

## TRAFFORD COUNCIL

**Report to:** Executive  
**Date:** 29<sup>th</sup> January 2024  
**Report of:** Chair of Overview and Scrutiny

### Report Title

#### Events at Old Trafford 2023

### Summary

In 2022 the Scrutiny Committee agreed to form a Task and Finish Group to look at the impact of Events at Old Trafford Football Ground upon the local Community and to look at ways that impact could be reduced. This report focuses upon the issues faced regarding Traffic and puts forward recommendations to alleviate the issues faced.

### Recommendation(s)

That the Executive;

1. Support plans to classify certain roads around Manchester United as red routes.
2. Work with Manchester United over time to reduce the number of spectators arriving by car, noting that there are currently around 16,000 cars not able to park at Old Trafford.
3. Work with TFGM to extend the Shuttle service and the possibility of providing car parks further away from the ground, for example within Trafford Park.
4. Request Manchester United to provide a list of all genuine car parking facilities to fans they have.
5. Work with Manchester United and TFGM to see whether car parking facilities for games are highlighted on Google Maps, Waze, or other mapping apps.
6. Look to link to TFGM's live Traffic Data and Manchester United information from the Council website and social media accounts.
7. Spread awareness of the monthly newsletter to ensure people are made aware of when matches are being held.
8. Look at the option to run a secure bike storage trial with Manchester United to see if it increases cycling to matches, and if positive, encourage Manchester United to commit to further provision of safe, secure cycle parking facilities on site.

9. Work with TFGM and the Trafford Centre with a view to utilising the parking spaces at the Trafford Centre for Match Day Parking.
10. Ensure that the monitoring data from Manchester United Traffic Management Plan be shared with Ward Councillors.
11. Support the continuation of the regular meetings between Manchester United and ward Councillors and that performance data from the Traffic Management Plan be shared at those meetings.
12. Support the reforming of the task and finish group to look at significant issues by residents if they occur.

Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

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## **Background**

### **1. Background**

**1.1** Manchester United are one of the largest sports teams in the world and the Old Trafford Football Stadium where they play is the largest capacity stadium in the Premier League. On top of being the largest stadium the team's popularity means that the stadium is almost always filled to capacity having an average attendance of 73,798 per match in the 2022/23 season. For context that is the same number of people as the population of Carlisle coming into and out of the Old Trafford area roughly 30 times a year, which causes large amounts of disruption for the local population.

**1.2** The task and finish group was suggested by Councillor Walsh following complaints received from residents about issues they face when Manchester United hold home games. The group was officially formed following the agreement by the Scrutiny Committee at their meeting on the 29<sup>th</sup> June 2022 where it was also agreed that Councillor Walsh would be the Chair of the group. Following the meeting an email went out to all Scrutiny Members and ward Councillors for the areas around Old Trafford asking if they wished to join the group. Responses were received from the Councillors listed below.

- Councillor Walsh
- Councillor Acton
- Councillor Carter
- Councillor Hornby
- Councillor Haughey
- Councillor Zhi
- Councillor Lloyd
- Councillor Jarman

## **2. Scope of the review and Resident Survey**

The first meeting of the group was used to scope the work the Task and Finish group would undertake and agree a Terms of Reference (appendix 1). The Group agreed that the overall aim was to produce a report detailing the issues residents faced, the impact the issues had on their lives, and providing a series of recommendations to address those issues. The Group also agreed that the first step to achieve this goal was to develop a questionnaire to capture residents views and experiences. Councillors Carter and Hornby led on the development of a survey to go out to residents (Appendix 2). The send out of the survey was delayed due to the By-Election for Stretford and Urmston on the 15<sup>th</sup> December 2022. This went live on the 13<sup>th</sup> of January 2023 and was open for four weeks closing on the 10<sup>th</sup> of February 2023. The Survey received 438 responses with over 200 respondents providing an email address for further correspondence.

## **3. Meeting with Council Officers, Manchester United, GMP, and TFGM**

Following a basic analysis of the findings from the survey the Group arranged to meet with representatives from the identified key stakeholders to present the findings and agree next steps for the group on the 27<sup>th</sup> of February 2023. Councillor Walsh delivered a presentation at the meeting (Appendix 3) before opening the floor for discussion of the actions to be taken. At the meeting it was agreed that traffic and anti-social parking was clearly the largest issue for residents and tackling the issue would require a range of approaches from new Traffic Measures, improved communications, increased public transport provision, and parking enforcement.

## **4. Traffic Management Meetings**

**4.1** Following the meeting on the 27<sup>th</sup> February, the Group met with Council Officers, Manchester United representatives, and staff from TFGM on the 1<sup>st</sup> of August 2023 and the 6<sup>th</sup> of September 2023. These meetings were to look at data prepared by TFGM, look at additional measures being brought in by TFGM, and to discuss steps to be taken by the Council and Manchester United. TFGM provided data showing that United have 5,000 car parking spaces and a total of roughly 21,000 vehicles coming into the area for a match, so the objective should be to seek to displace 16,000 vehicles into other forms of transport, recognising that this is a longer-term ambition.

**4.2** TFGM presented the Group with information of how they were increasing capacity of the tram lines, which are used by fans to get to the game, and that they were also in discussions with the Trafford Centre around utilising their car parking spaces with shops at the mall advertising the option to shop, eat, and drink before attending the match to increase business on match days. TFGM ran a shuttle service after the first home match of the season which proved effective and so TFGM approved a season long trial of a shuttle service to and from the ground on match days.

**4.3** Manchester United representatives told the Group that the Premier League were providing match dates a month in advance during the 2023/24 season, which was a large improvement on previous seasons. Manchester United plan to utilise this with improved communications including a monthly newsletter with a list of all the games, along with news of other activities the club is involved in including charity and community work. Representatives of the club recognised that there would not be any

single solution to address the issues that residents and fans faced on match days, and that it would take a wide range of solutions to address the problems effectively.

**4.4** Councillor Carter raised an issue around the bike facilities at Old Trafford and he felt that having safe bike storage places at the ground, would greatly increase the number of people who cycled to matches. The current cycle-park facilities and visibility of them are inadequate. Councillor Carter suggested that a trial be run on 100 secure spaces to see if it leads to an uptake in people cycling to matches. If this showed positive results, Councillors wanted further encouragement of Manchester United to provide further provision.

**4.5** Following the discussions at the meetings, the Chair of the group felt that the suggestions made at the meetings formed a good basis for recommendations to the Executive, as there was not much additional that the Group could add to this subject without significant investment of resources.

## **5. Manchester United Traffic Management Plan**

Manchester United shared their traffic management plan with the Group which lays out the traffic management steps to be taken on match days. The plan is signed off by Trafford Councils Highways officers.

## **6. Recommendations**

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