following discussion at the CASBR meeting, it was agreed to deploy PCSO’s on bus and foot patrol along the A6 corridor in the vicinity of Crowcroft Park and at Reddish Vale.

4. Next Steps

- 4.1 A key priority is to conclude the recruitment of the Crime Analyst, as this will enable intelligence led, proactive operational deployments that deter ASB from occurring in the first instance.
- 4.2 Improving the travelling public’s awareness of the TravelSafe Partnership, and in doing so providing greater assurance to public transport passengers that the services are safe will be an area of focus. The effectiveness of the current campaign will be assessed and a further campaign will be informed by lessons learned and intelligence assessments undertaken by the Crime Analyst.
- 4.3 TravelSafe will seek to build on the ‘hearts & minds’ engagement activity undertaken by the team and also to enhance the integration with divisional police, local authorities and charities.

5. Recommendations

5.1 Recommendations are set out at the front of this report.

Stephen Rhodes
Customer Director