

POLICY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
21/07/2021 at 6.00 pm



Present: Councillor McLaren (Chair)
Councillors Brownridge, Curley, Hobin and K Phythian

Also in Attendance:

Councillor Hannah Roberts - Cabinet Member: Housing
Councillor Abdul Jabbar – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member:
Finance and Low Carbon

Neil Crabtree – Head of Service – Public Protection
Elizabeth Dryden-Stuart – Strategic Planning and Information
Christine Wood – Constitutional Services

1 **FORMAL ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR - 2021-22**

As the previous meeting held on 15th June 2021 had been informal, the Committee was requested to formally nominate a Vice-Chair for the duration of the Municipal Year 2021/22.

RESOLVED that Councillor Brownridge be elected Vice-Chair of the Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the duration of the Municipal Year 2021/22.

2 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Alyas.

3 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received.

4 **URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of urgent business received.

5 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

No public questions had been received.

6 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS INFORMAL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, 15TH JUNE 2021**

The Committee was advised that the minutes of the previous informal meeting held on 15th June 2021 would be submitted to the meeting of the Committee scheduled on 27th July 2021.

7 **EXEMPT FROM CALL IN DECISION - LOCAL COVID SUPPORT GRANT FUNDING ALLOCATION**

A report was submitted advising the Committee of a decision that had been made on 6th July 2021 which had been exempt from call in (Local Covid Support Grant Funding Allocation).

Grounds for the decision being exempt from call in were outlined within the report.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

PLACES FOR EVERYONE PUBLICATION PLAN 2021: A JOINT DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT FOR 9 GREATER MANCHESTER LOCAL AUTHORITIES (BOLTON, BURY, MANCHESTER, OLDHAM, ROCHDALE, SALFORD, TAMESIDE, TRAFFORD AND WIGAN)



The Committee considered a report and presentation submitted jointly by Elizabeth Dryden-Stuart and Councillor Hannah Roberts, Cabinet Member for Housing, providing an update on the Places for Everyone Publication Plan 2021: A Joint Development Plan Document for 9 Greater Manchester Local Authorities (Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan), in advance of consideration at a meeting of the Cabinet scheduled on 26th July 2021 and Full Council on 28th July 2021 to consider the joint development plan document for approval, publication and submission to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government.

The following in relation to Places for Everyone was outlined to the Committee within the presentation and report:

- What it is and the legal obligations on Greater Manchester Mayor
- Places for Everyone and the Local Plan
- Process to date
- Content and structure of Places for Everyone
- Key messages for Oldham, benefits, and risks
- Timetable for next steps
- How to comment
- Local Plan Issues and Options consultation
- Local Development Scheme and Statement of Community Involvement Updates

A copy of the plan was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The Committee was advised that upon approval of the publication draft of the plan by the nine local authorities, consultation on the Places for Everyone Publication Plan 2021 would commence not earlier than the 9th August for a period of eight weeks.

When it has been adopted, Places for Everyone would become part of the development plan for Oldham. It would replace parts of Oldham's Core Strategy and change the Proposals Map. A list of Core Strategy policies that would be replaced by Places for Everyone was detailed in the report.

The Committee was requested to recommend approval of the Places for Everyone Publication Plan 2021 to Cabinet and Full Council.

A discussion took place in which the following issues and responses were made:

- If it is later considered that we don't need that much land or we need more, is there room for flexibility? The Committee was advised that monitoring had been built into the process and that if necessary or required, changes would be made/implemented via this process.
- What if things become out of sync, or if someone does not have a plan? The Committee was advised that there was a timetable and in Oldham we are "twin tracking" and that the Local Plan would be required to conform with this.
- What happens if the 9 Districts do not approve? The Committee was advised that if there was not full agreement, the consultation process would not be carried out.
- Infrastructure, can we deliver? The Committee was advised that alongside Places for Everyone, was the Local Implementation Plan which set out how we deliver. The Masterplan for each allocation includes requirements to ensure education and health provision.
- Contributions from developers, what confidence do we have? The Committee was advised that there is an obligation in the Local Plan to ensure infrastructure and delivery of that infrastructure.
- How do we achieve what we want to achieve? Mayoral Enterprise Zone – At what point are we tied into process? The Committee was advised that communications were taking place with the Mayor's office to understand what the Mayoral Enterprise Zone can do to provide a more simplified planning framework and financial, rates and tax incentives. The Skills Plan in Oldham was also referred to as an example of how efforts were being made to improve digital connectivity. The Committee was also advised that work was taking place to provide a joint statement to ensure the MEZ delivers what Oldham needs and that this would be included in the Local Plan. The Committee was also advised that legal advice indicated that substantial changes from the Publication Draft of the GMSF could not be made to the Places for Everyone to be able to pick up from where we got to last year.
- Protection of land, have substantial changes been made to deliver that? The Committee was advised that the Brownfield Strategy could identify that this is what we are doing, and that green belt land had been substantially reduced. The Committee was also advised that any changes to the plan would be required to be evidence based by officers or members of the public. A thorough process had taken place and it was felt that we would struggle to provide evidence to enable changes in the plan. Places for Everyone will deliver protection for Greenbelt land sooner than our Local Plan as we will be able to use a Greater Manchester land supply to meet the Government's Local Housing Need target.

- What funding is available to support Brownfield development for industrial or commercial use? The Committee was advised that currently, this question was not able to be answered and that further information was being sought.
- Planning applications, would they need to be supported? The Committee was advised that the Planning Inspectorate would pick up on these issues and that members of the public would have an opportunity to be represented. It was explained that both developers and members of the public/greenbelt groups can be represented at the Enquiry and that our officers would also attend to support the proposals in Places for Everyone
- Will we be in a position for 7000 to be built? Will mix and matching take place to enable achievement of this target? Is there any scope within the strategy? The Committee was advised that work was taking place to try to ensure viable schemes but that the whole process could not be controlled. The more active the Council is in bringing sites forward, the better we can deliver Brownfield sites first. Where developers show interest in Brownfield sites, there was funding available, and this was demonstrated in the Action Plan.
- Mill Strategy? The Committee was advised that 800 homes had been identified through the strategy but there is a balance to be struck between employment and housing use of many of the mills.

RESOLVED – That the Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommend to Cabinet and Full Council approval of the following:

1. Approval of the Places for Everyone: Publication Plan 2021, including strategic site allocations and Green Belt boundary amendments, and reference to the potential use of compulsory purchase powers to assist with site assembly and the supporting background documents, for publication pursuant to Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 for an 8-week period for representations to begin not earlier than 9th August; and
2. Delegate authority to the Oldham Council Cabinet Member for Housing in consultation with the Executive Director to approve the relevant Statement of Common Grounds (s) required pursuant to the National Planning Policy Framework 2019; and
3. Approve submission of the Places for Everyone Publication Plan 2021 to the Secretary of State for examination following the period for representations.

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT 2021

The Committee considered a report providing an update on the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) 2021 which was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The Committee was advised that the SCI sets out how Oldham Council would involve the community in the preparation and the revision of planning policy such as the Local Plan, together with the consideration of planning applications.

The Committee was further advised that this SCI was as per the adopted SCI 2020 version but with references to Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF) amended to refer to Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document.

The Committee was recommended to endorse approval of the SCI 2021 to Full Council and upon adoption to make it available to view alongside the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) 2020.

The Committee and Councillor Roberts thanked officers commenting that it was a very thorough and well written document.

RESOLVED – That the Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommend approval of the SCI 2021 for consideration at Full Council and upon adoption to make it available to view alongside the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) 2020.

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME 2021

The Committee considered a report to provide an update on the Local Development Scheme (LDS) 2021 a copy of which was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The Committee was reminded that the Council was required to prepare a Local Plan to ensure that there was an up-to-date and comprehensive planning framework to support the Borough's economic, environmental and, social objectives. THE LDS was the project plan for the Local Plan and set out details and timetables about the planning documents that would be prepared, including:

- Oldham's Local Plan (incorporating site allocations); and
- Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document for 9 Greater Manchester Local Authorities (Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford, and Wigan)

It was reported that the update had been prepared to amend references from GMSF to Places for Everyone (PfE), reflect the revised timeline for PfE and the review of Oldham's Local Plan. The proposed timetable for the remaining stages of the PfE Joint DPD were set out in the LDS and detailed within the report. Details of the consultation process were also outlined within the report.

The Committee was requested to recommend approval of the LDS 2021 for consideration at Cabinet and for publication upon adoption.

RESOLVED – That the Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommend approval to Cabinet of the LDS 2021 and for publication upon adoption.

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PRESENTATION - CLEAN AIR PLAN

The Committee received a presentation updating on the Greater Manchester Clean Air Final Plan detailing the process as follows:

- Responses to consultation (8th October 2020 – 3rd December 2020) including the current position in relation to Minimum Licensing Standards
- Covid-19 impact on air quality in Greater Manchester.

Key elements of the proposed and the final proposed GM Clean Air Zone were highlighted within the presentation, support measures, Governance process and the proposed forward timeline.

A discussion took place in which the following issues and responses were made:

- If Government funding is not made available, do we still have to go ahead with the measures? The Committee was advised that central government have stated that funding would be made available in November 2021, subject to approval from all 10 Local Authorities and then central Government.
- Do the standards apply to the Highways Agency? Is there any indication that there will be a legal obligation? The Committee was advised that this was an ongoing debate by the Highways Agency and that monitoring would still be carried out across Greater Manchester using diffusion tubes to ensure compliance is achieved on the Strategic road network managed by the Highways Agency.
- Is the Clean Air Zone (CAZ) a temporary measure? Is there a time-line? Do we know when we will be able to come out of it? Can charging continue if we fall below the WHO limit? The Committee was advised that this question would be put to the Steering Group and a response communicated to Committee Members. The response indicated that the CAZ will be operational until at least 2026 and then progress reviewed to ensure NOx levels are reduced over a longer period.

- Roadworks – Will there be a limit to the number of roadworks that cause blockages to the flow of traffic? The Committee was advised that this is considered as part of the permissions and planning process by TfGM but they have limited powers.
- Charging points – Have they been included? The Committee was advised that charging points and the infrastructure is provided from a number of different funding sources that complement the Clean Air Plan.
- Can we include the installation of Charging points from domestic and business proposals in the planning process? The Committee was advised that it was hoped that this would be included in the planning process.
- Following enquiries around the consultation process, in relation to Minimum Licensing Standards (MLS), the Committee was advised that Oldham had received the lowest returns response to the consultation process which had not been supportive of the proposals due to fears of the effects. The public had been supportive of the proposals.
- Checks on taxis etc, will they take place? It was confirmed that subject to funding, checks will be in place.
- Why wait until November 2021? Is there any way that the Council could fund and then reclaim as, there will be end of life vehicles coming off the road currently? It was suggested that this approach may be considered in conjunction with GMCA

RESOLVED – That the Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee endorses the Clean Air Plan and Strategy.

The meeting commenced at 6pm and ended at 8.22pm