

Forward

I'm very pleased to call Stretford my home. I love living here. The area has a real sense of community, great parks, fantastic transport links, and some brilliant voluntary and community organisations. It's a friendly and welcoming place.

However we all recognise that the town centre area is in need of renewal. Over the past few years many people have expressed their concern to me about the limited range of local shops, lack of facilities in the evening for a drink or a meal out, the speed and size of the A56, and the subways underneath.

Without a strategic plan in place it would be very difficult to start to improve the local area. That's why I am pleased that the Council have now reacted to local concerns and put together the proposals for a Masterplan for our neighbourhood.

This is a start and provides a framework on which to build ideas. It is now up to the Council to take on board local feedback both from the Labour Party's survey and from the public consultation process and pave the way for a regenerated town centre.



Kate Green
Labour Member of Parliament for Stretford and Urmston

The development of a Town Centre plan for Stretford is something Labour councillors have been pushing for years. We've regularly voiced concerns that Stretford has been left behind compared to Altrincham, Urmston and Sale. So we welcome the news that Stretford will get its own Masterplan.

Bringing together a plan which includes the Stretford Mall, the Library area, the Public Hall, Drum, The Essoldo Cinema, Arndale House, Metrolink Building, Canal Side and former Boat Yard Site has to be a positive move.

The Master Plan gives Developers a focus in determining how developments can progress in future in a more coherent and positive way, which fit into what our communities consider their priorities. We look forward to the council, working with local residents, businesses and representatives, securing real improvements for the town centre.



Cllr David Action
Leader, Trafford Labour Group

Introduction

In July 2013 Trafford Council published proposals for a Stretford Town Centre Masterplan and launched a three month consultation period.

A Masterplan for Stretford is something that the local Labour Party has been demanding for a number of years. We therefore welcome proposals for a strategic plan for the area and recognise that this proposal provides the framework on which we can build over the next few years.

Kate Green MP, together with local Labour councillors across Stretford, Gorse Hill and Longford were keen to hear from as many people as possible over the consultation period. Kate and councillors have attended a number of public meetings over the summer months and distributed literature across the Stretford area, drawing attention to the Masterplan proposals.

In addition the local Labour Party carried out its own consultation exercise. Using a questionnaire designed by two local students from the Stretford area, Kate and local councillors wrote to a number of households across Stretford asking for their thoughts. We also took to the doorstep to give local residents the chance to put across their views.

We recognise that Stretford is a diverse part of Trafford covering a large area, from the town centre itself to the Chorlton borders, Lostock, Gorse Hill, Victoria & Longford Parks, Firwood, Meadows and Trees to name a few neighbourhoods. Inevitably the consultation period has produced a number of different views; however each view reflects the aspirations people have for the area and the desire to bring real improvements to the town.

We are delighted that 200 people took part in our survey, from across Stretford reflecting different age groups. We believe the survey results provide a greater understanding of Stretford today, and what people think of plans for future.

The Survey

Labour's Stretford Masterplan Survey results	
Age Group:	
Under 16	1
16-25	4
26-40	46
41-60	70
Over 60	73
Not answered	6
Are you...?	
Employed/Self employed	94
Unemployed	14
In full time education	5
Retired	63
Other	19
Not answered	5
How often do you visit Stretford town centre?	
Daily	76
Weekly	83
Monthly	33
Never	8
Where do you generally food shop (preferences)	
1st Preference	Stretford
2nd Preference	Sale
3rd Preference	Chorlton
4th Preference	Urmston
Where do you generally clothes shop? (preferences)	
1st Preference	The Trafford Centre
2nd Preference	Manchester City Centre
3rd Preference	Stretford
4th Preference	Internet
Where is your preferred destination for a night out? (preferences)	
1st Preference	Manchester City Centre
2nd Preference	Chorlton
3rd Preference	The Trafford Centre
4th Preference	Don't go out
Do you feel safe when out around the Stretford town centre area?	
Yes	147
No	39
Don't know	14
Do you support proposals to fill in a couple of the subways and replace with street-level crossings?	
Yes	145
No	40
Don't know	15
Please rate the following out of five (average score out of 5):	
Stretford Sports Village	1.8
Stretford Library	2.4
Stretford Mall	2.2
Do you agree that the Council's proposals for more residential areas in Stretford will help to tackle our local housing shortage?	
Yes	108
No	62
Don't know/not answered	30
Would you like the Council to do more to promote green spaces in the Stretford area?	
Yes	165
No	23
Don't know/not answered	12
In your opinion what improvement to our town centre is most pressing? (1 being not urgent, 5 being urgent)	
More leisure facilities	2.5
More and improved retail shops	3.7
More independent cafes and bars	3.1
More national outlets (e.g. Nando's, Wetherspoons)	2.3
Permanent market	2.9
Occasional outdoor market	2.9
If Stretford town centre became more like a high street, would you be more likely to shop there than at supermarkets/shopping centres?	
Yes	138
No	40
Don't know/not answered	22
Does the 'Masterplan' make the area more attractive to you?	
Yes	123
No	8
Don't know	41
Not answered	28

Age Groups

The two most popular age groups to complete the survey were 41-60 and 60 plus. We are also pleased to see a significant return from the 26-40 age range. We recognise that the 60 plus group contained a diverse number of people, from those working full time to those in their 80s and 90s. We are concerned,

though not surprised, that more people under 25 did not complete the survey and would ask that the Council makes an additional effort to capture the views of people currently growing up in Stretford.

The reason we asked for ages is because age can often change how we see, use and what we need from our local amenities; and we wanted to ensure that we heard from a broad range of ages.

Employment status

The majority of respondents were employed or self-employed, with retired people completing the next number of surveys. A number of other people who returned the survey described themselves as stay at home parents, carers, housewives/husbands and people suffering long-term/chronic illness. Again we are pleased that the survey results reflect a variety of people living in Stretford.

Shopping habits:

How often do you visit Stretford Town centre?

The overwhelming message from the survey was that local people do use Stretford, the majority anything between daily and weekly. This demonstrates how important the area is as an economic asset and the potential Stretford offers to investors.

"If Trafford could do for Stretford what it has done for Urmston community life would be greatly improved"
Ms H, Trafford Grove

"Need to do something akin to Eden Square in Urmston but definitely also need to encourage restaurants/social evening businesses but not pubs necessarily" Mr H, Jackson Street

"The only people in and around Stretford town centre are those who live there. People tend to go to Chorlton, Urmston and Sale for shopping etc as the facilities there are better. If Stretford were to become more of a 'destination' more people from the outlying areas would come to Stretford which would further boost the economy and make Stretford more attractive. A mix of national outlets, retail chains and restaurants, as well as independent shops would make Stretford more appealing" Mrs H, Norway Street

"It really needs improvement as the town centre is horrid. I avoid going there now as all the nice independent shops have closed down. Stretford seems to be an ugly neighbour to places like Urmston and Chorlton" Ms E, Dalton Avenue

Preferences:

In this section we ask people to put down their preferences for where they generally food shop, clothes shop, and go on an evening out. The questionnaire listed a number of suggestions but left space to people to record other places. All the preferences were then calculated with the most popular four featured on our survey results.

Where do you generally food shop?

Stretford was the most popular preference, followed by our nearest local town centres: Sale in second place, Chorlton in third place, and Urmston in fourth. It is encouraging to see Stretford ranked first; however it is clear from a number of the returns that the new Tesco accounts for a sizable proportion of the Stretford food-shop. Another large supermarket mentioned frequently is ASDA in Trafford Park. However there seems a clear preference for people to continue to food shop in the town centres, relying

on the variety of shops on offer. Another popular option with younger families in particular was internet shopping.

Sale, Chorlton and Urmston town centres offer a mix of supermarkets, smaller national food chains and independent shops. This seems to remain the most popular proposition when it comes to food shopping and something we need to build on in the centre of Stretford itself.

"Area needs better cycling facilities, the Mall needs another supermarket" Mr D, Trafford Grove

"Reintroduce free parking in the Mall" DH, Moreton Avenue

Where do you generally clothes shop?

In contrast to the previous question, the most popular responses were the Trafford Centre followed by Manchester City Centre. This is not surprising given the number of clothes outlets available at each choice. Stretford was third preference and favoured particularly highly by older respondents to the survey. The internet was the fourth choice, though Chorlton and other local towns were not too far behind.

This is a contrast to food shopping habits and it seems clear that people are attracted to spend money where there are a collection of high street fashion outlets. The growth of the internet reflecting national trends.

It is clear that a lot of potential £s are leaving Stretford for elsewhere. Though it is unlikely that Stretford would ever be able to match the high street fashion brands available in Manchester, The Trafford Centre and on the internet we do feel more should be done to attract fashion outlets to Stretford in an attempt to inject more money into the local economy.

"Stretford needs less £1 shops and more brand shops, e.g. Aldi, Argos, Evans/Dorothy Perkins" Mrs P, Harcourt Street

Where is your preferred destination for a night out?

This is an area where there is a clear need for development as Stretford does not feature in the top four preferences. We are again seeing money being diverted to Manchester City Centre, Chorlton and the Trafford Centre as they all offer a variety of restaurants and bars; whereas Stretford lacks a night time economy.

The fourth preference was simply not to go out. Though most of the respondents putting this were older, a number stated this were of working age but unable to afford to go out at night.

"We need a major retailer in the Mall and more evening venues." Ms B, Jackson Street

"To create a community spirit you need more cafes and restaurants in Stretford like Urmston and Chorlton" Mr & Mrs C, Strathmere Avenue

"When Stretford Mall is closed Stretford is closed. Chester Road has cut Stretford in half." Mr S, Church Street

"The town centre is essentially part-time" Mr G, Jackson Street

Do you feel safe when out and about around Stretford Town Centre?

The answer to this question was clear, with almost 75% of respondents saying yes. This is a reflection of the high regard with which the local police and PCSOs are held. It is also a very positive statement about Stretford.

Where there was concern about safety, the majority was found in the older population.

"The streets seem to be a lot quieter. I see more police cars around" Mrs D, Gorse Street

"I have been going around Stretford for years and I feel very safe" Ms J, Bradshaw Lane

"I am usually only there during the daytime" Mr B, Strathmere Avenue

Do you support proposals to fill in a couple of the subways and replace with surface level crossings?

Again, almost 75% of respondents were in favour of this proposal, mostly citing safety concerns. 20% were against the proposal and had concerns about the speed of the traffic and practicalities of crossing a road as wide as the A56. A number of people said they felt safer pushing pushchairs under the road away from traffic. One wheel chair user also felt it safer to use the subways.

"The subway/underground is threatening, especially at night" Ms R, Edge Lane

"Smelly, vandalised, unappealing. Subways make area look uninviting. Not proud of them." Mr R, Pinnington Lane

What facilities would you like to see for children and young people?

As previously mentioned, not many children and younger people completed the survey so it is difficult to present a representative view of what those growing up in Stretford have to say. However we did receive a number of comments:

"We need more youth provision for 13-19 year olds"

"We need soft play facilities in the Mall; a cinema; and safe streets for kids" Mr R, Cyprus Street

"Teens are most in need of somewhere to go."

"Skate Park" Mr R, Cyprus Street

Rating other local amenities

In this section of the survey we asked respondents to rate Stretford Sports Village, Stretford Library and the Mall out of five, with one being poor and five being excellent. Many of the responses failed to rate one or more of these amenities, which pulled down the overall scores. However out of those that used the Sports Village and Library, overall satisfaction was very high. The Mall had a more mixed reaction, though more people were prepared to award it a rating.

Regarding the overall totals, Stretford Library is the most highly regarded amenity out of the three with the Sports Village the lowest. However, part of the explanation for the Sports Village's lower rating is that

many people did not know what was being referred to. The Sports Village is also further away from the town centre area.

"Parks, Library- these need to stay!" Mr V, Trafford Grove

"Please ensure the library is kept where it is" Mr M, Jackson Street

"In Stretford Mall, the owner should be forced to consider non-commercial/community projects" Mr O, Bradshaw Lane

"Would want Stretford Mall demolished and replaced by (possibly part covered) pedestrianized precincts, using markets and events to attract people. Get historic buildings used, refurbish and use the shops on Edge Lane, open up things to the canal side" Ms E, Raleigh Street

Do you agree that the Council's proposals for more residential areas will help to tackle our local housing shortage?

Just over 50% of respondents agreed that more residential areas would help to address our local housing need, with 30% disagreeing. Housing is one of the main debates over the summer with a number of people voicing concern about land set aside for residential development versus people wanting to move into a home of their own. Older respondents answered this question most favourably, along with people recently settled into their first home.

We, along with Labour nationally, recognise the need for appropriate housing developments and see housing as part of the town centre of the future.

"Although we do need more housing in the area, I would not like to see all the green areas taken up by buildings." Ms B, Cooper Street

"Agree with residential developments as long as they don't take things away, e.g. shopping mall" Ms F, Trafford Grove

"Already very built up" Ms T, Jackson Street

"Renovation of empty properties, e.g. on Highfield Road" FO, Highfield Road

"First time buyers need housing" Ms G, Hampson Road

Would you like the Council to promote more green spaces in the area?

The overwhelming majority of respondents, over 80%, said yes, with a number of suggestions.

"I would like to see money spent on the canal waterway with possibility of boating and more benches." Ms L, Derbyshire Lane

"More trees on the side streets, e.g. Jackson St and surrounding streets" Mr H, Jackson Street

"Canal area in general requires landscaping and tidying up." Mr G, Headingley Drive

"Allotments" Ms A, Beresford Road

"Me and my family enjoy going on a picnic when the weather is nice and we would love a picnic area" Ms C, Lacy Street

"Promote community allotments as part of a healthy eating lifestyle. Promote organised fitness activities in parks" Mr D, Gorse Street

"Victoria Park is lovely, but hidden. Opening up canal front/landscaping would be lovely" Ms H, Trafford Grove

"Lostock Park looks good and we spend a lot of time there. I think the more green spaces the better" Ms E, Dalton Avenue

"I love Victoria Park!" Ms F, School Road

"Maintain 'Pitch & Putt' at Longford Park, improve football pitches at Longford Park and w.c.s in Longford and Victoria Park" Mr H, Haig Road

In your opinion what improvement to our town centre is most pressing? (5 being most urgent)

As part of this calculation an average was taken for each suggestion across the 200 responses. Not all suggestions were rated on each individual survey, which in this case was interpreted as not being a priority.

The most popular improvement identified was for more and improved retail shops, followed by more cafes and bars. This underlines the potential Stretford has to attract more consumer expenditure and ties in with earlier answers regarding local spending habits.

The top two preferences were shared across all age groups and areas.

A form of market (both internal and external) was the next preferred preference. We feel this is something the Council could actively encourage using many of the lessons learnt from Altrincham and the use of market space there.

"Stretford needs everything. Cafes, restaurants, shops etc. Nowhere to take family, must go elsewhere!" PB, Vine Court

"I love the idea of an outdoor market- especially if we could sell some home grown produce here from our own allotments" Ms C, Gorse Street

"Regeneration of area near tram station like they have in Sale with a pub along the waterfront. We have nowhere to go local for a night out" HO, Raleigh Street

"Good cycle lanes and cycle parking" Mr B, Harcourt Street

"There should be cafes and more seating along the canal to attract people. More promotion of its virtues as well" Ms B, Trafford Grove

If Stretford were to become more like a high street, would you be more likely to shop there than at supermarkets/shopping centres?

The Mall currently dominates the centre of Stretford and attracted many comments, both good and bad. We wanted to see how people would respond to opening up the Mall and bringing back more elements of a traditional town centre. Almost 70% agreed that this would make Stretford a more attractive place for them to shop whereas 20% disagreed/thought it would make no difference.

"Knock down and start again on a local and sustainable scale" Ms B, Moreton Avenue

"There is no central community centre similar to Sale Waterside where Stretford can develop and encourage cultural events and develop a community spirit." Mr D, Derbyshire Lane

"The Brunswick Centre in Bloomsbury (London) is a good model. Previously it was run down and unpleasant. Now it has been regenerated and offers a good mix of national outlets and independents-worth a look!" Ms M, Harcourt Street

Does the 'Masterplan' make the area more attractive to you?

The majority of responses were positive, with over 60% favouring the plan. However, over a third of respondents either did not answer this question or were not sure. This indicates that the Council needs to continue engaging with local residents, making them aware of the plans and asking for feedback.

"I support the masterplan principles, but Stretford Mall will need considerable refurbishment/demolition to look attractive" Mr A, Gorse Street

"I don't think the plans are outlined in detail!" Ms T, Gorse Street

"I worry the plan is a bit vague" Ms W, Beta Avenue

"This plan must start ASAP and be pushed through as quickly as possible or Stretford will be gone." Mr M, Ashover Street

"We badly need to boost the local economy by increasing footfall; expanding the office space around the Arndale/Mall would do this" Ms L, Gorse Hill

"I feel that the proposals as a whole are very good as I think Stretford does need some degree of regeneration. Overall I'm happy living in Stretford but I do feel more retail shops and leisure facilities would be a great addition." Mr G, Jackson Street

"We have Man Utd and Lancs Cricket Ground in our area. This is more than others. We need to take advantage of this with an attractive shopping centre" Mr A, Harcourt Street

Conclusion

It is clear that Stretford has the potential to improve, grow and attract more investment. The local population would like to use Stretford more and have identified a number of needs- improving the local environment, attracting more shops, and injecting life into a night-time economy. We believe that the Masterplan offers a framework to build on for the future; we welcome it and will continue to work with local residents to press the case investing in Stretford.