

**STOCKPORT LOCAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY, LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN
AND NEIGHBOURHOOD TRANSPORT PLANS**

Report of the Director of Place Management

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This report provides an overview of several recent requests from Councillors, motions to Council and a Scrutiny Review requesting a more joined up approach to managing the highway networks and transportation improvements within Stockport. Councillors have also requested more visibility of proposed schemes within their areas and a clearer overview of how individual schemes fit together.
- 1.2. These requests are in the context of an increasingly busy highway within the borough, although Covid has interrupted the continued growth in traffic levels. This underlying growth in traffic creates ever greater competition on the highway and causes tension between the need for transport to support the local economy and the quality of life at a neighbourhood level.
- 1.3. At the present time funding for highway improvements is usually linked to bidding processes run either at Greater Manchester level, regionally or nationally usually focusing on a single mode or initiative e.g. bus, pedestrian and cycle improvements, school streets, or active neighbourhoods.
- 1.4. Whilst this approach may assist government and Greater Manchester Combined Authority/ Transport for Greater Manchester focus on achieving specific outcomes it may create difficulties for the public or members to have clarity on all the schemes in an area and their funding status or delivery timescales.
- 1.5. This report recommends developing a continuous linked series of plans from the Greater Manchester 2040 Transport Strategy and Plan via a Stockport Local Transport Strategy and Local Implementation Plan to more local Neighbourhood Transport Plans at ward and area committee level. These plans will identify existing networks, existing proposed funded improvements, and future aspirations for that area. They will also provide an easy to understand visual representation of the current facilities and how they link to future proposals.
- 1.6. In recent years there has been substantial investment in transforming the transport options for residents, enabling more people to use improved public transport facilities or safer and more attractive routes for walking and cycling, however, a more holistic approach needs to be developed enabling individual initiatives and funded schemes to be seen in an overall context within an area.

2. Background of Requests from Councillors

- 2.1. There have been a number of requests from Councillors highlighting the importance of continuing to manage the local highway network to achieve the best outcomes for residents, business schools and other organisations.
- 2.2. These include:
- 2.2.1. A motion to Council on 15th July 2021 which stated: *“This Council Meeting further notes that such proposals are not new, with individual 20mph zone schemes being currently or recently under consultation by this administration, and the establishment of 20mph zones dating back to August 2003 when the then Liberal Democrat administration developed the Stockport Speed Management Strategy, following acceptance of the recommendations of an all-party Scrutiny Policy Development Review by the Regeneration, Housing and Development Services Scrutiny Committee. This included the provision of mandatory 20mph zones in the vicinity of our primary schools and made Stockport one of the first local authorities in the country to introduce such measures.*
- 2.2.1.1. *This Council, therefore, resolves to:*
- 2.2.1.2. *Establish an all-Group working party to seek to implement a borough-wide 20 mph speed limit on residential roads as soon as possible, including: considering how to identify and manage areas where the lower speed limit may not be appropriate, exploring the trialling of average speed cameras, addressing how we can tackle speeding on main roads such as Offerton Road, Torkington Road, A6, Bean Leach, Bramhall Lane South, Bridge Lane, Ack Lane East, Ack Lane West, Lyndhurst Avenue and others and seeking the re-establishment of Community Speedwatch in conjunction with Greater Manchester Police;*
- 2.2.1.3. *Investigate the costs and implications for each ward to be assigned a Speed Indicator Device rather than shared at an area committee level and to report back on this within 6 months; and*
- 2.2.1.4. *Explore and identify where school crossing patrols could be reintroduced outside schools to further address road safety issues around schools.”*
- 2.2.2. Requests from Cheadle and Werneth Area Committees: *“This area committee resolves to ask the Cabinet to ensure that the highways department have the resources necessary to enable officers to catch up and complete any current backlog of work and continue to be able to undertake any new projects in all wards across the borough.”*
- 2.2.3. The Active Streets and School Streets Report from the Scrutiny Review. The was a Scrutiny Review Panel of the Council's policy for active streets, school streets and play streets which contained the following recommendations:
- 2.2.3.1. Recommendation One - That the requirement that event organisers must have public liability insurance in place before operating a play street scheme should be removed and replaced with a suitably worded indemnity clause that encourages residents to take out such insurance but does not mandate it as an absolute requirement.

- 2.2.3.2. Recommendation Two - That the need to provide proof of the support of 60% of the households affected be replaced with a more permissive scheme which includes the circulation of a model notification letter that asks those who do not approve of the scheme to contact Network Management with their objections which permits contact via traditional as well as electronic means.
- 2.2.3.3. Recommendation Three - That work takes place to develop a hub to support Play Street coordinators and enable sharing of ideas, best practice and advice across the Borough that includes the option of overarching group public liability insurance to cover all applications.
- 2.2.3.4. Recommendation Four - That clear, simple and readily accessible publicity materials and how-to guides be developed in a range of formats to support the relaunch of the play streets policy
- 2.2.3.5. Recommendation Five - That the school streets and play streets policy including the benefits of active and healthy communities be actively promoted to all communities in Stockport and using all avenues and mechanisms including through the use of all member briefings to engage elected members in the dissemination and promotion of such schemes.
- 2.2.3.6. Recommendation Six - That a flexible approach be adopted to the use of barriers and signage that reflects the needs and circumstances of local communities.
- 2.2.3.7. Recommendation Seven - That upon adoption, the recommendations of the Panel be implemented as soon as practicable such that pilot and early adopter schemes are able to commence as early as possible.

3. Background to Greater Manchester 2040 Transport Strategy and Local Transport Plan

- 3.1. The Greater Manchester 2040 Transport Strategy and Local Transport Plan provides an overview of the key strategic aims and priorities for transport investment in Greater Manchester. There are a number of companion documents that provide more detail on proposed elements of the plan and the development of the Bee Network. These include bus franchising, Streets for All, Change a Region to Change a Nation-Greater Manchester's Walking and Cycling investment plan, and Made to Move.
- 3.2. The plan splits proposed investment priorities into 5-year periods with initial plans focusing on more developed schemes and funded schemes and longer-term periods identifying studies or more aspirational schemes.
- 3.3. The recent bid for the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement identifies Greater Manchester Strategic Funding priorities for the next five years and the

outcome of that bid will be reflected in updated 5-year plans.

- 3.4. The outcome of the bid from a Stockport perspective will be included within the proposed revised Local Implementation Plan for Stockport.

4. Proposed Stockport Local Transport Strategy and Local Implementation Plan

- 4.1. The proposed Stockport Local Transport Strategy will seek to identify the key strategic aims, principles and priorities for transport in Stockport. It will support the overall Greater Manchester Strategy but reflect and support the local policies and priorities identified in One Stockport, the evolving Economic and Local Plan, Active Communities and the Housing Strategies and Stockport CAN.
- 4.2. One Stockport demonstrates the Council's commitment to improving the quality of life within the borough and tackling climate change through CAN. A significant part of this is tackling the over-congestion of our roads and the negative impact that cars often have in our communities. Developing better public transport and encouraging walking and cycling for local journeys is integral to this aim and will be key elements within the proposed transport strategy.
- 4.3. The proposed Stockport transport strategy and updated local implementation plan will identify the key strategic issues, evidence base and transport investment required before 2040 as well developing principles to help identify and prioritise smaller schemes.
- 4.4. It will also provide an overarching strategy in which existing strategies and plans will fit including transportation and highways asset management plans. The strategy and plan will identify public transport initiatives in Greater Manchester and future proposed improvements/aspirations, the development of a cycle network across Stockport and proposals to continue to manage and improve local road networks.
- 4.5. The Stockport local transport strategy will also identify the types of initiatives that could be developed in local neighbourhoods and set criteria for their usage. These initiatives could include quiet lanes, active neighbourhoods, school streets, play streets or more general 20mph zones.
- 4.6. An initial Stockport Local Implementation Plan was approved last year and was incorporated in the overall Greater Manchester Plan however this needs to be reviewed both to include any newly funded schemes and also to incorporate priorities identified in the proposed neighbourhood transport plans.
- 4.7. The parallel development of neighbourhood transport plans will enable the proposed strategic improvements to be placed in a local context and enable local councillors, residents and businesses to identify local issues and improvements required to support the overall aims and objectives of the strategy. This will allow a holistic co-ordinated approach to transforming local neighbourhoods. It will ensure there is a focus on long-term change utilising a coordinated variety of initiatives

and funding to improve local neighbourhoods and centres which complement the more strategic investment.

- 4.8. The development of neighbourhood-based transport plans will involve both local councillors and residents and will enable aspirations for new crossings and 20mph zones etc to be identified and linked to more strategic initiatives e.g., cycle routes, highway improvements etc. These plans will enable future funding priorities to be identified in a more systematic manner, ensuring that we continue to focus on overarching aims within communities rather than responding to individual initiatives. These plans can then be collated to identify future funding priorities that can be incorporated in the Stockport Local Implementation Plan which will inform future funding bids.
- 4.9. The change we need to deliver will require engagement and buy-in from our communities to enable greater active travel. The strategy will enable us to have a platform for engaging with our communities.

5. Proposed Approach to developing Neighbourhood Transport Plans

- 5.1. It is proposed to utilise a phased approach to developing Neighbourhood Transport Plans at both a ward and area committee level. Ultimately providing a clear point of information for current and future schemes.
- 5.2. At each phase there would be consultation with local Councillors and reports to Area Committee.
- 5.3. It is proposed to provide a single vision for each neighbourhood and improve the coordination of scheme delivery through the provision of Stockport Neighbourhood Transport Plans. This would be a single interactive map showing delivered and planned schemes and initiatives, work in progress and aspirations for the local areas.
- 5.4. As part of the council's commitment to digital transformation, a single interactive map will be developed showing delivered and planned schemes and initiatives, work in progress and aspirations for the local areas. To further clarify and coordinate transport improvements at the local level, Neighbourhood Transport Plans will also be developed for area committees. The plans would also feed into the overall borough wide Transport Strategy. This would not only improve the ability to understand how new proposals will interact with current infrastructure but also enable the clarification of any current provision gaps in need of being addressed.
- 5.5. These plans will be available to the public to provide reassurance and transparency in our commitment and progress against a range of transport initiatives. It will also give local neighbourhoods a picture of the overall vision and aspirations for their neighbourhood as various transport initiatives are progressed.
- 5.6. A prototype is in delivery and can be shared with Members early in the New Year for reflections and feedback. The draft map can be seen here:

<https://maps.stockport.gov.uk/community-transport/index.html> It is proposed to take an iterative approach to the delivery of the plans and as such will be done in a phased approach. The first phase will include existing features and schemes where we already have processes in place for automation onto a map, such as 20mph zones, public rights of way and car parks. Work will then be done internally to look at automating the capture of features and schemes where this is not already in place. The aim is to have this completed by Easter.

- 5.7. The second phase will involve mapping proposed improvements or changes to the area including proposed cycle networks, bus routes as a result of franchising, potential neighbourhood and other local schemes e.g., school streets, active neighbourhoods etc which are included in future funded programmes or bids so that Members are able to see the progress of schemes that are funded.
- 5.8. Due to the complexity of automating this and ensuring data is accurate and current, this is likely to take until the end of 2022. Members can be updated regularly through Highway Ward Briefings on progress as new features of the Neighbourhood Transport Plans are added.
- 5.9. The final phase would be to identify requested or aspirational schemes which could be included in future unfunded programmes or bids. These would include local councillor and public aspirations for the area which could then be prioritised for inclusion in the Local Implementation Plan.
- 5.10. Whilst this approach was being developed the existing schemes, programmes and requests for minor network management schemes would continue to be managed and delivered but be integrated into the process as each phase was delivered.
- 5.11. When completed the improved mapping would provide a clear information point for the public on current and future transport provision in their neighbourhood which would not only assist the ability to comment on future schemes but also help them make the best use of the facilities they already have.

6. Response to motion to Council on 15th July 2021

- 6.1. Officers have been requested to seek nominations for an all-party members committee to consider and give advice on the development of a policy approach to the introduction of slower speed initiatives including 20mph, active neighbourhoods, school streets, quiet lanes etc. This policy approach can then be utilised by local councillors to help identify appropriate areas for these approaches in their wards when bidding opportunities or funding becomes available. These aspirations can be recorded on the proposed neighbourhood plans which will enable Councillors to consider them in the context of other proposed or existing schemes.

7. Response to the Active Streets and School Streets Report from the Scrutiny Review

- 7.1. The Cabinet accepted the recommendations from the Active Streets and School Streets Scrutiny Review and has requested that officers implement the recommendations on play streets as resources become available.
- 7.2. The Council is developing several school streets in partnership with local schools as part of a pilot project funded by TGM and will use this experience to develop local guidance. The Cabinet Member has also requested these are considered as part of the all-party review of slower speed initiatives so that appropriate advice on their usage and location can be developed.
- 7.3. Established playstreets and school streets will be identified on the proposed neighbourhood plans and Councillors will be able to identify potential new areas for school streets in accordance with the proposed local policy and guidance.

8. Walk21 International Walking Charter

- 8.1. The commitments in the Streets for All Strategy approved by the Cabinet is to sign the Walk21 International Walking Charter. It is one way of showing our commitment to making progress towards our Right Mix vision - for at least half of all journeys to be made sustainably by 2040 - which supports our target to be net zero carbon by 2038.
- 8.2. Signing the International Walking Charter is a key action in the Streets for All Strategy because it signals that, here in Greater Manchester, we recognise the importance of policies and activities aimed at creating places where people can make the choice to walk, supporting our broader ambitions when it comes to the environment, public health and road danger reduction.
- 8.3. The Charter is as follows:
 - 8.3.1. Creating healthy, efficient and sustainable communities where people choose to walk I/We, the undersigned recognise the benefits of walking as a key indicator of healthy, efficient, socially inclusive and sustainable communities and acknowledge the universal rights of people to be able to walk safely and to enjoy high quality public spaces anywhere and at anytime. We are committed to reducing the physical, social and institutional barriers that limit walking activity. We will work with others to help create a culture where people choose to walk through our commitment to this charter and its strategic principles:
 1. Increased inclusive mobility
 2. Well designed and managed spaces and places for people
 3. Improved integration of networks
 4. Supportive land-use and spatial planning
 5. Reduced road danger
 6. Less crime and fear of crime

7. More supportive authorities

8. A culture of walking

9. FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

9.1. The recommendations should not increase financial demand or risk to the Council.

10. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

10.1. The recommendations should not result in any extra legal considerations but will require appropriate legal input once recommendations are put into practice.

11. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

11.1. The work will be done within current resources although there continue to be pressures through market inflation which has meant that the council has struggled to recruit to vacancies.

12. EQUALITIES IMPACT

12.1. The Neighbourhood Transport Plans will be subject to the necessary Equality Impact assessment as part of their development.

13. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

13.1. The Neighbourhood Transport Plans will be subject to the necessary Environmental Impact assessment as part of their development.

14. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

14.1. The Scrutiny Committee is asked to comment on the proposed approach to developing neighbourhood transport plans and note the responses to the motion to council regarding slower speed 20mph and the Scrutiny Review on Active Streets and School Streets.

14.2. The Committee is also asked to comment on the proposal to sign the Walking Charter.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

There are none

Anyone wishing to inspect the above background papers or requiring further information should contact Mark Glynn on Tel: 0161-474-3700 or by email on mark.glynn@stockport.gov.uk