

# Penalty fares for Metrolink fare evasion to increase as part of crackdown across network

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The penalty fare for travelling without a valid ticket or pass on Metrolink will be increasing to £120 from the 24<sup>th</sup> September as part of ongoing efforts to tackle fare evasion on public transport.

**Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM)** is urging passengers to take note of the higher penalty fare and to ensure they touch-in at the start and touch-out at the end of every journey when using contactless, smart cards or concessionary passes.

Customers can also purchase a ticket or travelcard with cash or card at the ticket machine or via the new Bee Network app from 18th September. Passengers cannot buy tickets on the tram.

As part of the crackdown, dozens of additional Customer Service Representatives (CSRs) are being employed to carry out ticket inspections as well as to help passengers travelling on the tram.

Metrolink operator KeolisAmey Metrolink (KAM) will also be deploying plain clothes officers to target passengers who deliberately avoid buying a ticket.

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, said: "Fare evasion is something we take very seriously, and

it will continue to be a priority as we move to the integrated Bee Network.

“While most people who travel by tram do so legally by purchasing a ticket, there are some who continue to think the rules do not apply to them.

“Our message is clear: if you travel on Metrolink without paying, you’ll now face a higher penalty fare, and you could be prosecuted.

“For 30 years Metrolink received no public subsidy, and the money we raised from fare-paying passengers is reinvested into the network for everyone’s benefit. If people are fare dodging, we won’t be able to improve the service we offer.

“Metrolink will play a vital role in realising our vision of a truly integrated public transport system, the Bee Network, which works for everyone. I would urge everyone to consider the consequences of fare evasion.”

Changes to Metrolink’s conditions of carriage will see the maximum penalty for fare evasion on Metrolink rise from £100 to £120 (reduced to £60, previously £50, if paid within two weeks). The fine for failing to pay by contactless, currently set at £45, will increase to £60 at the same time.

The same fines are also being introduced on Bee Network franchised bus services, which launch in Bolton, Wigan, and parts of Salford, Bury and Manchester on 24th September.

Danny Vaughan, TfGM’s Head of Metrolink, said: “We’re increasing penalty fares to remind passengers to pay for their ticket before boarding a tram. It’s simple and it’s cheap so there is no excuse for free loading, and it won’t be tolerated.

“This year we have issued almost 55,000 penalty fares and brought just under 6,000 cases to court, with defendants receiving fines of up to £450.

“The easiest way to use Metrolink is the contactless system. Simply touch-on and touch-off for each journey and we’ll cap the amount you pay at the best price for each day or for a week if you are a regular user. You’ll always pay the lowest fare, and it’s far cheaper than being caught or ending up in court.”

TfGM is a not-for profit organisation, and money generated from ticket sales is reinvested back into public transport services for the benefit of all passengers, and the new CSRs are being introduced as part of a broader strategy to tackle fare evasion across all modes of public transport in Greater Manchester.

In addition to the new CSRs, the Greater Manchester TravelSafe Partnership staff and police dedicate more than 5,000 hours per week patrolling the Metrolink and bus networks, day and night, seven days a week.

Their job is to tackle crime and antisocial behaviour, and to reassure passengers that they can travel safely in Greater Manchester. They are also supported by more than 3,800 CCTV cameras across the network that are monitored 24/7.

Vernon Everitt, Transport Commissioner for Greater Manchester, said: “Everyone using or working on our

public transport network, including Metrolink, is entitled to feel safe at all times.

“Increasing the number of CSRs on Metrolink, and introducing enhanced ticket checking across the network, will support the great work that the TravelSafe Partnership already undertakes to help reassure passengers that they can travel safely and securely in Greater Manchester.”