

Appendix A – Meetings with Amey and Council Officers: 01.02.2023 - 06.03.2024

Public Health

The Public Health Team agreed with the urgent need for the actions the group aimed for, as car dependency has a proven detrimental impact on public health as a result of poor air quality and lack of exercise. The Trafford 2023 Public Health Annual Report highlights this issue and suggests high impact measures the Council could implement, recognising that a package of interventions is required that work together to make active travel easier and safer, placing some limits on motorised vehicles and recognising and addressing cultural or social factors.

The report contained similar aims to those of the group:

- Reallocate road space away from cars towards better use of space per traveller.
- Remember not everyone drives and it is not a right – older people, disabled people and those on lower incomes are not likely to drive.
- Provide protected space for cyclists.
- Restrict parking and increase parking charges.
- Lower and enforce speed limits.
- Improve the public realm – benches, street lighting, greenery.
- Improve public transport.

They provided us with some evidence. Walking, including using mobility aids, is an important contributor to meeting physical activity thresholds for women, people with disabilities, older people, people on lower incomes, and people from ethnic backgrounds, and also provides benefits for diseases such as cardiovascular disease and diabetes. The more people there are that walk and cycle, the safer active travel becomes for everyone. Electric cars still produce particulates and cause congestion, so they are not a long-term solution for urban areas. Air pollution causes even more harm to children than to adults with peak exposure on the school run and air pollution coming into schools. In addition, air quality is worse in more deprived areas.

15-minute neighbourhoods remain an aspiration.

Right to the Streets

This is a successful project which contributes towards aiming to make our streets safer and to encourage walking. It was not explored further as it appears to be a successful strategy in raising the profile of safety while walking, cycling and using public transport.

Play Streets

The group were informed there were difficulties in implementing Play Streets. If more were agreed to, this would appear to offer another opportunity to allow people to see the benefits of car free roads, which could offer a safe space for children to play outside.

School Streets

The group were informed that the Urmston School Streets scheme appears to be the most successful of the current schemes, able to run full time and with regular volunteers, supported by Enforcement Officers and Police Traffic Officers. A 6-month experimental TRO has been applied for this scheme and also for the Seymour Park Community Primary Scheme through One Trafford Partnership with the erection of permanent signage. The team feel that there have been very positive steps made with the schemes in a relatively short amount of time and they have clearly worked very hard to achieve this.

There are clearly challenges in implementing School Streets due to the reliance on volunteers and the cost implications of installing ANPR. Parents are generally supportive, but according to the Public Health team, there is resistance to children using buses to get to school and parents are still cautious about letting their children walk to school on their own. Infrastructure spending is required to improve safety at junctions. Although School streets do not reduce car dependency as cars simply park on roads nearby, they can prevent road collisions and enable children to walk a short distance to school. It is clear that community engagement is essential as well as effective enforcement. However, despite the fact that installing ANPR has been proven to bring in revenue, there are cost restrictions.

The team are requesting a dedicated School Streets Officer as School Streets funding is due to cease at the end of March 2024 and there is concern over the post's sustainability. They are keen to explore setting up School Streets in areas where there are health inequalities and where the community would most benefit, such as Partington. They recognise that a volunteer-based model offers lots of benefits in terms of education and community building in the short term, but is unsustainable in the long term, and that ANPR is needed as a long-term solution. The view is that ideally school streets would start with volunteers for a fixed period such as 6 months, then followed by ANPR. At the last GMCA Overview and Scrutiny meeting Andy Burnham agreed that School Streets should be a GM initiative.

20 mph zones

The group were informed that the costs of implementing a blanket 20 mph would require a large capital investment linked to signage and TRO implementation, which would increase street clutter and maintenance. Consultation costs and time to do this would take increased resource to manage objections, hence a blanket zone is not considered to be a more cost-effective approach than the current practice. Increased enforcement demand would also potentially be needed where there were reports of non-compliance. The rollout of blanket 20mph is also being potentially challenged by the government as per the Plan for drivers' guidance, and a site-by-site introduction is being advocated. They are awaiting guidance on the best approach to introducing 20 mph: [Plan for drivers - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/plan-for-drivers)

There are currently 10 sites under consideration.

Signage on streets

The group asked about the feasibility of having signage on roads, reminding residents that cars should not dominate e.g., requesting drivers to prioritise pedestrians at roundabouts. They were informed that there is no regulatory signage that can be put on the highway to support this messaging and that they would need to apply to the DfT for such signs, which often do not get approval and contradict street clutter initiatives. The Highway Code was changed in 2023 to prioritise pedestrians but this is difficult to enforce. Trafford propose to work with GM and promote campaigns via the Vision Zero initiative that is being developed by GM and utilise digital signage.

Pavement blocking

Pavement blocking is difficult to tackle, even though it discourages walking and damages the infrastructure, and changing parking policy is not straightforward.

ANPR for School Streets

The group was informed that ANPR in School Street projects was not likely to happen in the short term as it comes at considerable cost and consultation would be required. Future criteria are required to be agreed for other sites and this could be a couple of years away. Moving camera enforcement requires investment and working with GMP.

Planning

The group was informed of the relevant policy and guidance documents, including National Planning Policy Framework guidelines, the Local Plan, which has as one of its objectives “reduce the need to travel”, and the Trafford Core Strategy. Places for Everyone prioritises pedestrians in new developments and requires the reduction of the negative effects of car dependency by prioritising new and enhanced walking, cycling and public transport routes and stops, and reducing the need to travel by ensuring that community services are within the site or within walking distance. The tilted balance required, however, means some aspirations may not be achievable if the harm of not achieving them is outweighed by the benefits offered by the planning application.

Designing streets that prioritise walking, wheeling and cycling are included in the Trafford Design Code, with a maximum speed limit of 20mph, and a focus on connected neighbourhoods and sustainable movement, but these are for new developments only. Information and designs of an active travel street, and a destination street were shown to us. The group was informed that planning applications are however not the only way of delivering the Council's aspirations.

Car club

The group were informed of issues regarding isolation and social exclusion in some areas such as Partington and Broadheath due to the lack of public transport, and it

was agreed that a car club would be good in these areas, but there has been no progress on this.

Public transport

The use of public transport has now returned to pre Covid levels on the tram. There is as yet no evidence available of whether the cheaper fares have impacted bus travel in Trafford. The roll out of the Bee Network to Trafford in January 2025 offers a lot of opportunities to encourage bus use.

Pedestrian prioritisation at crossings

The group was informed that there are not many people taking up the option to request pedestrian prioritisation at crossings, probably due to a lack of awareness, and that this is in TfGM's remit.

Trafford Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy

The Trafford Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy was presented to the group, with its aim to encourage a modal shift from the car to other more active and sustainable forms of travel including walking, wheeling and cycling via the approved Strategy, with other initiatives such as bike hire, car clubs, Bee Network bus investment, and EV charging: [Trafford Walking Wheeling and Cycling Strategy 2023 V4.pdf](#) Its vision is that Trafford is a green and connected borough where more people choose active travel every day. The group were informed that they see the Council's role as providing inspiration and leadership, enabling change and delivering infrastructure. Conditions for change include increasing confidence and knowledge about bicycles and School Streets, social interaction, such as led rides and walks, feeling safe, such as better walking and cycling routes, and the Right to the Streets project, and better infrastructure such as the active travel schemes. They are working with community groups in targeted areas and have established the Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Forum. However, no mention is made in the report of reducing the number of cars on the road to improve confidence and safety for active travel.

Parking policy

A breakdown of free and paid Council parking spaces and the revenue from these was requested and given to the group. The group was informed about the new parking services contract to commence in April 2024 and the Council's new powers to enforce on and off-street parking infringements. Additional enforcement activity would require increased presence or cameras, and fixed cameras come at considerable cost, and consultation would be required. Use of moving camera enforcement can be considered a more flexible option but will require investment and work with GMP who still retain some prohibition of driving enforcement powers. The cost can be offset by PCN income, and any surplus can be invested into highway investment, which can also be used for pavements.

The group was informed that there was to be a review of parking procedures in 2024 following publication of the Plan for Drivers that requires evidence-based enforcement changes, which can link resident permits to engine size and size of vehicle. Costs can then penalise larger cars, and engines that are low emissions would benefit. Increased EV spaces and usage across the borough would be reviewed alongside.

However, the group were informed that increased parking charges may mean that cars park on residential streets. Also, business and economic growth pressures often seek a decrease or suspension in parking charges and hence there is a balance to be had with setting the right charges.

The group asked if it is possible to change the protocols such as no waiting for idling enforcement. They were informed that the Council would need to apply to the Secretary of State for Transport and be designated as an 'air quality management area' to allow Trafford to utilise these powers and to issue fixed penalty notices. TfGM are managing the introduction of air quality management areas on behalf of GM as the combined authority; hence Trafford cannot apply for these powers in isolation. Any future income from such a scheme will be centralised and controlled by GM and hence there would be no income for Trafford to reinvest.

Red Routes will be introduced to improve match day impacts.

Head of Climate Change

The group was presented with data about the impact, outcome and challenges related to reducing carbon emissions and informed that transport creates a major proportion of our emissions, only less than household and industry. The recommendations given were to reduce the need for travel, use less carbon intensive models and improve the efficiency of transport.

Trafford Data Lab

A meeting with Trafford data lab was set up to find out how their data might help with this topic. Data is available for example on driving, car use, road collisions, the location of bus stops, and the reachability to schools by different forms of transport. Social media has been used to publicise this information. It was suggested that the school admissions team are made aware of the data on reachability. Information about where the most polluting vehicles were located and used was requested and about the levels of parking permits provided each year, whether it was increasing or reducing. The data lab does not hold that information. It was suggested that they could look at the impact of parking on local businesses, comparing a pedestrianised shopping street to one that is not. It was suggested that they could provide data to Council Officers to help with creating and analysing surveys.

Meeting with Amey officers: 23.2.2024

Officers informed us that they are very much focused on reducing their carbon footprint, but they do not set policy, working instead with the Trafford partnership and

TfGM. However, decision making is to a degree with Amey in their role of highways authority.

They are aware that they have to show leadership and stand firm, such as in the A56 cones situation, acknowledging that courage wins through.

They are decarbonising their fleet but have no plans as yet for electric refuse vehicles.

They spoke to us about their active travel schemes. They plan to put infrastructure in place for buses, aiming to make journeys seamless, such as bikes schemes linking into Metrolink car parks. They have to work hard to get the bids for active travel funding. Regarding the UAN they are concentrating on Flixton in response to the survey, but also because these schemes are likely to be accepted more by a younger family demographic. They are focusing on the north of Trafford to aim for better connectivity with Salford and Manchester, and because there are lower incomes here and lower car ownership.

They are aware that footways have been neglected, but investment is centred around claims, and there are more complaints about potholes. There is a walking initiative included in active travel funding, for example they are looking at dropped kerbs in Urmston, but the tendency is towards cycling.

They aim to get as much School Streets enforcement as possible, but the main constraint is the funding.

They are negotiating the recruitment of a Council Officer transport strategy post at band 8/9 to enable a more strategic approach, such as connecting up schemes.

They agreed to our suggestions that they give all Councillors an annual briefing to explain the capital strategy and their policy reasons.

Meeting with Public Health: 6.3.2024

We decided to hold another meeting to look at progress from our meeting last year. We were pleased to see that a more joined up approach is beginning, with a focus on behaviour change.

School Streets projects are doing well, but there is still a precarious overreliance on volunteers, and uncertainties regarding ANPR. There is only anecdotal evidence that these initiatives are increasing the number of children walking to school. They are also now looking at walking buses.

They are working with areas of the community that are not so confident with active travel, such as Asian groups, and Trafford now has 3 bicycle libraries, with applications for cargo bikes, adapted bikes, cycle parking and storage, and are linking in cycle hangars with School Streets. They feel that they are still too safe with their comms and could use case studies better.

They are aware that a more connected up approach is needed, and they hope that the new Council Officer transport strategy role will help towards this.

Summary of meetings with Amey and Council Officers

It was concluded that Council Officers are extremely aware of the issues, and are keen to implement change, but there appears to be a lack of connection between the actions of each department and a lack of an overarching strategy. A lot of work has been achieved on active travel, but there appears to be less focus on behaviour change, reducing car dependency per se and on encouraging walking, with safer pavements and roads.