

Greater Manchester Franchising Scheme for Buses 2021
Service Permit Conditions and Descriptions of Conditions Notice

Transport Act 2000, s 123R

1.1 Introduction

The Transport Act 2000 allows for conditions or conditions of a description to be attached to service permits.

Different conditions conditions/conditions of a description can be attached for different circumstances, or for different sorts of services.

Government guidance¹ explains that for example, the authority may apply a 'lighter-touch' set of conditions to services which have a limited number of stopping places in the franchising area but may require services which operate wholly within the franchising area to comply with more stringent conditions, to ensure they integrate effectively with the network of franchised services.

TfGM may attach conditions or conditions of a description to a Service Permit at the time it is granted, or after it has been granted. If it does this, it must give the applicant notice of its reasons for doing so within a period of 14 days beginning with the date on which it grants the permit or attach the conditions to an existing permit.

A person who is granted a service permit with conditions, or a person to whose permit conditions are attached after the service permit has been granted, may appeal to the Traffic Commissioner against the attaching of the conditions, or any of them.

A Notice specifying the conditions, or description of conditions that may be attached to a service permit can be withdrawn, and a new notice published instead. If a notice is withdrawn, conditions attached to the service permit before it was withdrawn cease to have effect (subject to being attached again).

1.2 Conditions and Descriptions of Conditions that may be attached to Service Permits

Conditions marked with a * will not be attached to service permits for rail or tram replacement services

Operational Standards

OP1. Environmental *

Vehicles on permit services must meet, or exceed, Euro VI emission standards. **Where appropriate TfGM may require that vehicles used for services meet equivalent emission standards to those that will be met by services under local service contracts**

OP2. Accessibility *

All operational staff who are materially involved in the provision of the permit service shall receive disability, equality, and customer care training as part of the operator's planned training programme for its operational staff. **This will ensure that high standards of customer care are met by operational staff, ensuring confidence in bus travel in Greater Manchester**

OP3. TravelSafe *

The operator of the permit service shall participate in the Travel Safe Partnership, including allowing TfGM officers to travel on the permit service for the purposes of passenger safety and security and revenue protection. The operator may also be required to embrace additional policies and standards, such as incident reporting through the TravelSafe Incident portal and information sharing with TfGM in relation to incidents involving its staff or vehicles on the permit service upon request. **This will ensure that high standards of customer safety are met by permitted services, ensuring confidence in bus travel in Greater Manchester.**

OP4. Vehicles TROs and highways requirements

Permit service operators shall comply with any requirements as to

1. The size and type of vehicles which may be used.
2. Compliance with existing Traffic Regulation Orders.
3. Compliance with any proposals to amend the highway layout or Traffic Regulation Orders.

For the avoidance of doubt, to ensure that the service fully fulfils its purpose and appropriately benefits persons making journeys on local services in the area to which the Scheme relates, TfGM may also specify clearly in the permit itself, the route, including its starting points, waiting and departure locations, times, stopping places and termini including minimum service levels, operating hours (first and last bus) and days of operation based upon the application. These would define the service to which the permit was granted, including the extent to which TfGM was happy to accept minor deviations in the service provided without a new permit being required to be granted, where TfGM had agreed to such deviations.

TfGM expects to use these conditions to ensure that operators comply with their service permit application, in particular in respect of elements of the service specification which TfGM have relied upon in determining to grant a permit.

OP5. Duplicate Vehicles *

Duplicate vehicle(s) which provide additional capacity on a permit service may only be operated over any part of the route of the permit service within Greater Manchester, with, and in accordance with, TfGM's prior consent. **The permit will be granted on the basis of the timetable and other details provided within the permit application. Running of duplicate buses to increase capacity within a timetable slot may mean that the service breaches the statutory requirements, in particular if it leads to congestion on routes also used by local services under local service contracts. This condition will allow the operator to agree such duplicate vehicle use on a short-term basis but allow TfGM to intervene if such duplicate vehicles adversely affect other services.**

OP6. Service Performance & Operational Standards

The permit service shall be provided in accordance with the principles, operating standards and statutory guidance issued by the Traffic Commissioners. Any non-compliance may be reported to the Office of the Traffic Commissioner and/or the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency. **The permit service will need to comply with these requirements outside Greater Manchester, so this ensures consistent standards throughout the journey.**

Passenger Information & Customer Service

CS1. Passenger Information *

Permit service operators shall comply with any marketing initiatives reasonably required by TfGM, including:

- a) providing required information in the appropriate way as specified by TfGM pursuant to section 139 – 141 Transport Act 2000;
- b) publishing on vehicles operating the permit service notices relating to TfGM concessionary fares and up to two other passenger information or marketing notices provided by TfGM. **TfGM already has rights in respect of information provision within Greater Manchester – this condition ensures that operators under service permits do not detract from consistent provision of information across the network, which could adversely affect passengers and their confidence in the franchised bus network.**

CS2. Service Numbers *

Where service numbers are to be used, applicants must take account of existing service numbers to avoid situations of more than one service operating with the same number in the same locality or district(s) of Greater Manchester. TfGM reserves the right to allocate a different service number that the operator will be required to use as a condition of a permit. **Conditions relating to service numbers ensure that there is consistent service numbering within Greater Manchester and that this does not have an adverse effect on any franchised services. Where such clashes exist, TfGM will engage with the applicant to identify an alternative service number.**

CS3. Communication with passengers

The operator will properly investigate and address customer complaints relating to the permit service to TfGM's reasonable satisfaction and within a reasonable timescale. **This condition ensures that passengers within Greater Manchester are able to benefit from proper management of any complaints and have confidence that such complaints will be dealt with properly, whatever bus they travel on.**

Fares & Ticketing

FT1. Fares and acceptance of TfGM tickets and passes *

The operator shall retail and accept TfGM's specified range of tickets and passes at the same fare scale as that provided by TfGM for journeys within the Greater Manchester Boundary, unless specifically exempted from doing so, either in full or part by TfGM. Operators should note that whilst this condition may be imposed on a service, this will be subject to TfGM ensuring that operators are reimbursed appropriately for acceptance of tickets and fare scales specified by TfGM, such that they are no better and no worse off as a result of compliance with this condition and such tickets being available within the Greater Manchester boundary.

Such conditions will be intended to ensure that whilst operating within Greater Manchester services do not adversely affect the local services provided under local service contracts or passengers, by ensuring that passengers can make use of common tickets. Such conditions will, however, be subject to ensuring that compensation/reimbursement

arrangements are in place to ensure that operators are not worse off as a result of such a requirement and those ticket types still being available within Greater Manchester.

Service Monitoring

SM1. Service Monitoring

Authorised representatives of TfGM shall be allowed to board vehicles operating the permit service without prior notice and require the provision of any data reasonably required for the purpose of confirming compliance with service permit conditions. **It is important that TfGM can ensure that permit conditions are complied with – this approach is consistent with the survey rights that TfGM have previously exercised, for example to manage concessionary travel schemes.**

ⁱ [tps://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/918664/bus-services-act-2017-franchising-scheme-guidance.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/918664/bus-services-act-2017-franchising-scheme-guidance.pdf)