

23 January 2017

### **Metrolink's Second City Crossing on track to open soon**

Manchester's new tram line is a step closer to opening following another successful round of testing over the weekend.

Councillors Andrew Fender and Pat Karney joined engineers to ride Metrolink's new Second City Crossing and witness first-hand the rigorous testing and commissioning process.



The new route, which will connect the major new St Peter's Square tram stop with Exchange Square and Victoria Station, is on track to open to passengers soon.

The [Second City Crossing](#) is the final piece of Metrolink's £1.5bn 'big bang' expansion programme – which has seen extensions to MediaCityUK, East Didsbury, Rochdale via Oldham, Ashton and Manchester Airport – and will allow more trams to run through the city centre and across the 93-stop network.

Councillor Fender, Chair of the Transport for Greater Manchester Committee, said:

“We're on the home stretch now as engineers carry out the final phase of testing to check all the infrastructure and test out the tram management system on this important new route through the city.

“While the Second City Crossing is a relatively short stretch of line, it is a crucial piece in the Metrolink jigsaw – allowing us to run more trams on a more flexible and reliable tram network. That's great news not just for the city centre, but for customers right across Greater Manchester.”

Councillor Pat Karney added: “It's a thrill to be one of the first people to experience a journey on the new Second City Crossing. We've all seen the progress as the work to lay the line through the city has gone on, and to be able to see the finish line in sight is fantastic after the years of hard work.”

The Second City Crossing is part of the transformational [Grow project](#) which is seeing more than £1 billion invested into city centre infrastructure improvements, including [bus priority measures](#), six new and [better cycle routes](#) into the city centre and [major rail improvements](#).

The first phase of the Second City Crossing opened from Victoria through to a new stop at Exchange Square in December 2015. Fast-tracked thanks to the European Regional Development Fund, this new line is allowing a six-minute daytime service to run between Shaw and Crompton, Oldham and the city centre from Monday to Saturdays.

The final stretch of the Second City Crossing continues along Cross Street and Princess Street through to a major [new two platform stop at St Peter's Square](#).

The [Deansgate-Castlefield](#), [Victoria](#) and Market Street tram stops have all been upgraded in readiness to handle more services when the Second City Crossing opens.

A campaign is now under way to remind customers of upcoming service changes when the new line opens. A date will be announced in coming weeks.

Once the new line is open services will run on the following routes:

- Altrincham – Bury
- Altrincham – Etihad Campus
- Bury – Piccadilly
- Ashton-under-Lyne – Eccles
- MediaCityUK – Piccadilly
- Manchester Airport – Deansgate-Castlefield
- East Didsbury – Rochdale Town Centre
- East Didsbury – Shaw and Crompton

For more information on Metrolink services visit [www.metrolink.co.uk](http://www.metrolink.co.uk), call Metrolink Customer Services on 0161 205 2000 or follow [@MCRMetroLink](#) for live travel updates.

**ENDS**

Media contact: 0161 244 1055 or email [mediarelations@tfgm.com](mailto:mediarelations@tfgm.com)

### **Notes to Editors**

1. Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) is the transport delivery arm for Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and its Transport for Greater Manchester Committee (TfGMC).

2. TfGM oversees transport and travel across Greater Manchester, home of the UK's largest regional economy outside London and a diverse population of over 2.7 million people.

3. TfGM:

- is responsible for delivering the Greater Manchester Transport Fund, a £1.5bn transport investment package which will drive economic growth and create 21,000 new jobs.
- owns and manages the Metrolink network, which currently covers 60 miles and has 93 stops across seven lines – hosting 36 million passenger journeys every year.
- is delivering the Metrolink Second City Crossing – a new line through the heart of Manchester city centre, set to launch in early 2017 – and the Trafford Park extension to the intu Trafford Centre via Trafford Park, Europe's largest industrial estate.
- is responsible for the bus priority package which is improving bus links between Leigh, Atherton, Salford, Middleton and Parris Wood and Manchester city centre.
- builds, maintains and staffs bus stations and interchanges, and installs and maintains 12,000 bus stops and 4,000 shelters in partnership with JCDecaux.
- works closely with 30+ bus operators to ensure high quality services in the right places.
- is a key partner in Rail North – calling for increased rail devolution for the north of England, and is working to prepare for HS2 and in the £1bn+ North of England programme.
- manages the road network and co-ordinates maintenance, investment and strategic modelling to keep traffic flowing, as well as installing and maintaining traffic signals.

- is overseeing an investment of more than £40m into cycle routes and facilities through the Cycle City programme, alongside a wide-ranging programme of cycling information, education and training.
- works with Job Centres, job-seekers and local businesses to encourage sustainable commuting.

4. For more information, visit [www.tfgm.com](http://www.tfgm.com).