

Landmark moment as Greater Manchester takes over first rail station

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The Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham, has welcomed a significant moment for the city-region's long-term vision for rail as Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) has taken over the operation of Horwich Parkway Station.

The TfGM-owned station was previously operated by Northern Trains Limited but has come under local control from February 1st.

Horwich Parkway will act as a blueprint for Greater Manchester's future approach to station management, which includes working with local partners and the rail industry to ensure stations are accessible, integrated and reflect the needs of their communities.

TfGM will be responsible for everything at the station apart from the running of the trains and the tracks they run on. This includes selling tickets, customer service, passenger assistance, cleaning and day-to-day maintenance and long-term renewals and enhancements.

Greater Manchester has a long-term vision for rail, as set out in [Our Prospectus for Rail](#), which includes

more local control over stations. This also forms part of Our Network, Greater Manchester's 10-year plan to create an integrated, simple and convenient public transport system with simple fares and ticketing and an improved customer experience across all types of transport – trains, trams, cycling and walking and buses.

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, said: "We have long-standing ambitions to transform rail stations in Greater Manchester, managing them for and on behalf of local people. Taking over the running of Horwich Parkway is a key first step on that journey.

"More local control over our public transport services is key to Greater Manchester being able to design and deliver a network that is properly joined-up across all forms of transport and contribute to achieving the priorities of the city-region and all the 10 districts.

"We also have ambitions to transform rail services in Greater Manchester, which was set out in Our Prospectus for Rail, and I look forward to seeing the outcome of the long-awaited Williams Review and working with Government to ensure we have a stronger voice in decisions on how services and timetables are designed, specified and operated."

While this will be the first rail station that TfGM operate and manage on a day-to-day basis, it has been responsible for all the enhancements and renewals at Horwich Parkway since its construction in 1999.

Councillor Stuart Haslam, Bolton Council's Executive Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, said: "We support Greater Manchester's long-term vision for an integrated transport network that supports sustainable economic growth.

"Horwich Parkway is a vital transport link for our communities and businesses due to its proximity to Middlebrook Retail Park, the University of Bolton Stadium and a growing number of residential properties, and we look forward to working with TfGM to ensure the station continues to meet the changing needs of passengers, residents and visitors."

Councillor Mark Aldred, Chair of the Greater Manchester Transport Committee, said: "Stations are the focal point for many communities and should evolve to meet the needs of the people and places they serve, as part of a truly integrated travel offer.

"As a first step, bringing Horwich Parkway within our control will allow us to plan for the long term, complement TfGM's existing capabilities across other modes and supports our ambition to create a truly integrated and customer-focused transport system for Greater Manchester.

"TfGM will also continue to work in partnership with Network Rail, rail operators and other industry stakeholders to identify improvement opportunities to support the changing needs of passengers, residents and visitors at all of Greater Manchester's rail stations."

Photo credit: Transport for Greater Manchester