
Report to OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

Who put that there?: A street charter for Oldham

Overview and Scrutiny Lead:

Cllr Colin McLaren, Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Board

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Purpose of the Report

To provide an update on the implementation of the action plan for the street charter in Oldham.

Recommendations

That the Board:-

1. Notes progress and final conclusions of the working group on the implementation of the street charter.
2. Agrees that the street charter is now embedded within the relevant responsible service areas and notes the conclusions of the 'Who Put That There' Street Charter Working Group as set out in the action plan
3. Agrees that service areas should utilise the working group as a network for any relevant issues where they are consulting on, which would potentially have an impact on blind and partially sighted residents and visitors to Oldham e.g. Town Centre Regeneration.
4. Notes that a piece of work being led by the Licensing Team in respect of A Boards and Street Furniture and will be reported on separately.

1 **Background**

- 1.1 The report provides an update on the implementation work that has been taking place following agreement by Council in March 2017 to adopt the 'Who Put That There' Street Charter for Oldham, which seeks to make Oldham more accessible for blind and partially sighted people.
- 1.2 As a reminder to the Board, the requirements detailed within the Street Charter are set out below.

We will work with blind or partially sighted people to:-

- Establish a voluntary database for those with sensory impairments and the main support groups for those with impairments – this will help us to be proactive in communicating key information at a local level to those who are blind or partially-sighted.
- Review the reporting system to ensure that our systems for reporting issues are easily accessible for blind or partially-sighted people, including the introduction of a facility for people to record that they are partially-sighted or blind when reporting an issue. This will enable us to collect specific data on issues within Oldham that are causing a problem for those who are blind or partially-sighted.
- Identify how we can engage those who are blind or partially-sighted more effectively in decision making through greater involvement and consultation when changes are being discussed or planned i.e. involvement in Road Safety audits when planning new schemes
- Identify how we can communicate most effectively and proactively about changes to highways or other issues that affect their ability to live independently and enjoy a good quality of life.
- Identify how blind or partially sighted people may be able to effectively and proactively input into the review of crossings across the borough in conjunction with TfGM and the Community Lighting Partnership.
- Identify any improvements which could be made to improve accessibility when out and about and help to promote these. For example, the focus group mentioned how yellow lines on steps would greatly assist accessibility where no such 'highlighter' exists. Additionally, Unity have suggested they work with the user group to identify works that need doing through sharing the programme of planned works in advance.
- Develop an awareness campaign aimed at:

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- **Residents:** asking them to consider the needs of those who are blind or partially sighted more generally, and particularly in respect of parking, putting bins out, garden maintenance etc.
 - **Businesses:** to raise the awareness of the hazards that A-boards and café furniture can cause and encourage them to adopt a safe alternative.

We will also:

- Work with licensing to review their draft 'A Board' policy, using the working group as consultees, making recommendations and support the awareness raising of the policy and its implementation. (The 'A Board' Policy will be reported separately to Overview and Scrutiny Board on 16th October 2018 by colleagues in licensing.

2 **Current Position**

2.1 A working group was formed to progress implementation of the Street Charter.

The group comprises of Councillor McLaren as Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Board, Councillor Elaine Garry as a previous member of O&S who wished to remain involved in implementing the charter together with 3 representatives from a local organisation Henshaw's Society for Blind. The Group is supported by the Strategy, Partnerships and Policy Team who engage other officers across Council services on specific actions within the charter.

2.2 The group met over the last 12 months and prioritised key areas within the street charter for the initial focus, with other areas coming on stream as the work of the group evolved, . Those priorities were:-

- General awareness raising through attending existing and suitable events, such as the Your Oldham Street Markets, handing out leaflets.
- Regeneration – specifically the Town Centre master planning team to provide feedback and advice to ensure that regeneration proposals give consideration to blind or partially sighted people.
- Obstructions on the highway- specifically overhanging bushes and bins.

Initial discussions on all the actions within the street charter have been held and lead officers identified so that work can begin and updates can be provided to the group, alongside the priority work identified above.

2.3 The implementation plan is attached at Appendix 1. This aimed to track the actions identified by the group and those within the charter. It established the current policy / position is on the issues raised as part of the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) campaign and also considered what more can be done, if anything..

2.4 This was a time-limited working group reporting back to Overview and Scrutiny for the last time in September 2018 with the intention that services will then work to the charter as part of their business as usual arrangements.

2.5 Next steps

- That service areas should utilise the working group as a network for any relevant issues where they are consulting on, which would potentially have an impact on blind and partially sighted residents and visitors to Oldham e.g. Town Centre Regeneration
- To ensure the group has an ongoing presence at suitable events such as Your Oldham events, as this ensures continual awareness raising.
- To create a good news story from this work via social media, bringing together any key messages for residents, businesses and visitors to the borough.

3 Key Issues for Overview and Scrutiny to Discuss

3.1 The Board is asked to consider the implementation plan attached at Appendix 1, noting the conclusions of the working group and how the actions are embedded within the relevant responsible service areas.

4 Key Questions for Overview and Scrutiny to Consider

4.1 N/A

5. Links to Corporate Outcomes

5.1 The street charter is closely linked to our priorities of thriving communities and co-operative services as it seeks to engage people in our relevant design processes to make Oldham more accessible for blind and partially sighted people.

6 Financial Implications

N/A

7 Legal Services Comments

N/A


8 Co-operative Agenda

8.1 The project will help communities to become more aware of the issues faced by blind and partially sighted residents and visitors to the borough, and in turn will create a safer space for all. Communities will be doing their bit reducing the risk by making their streets more inclusive by cutting back over hanging bushes, keeping the highway clear.



9	Human Resources Comments
9.1	N/A
10	Risk Assessments
10.1	N/A
11	IT Implications
11.1	None
12	Property Implications
12.1	None
13	Procurement Implications
13.1	N/A
14	Environmental and Health & Safety Implications
14.1	None
15	Equality, community cohesion and crime implications
15.1	None
16	Equality Impact Assessment Completed?
16.1	No – update only.
17	Key Decision
17.1	No – update only.
18	Key Decision Reference
18.1	N/A
19	Background Papers
19.1	N/A


Implementation plan

Issue/Lead	What we currently do?	What is the RNIB ideal?	Actions to be progressed / considered	Conclusion (also refer to the 'what we currently do column)
Priority identified by the working group: General awareness raising through attending existing and suitable events	Ad-hoc place specific awareness raising based around a particular issue picked up by the District Team through casework.	N/A	Liaise with Comms to identify events in 2018 Liaise with District Teams to identify events in 2018	Awareness raising took place in September 2017 and July 2018 through the Your Oldham events, where both Henshaw's and RNIB had a presence
Priority identified by the working group: How we proactively communicate and engage with those who are blind or partially-sighted when changes are being discussed or planned i.e. road schemes, highway changes	We engage with the public through consultation events, but nothing specifically around the blind and partially sighted.	N/A	Consider how we effectively engage with those who are blind or partially sighted when:- Designing highway schemes Through the town centre master planning programme When reviewing crossings in conjunction with TfGM and the Community Lighting Partnership.	Su Barratt from the council's regeneration scheme has been fully sighted on the Who Put That There – Street Charter for the blind work. The team have the contact details for Henshaw's and will engage with them for any appropriate advice on schemes going forward
Priority identified by the working group: Bins and rubbish bags Lead: Craig Dale	Bin crews are trained in placement of bins following collection with particular attention on the need to consider partially sighted or blind residents. Due to the variants in collection points we do not stipulate to residents the way in which they place bins for collection, although we do state the collection point (i.e. front of property, collection point etc).	All bin crews to be trained in why it is so important to store bins as safely as possible. Run awareness campaigns to encourage residents to be considerate in how they place their bins. Give consideration to the requirements of the Equality Act in relation to their waste collection policies.	Ensure that the reporting system is easily accessible for blind or partially-sighted people. Run an awareness campaign aimed at residents asking them to consider the needs of those who are blind or partially sighted when putting their bin out.	We operate in line with the RNIB ideal as training takes place with staff. Environmental services have confirmed that the numbers of complaints recorded from blind or partially sighted residents is unrecorded due to the low numbers. This would make the percentage less than 0.00%

Issue/Lead	What we currently do?	What is the RNIB ideal?	Actions to be progressed / considered	Conclusion (also refer to the 'what we currently do column')
	All crew members have at least 2 recorded inspections a month and this area of work is included in PPF's	When negotiating contracts with waste management companies, build in 'clear highway' policies as part of the contract.		Awareness campaign took place as part of the 2017 and 2018 Your Oldham campaign where both Henshaw's and RNIB had a presence
<p>Priority identified by the working group: Overgrown shrubbery and branches Lead: Glenn Dale</p>  <p>WPTT Overhanging shrubbery and branch</p>	<p>If we receive a report outside the normal pruning programme we will aim to inspect the site and prune the shrubs away from the public highway if they belong to the council. If the shrubs are private our colleagues in Unity will write to the landowner and ask them to cut back the shrubs from the adopted highway to their boundary. If they fail to do this within a given time then we will cut them back and charge the landowner for the work. Reportable via</p> <p>.environmentalservices@oldham.gov.uk for those owned by the council.</p>	<p>Set up accessible ways for blind and partially sighted people to report.</p> <p>Act swiftly upon these reports by alerting the residents or taking action if it is a council owned property.</p> <p>Run awareness campaigns to encourage residents to be considerate in managing their shrubbery and trees.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the reporting system is easily accessible for blind or partially-sighted people. • Provide the facility for people to record that they are partially sighted or blind when reporting an issue. • Run awareness campaign • Consider an expedited response time for these requests 	<p>Environmental services have confirmed that the numbers of complaints recorded from blind or partially sighted residents is unrecorded due to the low numbers. This would make the percentage less than 0.00%</p> <p>Reporting is via the Council's usual channels e.g. email, website, telephone.</p> <p>Awareness campaign took place as part of the 2017 Your Oldham campaign</p>
<p>Establish a voluntary database for those with sensory impairments and the main support groups: Strategy, Partnerships and Policy Team</p>	<p>We do not currently hold this information, we make contact through the local and national organisations that we are aware of</p>	<p>n/a</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link to resident first programme • Assess complaints received and make contact with individuals to see if they would like to be included on the database. 	<p>Council's customer services team have been linked into this work.</p> <p>They have not received any complaints to this effect but will be mindful and compliant with the charter in any future channel</p>

Issue/Lead	What we currently do?	What is the RNIB ideal?	Actions to be progressed / considered	Conclusion (also refer to the 'what we currently do column) shift and system change
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share updates with those people in relation to progress of the street charter 	
<p>Review our reporting and access to services to ensure they are easily accessible for blind or partially-sighted people. Lead: Fran Lautman</p>	<p>We offer mediated support in Access Oldham for residents to access services</p>	<p>n/a</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that user requirement for blind or partially-sighted residents is built into requirements and service redesign through the Resident First Programme. Ensure all front-facing staff are refreshed and trained on supporting blind or partially-sighted people. Consider introducing a facility for people to record that they are partially sighted or blind when reporting an issue so that we can collect specific data on issues within Oldham that are causing a problem for those who are blind or partially sighted. 	<p>Council's customer services department have been linked into this work.</p> <p>They have not received any complaints to this effect but will be mindful and compliant with the charter in any future channel shift and system change</p>
<p>Analyse the number and nature of complaints from blind or partially-sighted people</p>	<p>Consideration of this action to be progressed by the working group</p>	<p>n/a</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider targeted activity in any residential area to help relieve the most persistent and dangerous hotspots Work with Ward Councillors, residents and community groups to identify local 	<p>No complaints have been made which have been specifically notes as being made from blind and partially sighted residents and visitors to the borough</p>

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<p>A-Boards and Café Furniture Lead: John Garforth</p>  <p>What can I do about... A boards.do</p>	<p>Previously we had no Policy on this and did not enforce.</p> <p>Through the Street Charter work, the council now has a draft policy which includes enforcement.</p> <p>The Who Put That There Working group have reviewed this, make recommendations and the final version of the policy is being presented to Overview and Scrutiny on 4 September 2018</p>	<p>RNIB supports a complete ban on A-boards.</p>	<p>solutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the reporting system is easily accessible for blind or partially-sighted people. • Provide the facility for people to record that they are partially sighted or blind when reporting an issue. • We could do an awareness campaign through social media and Borough Life asking business owners to be mindful of where the A-Boards are positioned. 	<p>A draft A Board Policy has been developed and was considered by the July meeting of the Who Put That their working group.</p> <p>This will be reported separately by the Licensing Team to O&S.</p>
<p>Pavement Parking Lead: GMP rep (to be identified) Peter Wood</p>  <p>WPTT Parking on Pavements.doc</p>	<p>Pavement parking is a real issue not just for people who are visually impaired or blind, but the wider community. We receive several calls daily regarding obstruction due to parking on the pavement.</p> <p>Our TPCSO's attend many of the incidents and will act on a complaint by issuing a TOR (Traffic Offence Report) but they will not actively go out ticketing vehicles parked on the pavement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review LA policy in relation to pavement parking • Ban pavement parking • Use existing powers such as Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) to introduce bans where practical • Work with the police to use their existing powers under the Highways Act and other legislation to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the reporting system is easily accessible for blind or partially-sighted people. • Provide the facility for people to record that they are partially sighted or blind when reporting an issue. • Run an awareness campaign aimed at residents asking them to consider the needs of those who are blind or partially sighted when parking on the pavement if absolutely necessary. 	<p>Awareness campaign took place as part of the 2017 and 2018 Your Oldham campaign where both Henshaw's and RNIB had a presence</p>

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		<p>keep the pavement clear of obstructions caused by parked cars.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with police, local authorities and other stakeholders to raise awareness of the issue with the general public. 		
<p>Pedestrian Crossings Lead: Steve Irvine / Gordon Anderson</p>  <p>WPTT Pedestrian Crossings (Feb 2015)</p>	<p>The provision of a pedestrian crossing can come about in a number of ways, as follows:</p> <p>(i) As part of a Casualty Reduction Scheme where there is evidence of pedestrian related accidents taking place on the highway.</p> <p>(ii) As part of a Planning requirement stipulated by the Authority where a new development is likely to increase the demand to cross the highway at a particular point</p> <p>(iii) Following a request from the Public or Ward Councillors where there is a user demand but not necessarily a significant</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review their policy in relation to pedestrian crossings. • Work with blind and partially sighted people to review and audit their crossings. • Enforce national guidance when it comes to the use of audible beeps, rotating cones and tactile paving. • Regularly monitor and maintain the accessibility of crossings and look at increasing the crossing times, especially in busy areas. • Ensure that reporting processes for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We could be more proactive in encouraging partially sighted or blind residents to feed into the planning and consultation process. • Ensure that the reporting system is easily accessible for blind or partially-sighted people. • Provide the facility for people to record that they are partially sighted or blind when reporting an issue. 	<p>Su Barratt from the council's regeneration scheme has been fully sighted on the Who Put That There – Street Charter for the blind work.</p> <p>The team have the contact details for Henshaw's and will engage with them for any appropriate advice on schemes going forward – so that they are part of the consultation.</p>

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	<p>accident problem.</p> <p>TfGM operate annual inspections of all of the Signalised Crossings in the Borough. The Community Lighting Partnership inspect Zebra Crossing Belisha Beacons in the Borough.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the process for people reporting issues? Faults or issues are received by Unity Traffic Section who forward them to TfGM. Faults or issues are submitted directly to TfGM on their website. 	<p>potential new crossing points are accessible for blind and partially sighted people.</p>		
<p>Tactile paving Lead: Steve Irvine / Gordon Anderson</p>	<p>Oldham Council carry out a various types of improvements and enhancement to the adopted Highway Network and Public Realm areas that involve laying Tactile Paving.</p> <p>For all such installations we adopt the requirements for Tactile Paving that are contained within Department for Transport Guidelines and Regulations.</p> <p>Depending upon the size of the particular scheme the Design</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure authorities fulfil the requirements of the Equality Act in particular the Public Sector Equality Duty • Remind authorities of the importance of the use of kerbs and the potential discriminatory effect of removing them • Remind authorities of the issues they should apply their minds to when 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A 	<p>Su Barratt from the council's regeneration scheme has been fully sighted on the Who Put That There – Street Charter for the blind work.</p> <p>The team have the contact details for Henshaw's and will engage with them for any appropriate advice on schemes going forward, so that they are part of the consultation.</p>

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	<p>Team carry out a vulnerable road user assessment.</p> <p>With regards to criteria, facilities are designed to best address an actual (or suppressed) demand, existing or anticipated desire lines or a particular road safety issue.</p>	<p>removing railings and other barriers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advise against the use of a 25mm kerb 		