

Report to CABINET

Oldham's Transport Strategy, Delivery Plan and Town Centre Parking Strategy

Portfolio Holder:

Councillor Chadderton, Leader and Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Housing

Officer Contact:

Emma Barton, Executive Director of Place and Economic Growth

Report Author:

Helen Fallon, Strategic Transportation Team Leader

23 January 2023

Reason for Decision

To adopt and publish the Oldham Transport Strategy.

Executive Summary

The Oldham Transport Strategy sets out how Oldham will meet the ambitions set out in the Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040 and sub strategies, whilst ensuring investment is prioritised to ensure Oldham's Transport and Highways Network support a Healthy, Clean and Thriving borough.

The Vision for Oldham as set out in the strategy is to create a connected borough with increasing use of public transport and active travel that provides all people with safe and inclusive access to opportunities and healthy choices.

The Transport Strategy sets out the council's transport and highways ambitions in relation to:

- A Healthy Oldham
- A Clean Oldham
- A Safe Oldham
- An Accessible Oldham
- A Connected Oldham and
- A Thriving Oldham

The Oldham Transport Strategy and Delivery Plan align with the Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040 'Right Mix' ambition for half of all journeys to be made by active and sustainable transport modes by 2040. The aim of Oldham's Transport Strategy is to reduce carbon emissions from transport, increase cycling, walking and public transport use and enable the borough to become an increasingly attractive place to live, work and visit.

Our Transport Strategy will support the borough's ambitions for sustainable growth and development over the next 20 years.

The Delivery Plan sets out transport interventions to be delivered over the following time periods:

- short term 0 - 5 years;
- medium term 5 -10 years;
- long term 10 – 20 years (up to 2040); and
- beyond 20 years - 2040 onwards.

The Transport Strategy also includes the first proposed sub-strategy - an update to the Oldham Town Centre Parking Strategy. The refreshed Town Centre Parking Strategy is necessary to support the current regeneration proposals for the town centre, which are aimed at providing quality homes within the town centre, increasing office and service space, and promoting decreasing road traffic and increased access to public transport. These growth plans need to be supported by the right parking infrastructure, with the right levels of car parking provided in the right places at the right tariff. An updated car parking strategy is therefore needed to ensure that appropriate mechanisms and processes are in place to plan for future provision.

A number of recommendations have been made in the Parking Strategy which range from improvements to signage around the town centre, updates to parking technology, such as mobile phone application, Mobility Hubs and Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure. Following the adoption of the Parking Strategy work will be undertaken to establish a supporting delivery plan facilitating the implementation of the identified recommendations.

As we identify actions to support the aims set out in the Transport Strategy, we will be developing further sub strategies to support this, including an Active Travel Sub Strategy to set out how we will ensure we meet our Transport ambitions to get more people walking, wheeling and cycling.

Recommendations

To adopt the Oldham Transport Strategy including the Delivery Plan and Oldham Town Centre parking strategy, to embed meeting the aims of the Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040 (GM2040) in the borough and ensure our transport and highways networks enable the building of homes and the creation of jobs.

1 Background

- 1.1 Oldham is an integral part of the Greater Manchester city-region and the Council is working to deliver GM2040. However we are a unique borough with our own significant challenges and opportunities.
- 1.2 The population of Oldham has grown by around 14,000 people over the last decade, which compares to a similar rate of growth in Greater Manchester.
- 1.3 Oldham is an ethnically diverse borough which in the last decade has seen population growth in the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities, as well as groups primarily made up of Polish and Romanian heritage. Oldham's diversity presents opportunities for businesses and training to access the skills required.
- 1.4 Oldham has high levels of community deprivation. In 2019 most of the Oldham urban area was within the 50% most deprived areas nationally.
- 1.5 When the Covid-19 pandemic struck the economic consequences impacted heavily on the poorest communities, which means many neighbourhood areas in Oldham require support with their travel.
- 1.6 A large proportion of the Oldham population works in sectors that have seen big changes to demands during the Covid-19 pandemic and therefore high levels of vulnerability. The top five employment sectors are health, manufacturing, retail, education, transport and warehousing. Together, these sectors make-up 55% of employees in Oldham. Retail has seen national and local declines in employment whilst transport and storage is a growing area of employment for the region.
- 1.7 As a Council we are making unprecedented investment in the borough to help build a thriving economy and need a transport offer that will support our wider health, environmental, economic and regeneration ambitions, such as those set out recently in the 'Creating a Better Place' boroughwide plan, which builds on the Council's refreshed vision for Oldham Town Centre.
- 1.8 It was agreed in 2020 that Oldham Council should develop our own Transport Strategy in the context of the agreed GM Transport Strategy (GMTS) to establish our own local transport vision, objectives, strategy and priorities that will provide a robust and cohesive framework to direct transport investment for all modes going forward.
- 1.9 The commitment is to enable the borough to become an increasingly attractive place to live, work and visit. This means Oldham Council want to provide safer facilities for walking and cycling and improve their integration with public transport services.
- 1.10 Walking, cycling and public transport services that integrate with better information and facilities is important to supporting the local economy and high streets in the short and longer-term to 2040.
- 1.11 The Oldham Transport Strategy aligns to the national, regional and local policy. This means alignment with the aims by the Government, TfGM and Oldham's Corporate Plan.

2 The Oldham Transport Strategy

- 2.1 The strategy sets out a transport vision and objectives for Oldham based upon meeting local priorities for Oldham Council, as well the Spatial Theme priorities and ambitions within the Greater Manchester Transport Strategy, (GMTS) 2040.
- 2.2 The vision is for a connected borough with increasing use of public transport and active travel that provides all people with access to opportunities and healthy choices with infrastructure that is safe and inclusive.
- 2.3 The Transport Strategy sets out the council's transport and highways priorities in relation to our following six ambitions:
- A Healthy Oldham
 - A Clean Oldham
 - A Safe Oldham
 - An accessible Oldham
 - A Connected Oldham and
 - A Thriving Oldham
- 2.4 It provides a strategic view of transport matters across the borough and sets out a delivery plan with priority schemes and interventions that will feed into the Greater Manchester transport intervention pipeline and how Oldham Council will work towards meeting the objectives of the Greater Manchester 2040 Transport Strategy over the next 5, 10 and 20 years, including the Right Mix Vision, Network Principles, Modal Principles and Spatial Theme ambitions. This will be achieved by:
- Improving walking and cycling routes in Oldham to support healthy travel choices and provide the environmental benefits from reduced vehicles emissions by continuing to deliver the Bee Network and implementing campaigns to promote active travel including to schools, residence and workplaces.
 - Improving actual safety, perceived safety and reducing fear of crime for all people using our highway and public transport networks in Oldham, working with partners from TfGM and transport providers.
 - Working with our partners to improve the public transport offer in Oldham and ensure it is developed to respond to the needs of the borough, supports the economy for travel for work and leisure, ensuring our residents are connected to opportunities.
 - Maintaining the highway to ensure a reliable and resilient network that can support essential journeys, including buses and freight to provide journey time reliability throughout the year within, into and out of the borough.
 - Lowering traffic related emissions from vehicles and improving air quality in Oldham for cleaner air, health and wellbeing including facilitating and accelerating the shift to electric vehicles by incentivising their use and ensuring access for all our residents to affordable charging infrastructure.
 - Ensuring our network is resilient to the impacts of climate change and extreme weather, eg flood mitigation measures, green infrastructure to increase bio-diversity.
- 2.5 It identifies how these policies can be applied across the different districts in the borough, adapting the vision to suit local area characteristics such as connectivity,
-

urban density and topography, supporting the 'right- mix' sustainable mode share targets appropriate for the trip and destination, as set out in the GM 2040 Transport Strategy.

- 2.6 The strategy builds the case for transport investment in Oldham, and demonstrates Oldham's role in supporting Greater Manchester's economic, social and environmental aspirations for the period to 2040 to ensure Oldham is poised to grasp opportunities to bid for external funding as and when they arise.
- 2.7 It includes cycling and walking interventions that will further develop Oldham's Bee Network proposals into a comprehensive cycling and walking network, including connections to public transport.
- 2.8 It presents a clear statement to the public and our partners of our transport priorities and the interventions needed to make ensure a healthy, clean, safe, connected, accesible and thriving Oldham.
- 2.9 The Strategy will support the Council's wider economic, environmental, regeneration and social aspirations as set out in key strategy and policy documents:
- The Oldham Corporate Plan and Future Oldham Vision;
 - The Local Plan (currently being reviewed) identifying where additional land should be safeguarded for possible future transport interventions;
 - Greater Manchester's Plan for Homes, Jobs, and the Environment
 - The Oldham Strategic Investment Framework;
 - the boroughwide 'Creating a Better Place' plan;
 - the Oldham Environment Strategy and Green New Deal strategy;
 - the refreshed vision for Oldham Town Centre and the emerging Oldham Town Centre Masterplan; and
 - other local masterplans such as the Royton Masterplan.

3 The Oldham Town Centre Parking Strategy

- 3.1 The updated parking strategy now forms part of Oldham's Transport Strategy and assesses the existing parking stock within the Town Centre area, reviews the previous assumptions with regard to future growth in demand to take account of recent land use development plans, which have been developed since the previous Parking Strategy was issued, and assesses the implications of the latest set of regeneration proposals.
- 3.2 An assessment of current and future demand for public car parking has been undertaken in order to establish existing car park usage and identify any potential future shortfall in parking provision.
- 3.3 The main aims of the Town Centre Parking Strategy are to:
- Draw together the existing evidence base and work completed to date to provide a one stop location of understanding Oldham's Parking Strategy;
 - Examine the potential implications for parking provision associated with the latest land use development proposals and identify a recommended strategy for managing car parking in Oldham;

-
- Reflect the aspirations of Oldham and seek to maximise the opportunities it has for sustaining both the economy and delivering new homes across the borough; and
 - Include a wide-ranging remit incorporating the level of parking provision provided, parking charges and revenue implications, provision of disabled and EV charging spaces, and consideration of a mobility hub location.
 - Facilitate the creation of a supporting delivery plan.
- 3.4 This updated parking strategy considers an updated 15-year period from 2022 to 2037.
- 3.5 Three options have been considered in relation to future development. The first considered the impact of closing nine town centre car parks and relocating their existing demand elsewhere on the network. The second and third scenarios contained within the Parking Strategy consider the land use development proposals put forward by Simpson Haugh in the Creating a Better Place (2020) strategic framework and subsequent Development Plan Prospectus (2022).
- 3.6 Both of these documents indicate a number of existing town centre car parks which could be redeveloped to different land uses (mostly residential) and so are reviewed in terms of displacement of existing demand and the additional demand generated by the new developments.
- 3.7 Overall conclusions of the assessment are as follows:
- All development options assessed will see a net loss of spaces across the Town Centre (which is to be expected).
 - Based on an assumption of 40% on site provision for residential development combined, work to support modal shift combined with TRICS modelling, demand is anticipated that the loss of parking provision can be contained within the reduced parking stock.
 - Demand will be managed by a number of methods, such as: introduction of Mobility Hubs, reduction in price of public transport, improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure, prioritisation of improvements to the perception of safety (in partnership with Transport for Greater Manchester, Greater Manchester Police and Metrolink) and Park & Ride facilities.
 - With the exception of the Mecca Bingo site, parking demand from new development is expected to be contained on site. The displaced Mecca Bingo site parking demand is expected to be contained within the reduced overall town centre capacity.
 - The strategy notes that parking charges are currently broadly comparable with benchmarked neighbouring towns including Bolton, Bury, Rochdale and Stockport. This is however an area which must remain under constant review to ensure that a balance between strategic transport aspirations and achieving the ambition to have a vibrant and strong town centre is achieved.
- 3.8 The report also sets out a number of recommendations. These include:
- Improvements to signage around the town centre, both in relation to the use of Variable Message Signs and the location of signs to promote the use of Park & Ride facilities.
-

-
- Updates to parking technology, such as mobile phone application with multiple functions (e.g. parking space availability and price) should be extended across all town centre parking locations. All locations should offer contactless or in-app payment options for parking.
 - Relocated and new Blue Badge spaces should have locations determined in liaison with local disabled user groups. Use of Blue Badge spaces should be monitored to determine when an increase in provision is required.
 - Mobility Hubs could be located at Spindles car park, Oldham Central Bus Station and the New Leisure Centre. This would have the joint benefit of offering emission free options for local deliveries, as well as providing uses with options for making sustainable journey choices.
 - It is recommended that further Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure is provided as demand grows.
 - The Council should continue to manage demand for on-street and off street car parking, and enforcement action should be taken against illegal, inconsiderate and dangerous parking, and unregistered vehicles.
 - The Council should monitor for any negative impacts associated with displaced parking following the closure of a number of town centre car parks.
 - The council will consider Controlled Parking Zones / Residents Parking Zones, where appropriate.

3.9 The Council's ongoing work with TfGM and partners on programmes such as Accessible Oldham, will ensure that walking and cycling can be a genuine mode choice for people of all abilities, and combined with planned improvements to public transport and the perception of safety on public transport, will help to mitigate future parking demand. Moving forward a supporting delivery plan will be developed to ensure that the recommendations contained in the Parking Strategy are implemented.

4 Engagement

4.1 Engagement has been undertaken with key internal and external partners and stakeholders in the preparation of the transport strategy, pipeline of interventions, identification of priorities and the development of the delivery plan, including:

- Oldham Council officers working in highways ((including Unity Partnership for engagement pre April 2022), strategic planning, development management, regeneration, environmental policy, health, the town centre manager;
- Officers within the Economic and Environment Directorate, in particular our Highways Service
- Oldham Council Leader and Elected Members
- Oldham District Leads; and
- Transport for Greater Manchester

4.2 The development of the Oldham Town Centre Parking Strategy included steer from the Transport Strategy project team to ensure it reflected the views previously provided by key stakeholders. This has ensured that the recommendations are consistent with and support the ambitions set out in the Transport Strategy, particularly relating to a Healthy, Clean and Accessible Oldham.

-
- 4.3 Following approval at Cabinet, there will be further communication and engagement to raise awareness of the delivery plans across each of our districts including key priorities. We will also be identifying how we can progress the ambitions and recommendations across the strategies which may include developing further action plans and sub strategies in addition to the Parking Strategy, including an Active Travel Strategy setting out further detail on how we will work to increase walking and cycling in Oldham and Road Collision Reduction Strategy.

5 Options/Alternatives

- 5.1 Option 1: To adopt and publish the Transport Strategy, Delivery Plan and Town Centre Parking Strategy to support our framework to direct transport investment for all modes going forward to support sustainable growth and development to enable and ensure a healthy, clean, safe and connected.
- 5.2 Option 2: To not adopt and publish the Transport Strategy, Delivery Plan and Town Centre Parking Strategy, which will weaken the case for transport investment in the borough, as there will not be clear direction on the need and justification for the investment, and links to how it meets the targets set out in the GM2040 Strategy.

6 Financial Implications

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the adoption of the Transport Strategy. As individual programmes of works and schemes are developed the detailed financial implications will be included in future reports. (James Postle)

7 Legal Services Comments

- 7.1 Local Transport Plans (LTPs) were established by the 2000 Transport Act, as statutory documents to be produced by all local authorities, setting out a 5-year programme for investment for local transport, supported by statements on wider local transport policies to support the delivery of a longer term vision and strategy for their given area. The adoption of an LTP had to be approved by full Council. Under changes mainly introduced by the Local Transport Act 2008, the duty to produce an LTP for Greater Manchester was transferred to the sole responsibility of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA). In addition the requirement to produce a 5-year programme was replaced by a duty to keep the LTP under review, alter it if considered appropriate to do so and replace it as the GMCA think fit. As the statutory duty to produce an LTP is now the sole responsibility of the GMCA, there is no requirement for Oldham's Transport Strategy to be approved by full Council. (A Evans)

8 Co-operative Agenda

- 8.1 Adopting an Oldham Transport Strategy will assist the Council's Co-operative Agenda by ensuring Oldham has a Transport Strategy that reflects Oldham's specific transport needs and ambitions and makes the case for transport investment in the borough. The Strategy will cover all modes of transport and is boroughwide so should benefit all residents.

9 Human Resources Comments

- 9.1 N/A

10 Risk Assessments

-
- 10.1 None provided
- 11 **IT Implications**
- 11.1 N/A
- 12 **Property Implications**
- 12.1 N/A
- 13 **Procurement Implications**
- 13.1 If option one is selected to adopt and publish the Transport Strategy to support Oldham Council's direct transport investment for all modes, Oldham Council may require additional external resources to support successful delivery. Any external consultancy and professional services required for effective delivery must be procured compliantly within the stated terms of **The Public Contracts Regulations 2015**) utilizing all compliant procurement procedures listed within the Act, **PCR Chapter 2 section 3 & 4, r26-34.**
- 14 **Environmental and Health & Safety Implications**
- 14.1 The Transport Strategy sets out ambitions for a Healthy, Safe and Clean Oldham and supports the GM Transport Strategy 2040 to deliver programmes to increase active travel to improve the health of our people, reduce emissions from transport through both a reduction in private car and switch to less polluting vehicles and or active and sustainable modes, and reduce road danger to improve safety across the highway and public transport network.
- 15 **Equality, community cohesion and crime implications**
- 15.1 All schemes that are brought forward for delivery through the Strategy will be designed in accordance with the relevant guidance in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges and in compliance with all DDA standards which will mean improved accessibility and safety for non-motorised road users including those with a sensory disability, those in wheelchairs and those with prams and pushchairs.
- 16 **Implications for Children and Young People**
- 16.1 This decision supports children and young people as it seeks to improve options for walking, cycling and public transport to schools, as well as improved road safety around schools and access to cycle training.
- 17 **Equality Impact Assessment Completed?**
- 17.1 Trialling Impact Assessment Tool
- 18 **Key Decision**
- 18.1 Yes
- 19 **Key Decision Reference**
- 20.1 Nei-18-22
- 21 **Background Papers**
-

21.1 The following is a list of background papers

Two baseline reports have been developed to support the evidence, ambitions and measures within the Oldham Transport Strategies. The baseline reports are:

- Oldham Council Transport Strategy Policy Baseline Report, 2021.
- Oldham Council Transport and Spatial Change Report, 2021.

22 **Appendices**

22.1 Appendix 1 - Oldham's Transport Strategy (Draft for Management Board)

22.2 Appendix 2 – Oldham Town centre Parking Strategy (Draft)