

Portfolio Report

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Chris Goodwin, Cabinet Member for Transport and Highways.

This report provides an update on the main activity since the last Council meeting relating to portfolio responsibilities.

Strategic Transport & Bee Network:

We have been working closely with Transport for Greater Manchester and colleagues across GM to prepare the new Local Transport Plan for Greater Manchester. This will include a Local Implementation Plan for each local authority, setting out a pipeline of transport-related projects to progress under the Local Transport Plan. The draft Plan goes to GMCA on 7 November and, if approved, there will be a public consultation on the draft Plan for 12 weeks between December and February.

We have also recently started a trial for our latest School Street proposal, around St Luke's CofE Primary School in Chadderton. The trial aims to give children the chance to walk, wheel or cycle to school and stay safe on the school journey, while also addressing the high levels of traffic that local residents experience during school drop-off and pick-up times.

One of our CRSTS projects, the Broadway Canal Link, successfully passed the Strategic Outline Business Case stage in October, meaning that the scheme can progress onto public engagement, which is planned for the coming months, followed by a planning application. The project proposes an upgrade to the existing off-road route between Broomes Park and the Rochdale Canal. The scheme will create a 1.2km long and a 3.5m-wide shared path for pedestrians and cyclists, offering a safer, more attractive alternative to busy routes such as Broadway, Middleton Road and Foxdenton Lane. This new connection will strengthen links between Chadderton and Middleton, support the Mayor's Network Vision and Oldham's Cycle Network Masterplan, and contribute to the town's wider active travel ambitions.

Street Lighting:

The annual replacement programme is ongoing and as part of this, 665 columns are planned to be replaced in 2025-26 (Year 3) across two phases in North Chadderton. Phase 1 of 330 lights was successfully completed between March and September, and Phase 2 is underway and is projected to be completed this financial year.

To date, as part of the programme, 1,490 columns have been replaced with another 4,012 to be replaced by the end of March 2031. The programme is based on the age and condition of assets across each ward and replaced on a ward-by-ward basis to minimise network disruption. As a result of the improvement in technology and the upgrades installed, electricity consumption and therefore carbon output are both reduced from the 2024/25 levels.

Finally, the Christmas decoration displays for this year are being installed across the borough; switch-ons are being undertaken with the first event in Oldham Town Centre on Saturday 15 November and then steadily completed across the borough.

Highways:

Gully Cleaning - The planned gully cleansing programme is continuing on a ward-by-ward basis and is in the 11th out of 20 wards – approximately 24,000 gullies have been visited and another 23,500 still to visit. To date, the first pass of the wards has resulted in nearly 75% of gullies being cleared per ward, with approximately 6,000 overall at this point requiring a revisit as they need a complete dig-out or repair. This part of the programme has now also commenced starting back in Alexandra, and any gullies missed during the initial visit will be cleared, and officers are coordinating with ward members to help with parked cars.

We are mindful that winter weather generates additional demand due to excessive rainfall and leaf fall. Therefore, as stated when this programme was initiated, any blocked gullies that pose a risk of property flooding or highway safety will also be visited and cleared in parallel to the above programme.

Winter Maintenance:

The Winter Maintenance service officially started operation in October and will continue for the next 6 months. The Service currently has a stock of 6,000 tonnes in place – grit bins across the borough have been filled and the teams are ready to respond should the need arise.

There are 8 modern, well maintained gritters ready to be used, including 6 standard sized gritters (18 tonnes), one large gritter for the Transpennine routes (26 tonnes), and one much smaller gritter (6.5 tonnes) for the small routes on narrower country lanes when necessary.

The overall operation requires over 28 operatives to be involved, with 14 of these operatives per day if required to cover two shifts over the 24hr period – this involves Highways operatives, help with from other departments.

Last year, which was relatively mild, there were 71 gritting sessions of the primary network over 46 days of active gritting operations – this equates to the gritters having travelled and gritted over 16,000 miles.

Recommendations: Council is requested to note the report