

## TRAFFORD COUNCIL

**Report to:** Scrutiny Committee  
**Date:** 29<sup>th</sup> October 2014  
**Report of:** Executive Member for Environment and Operations

### Report Title

**Cycling Review: Response to Scrutiny Committee**

### Summary

This report represents the Executive Member's response to the Scrutiny Panel on Cycling's recommendations regarding the Council's services as they relate to cycling. The report summarises the major cycle infrastructure schemes which have been implemented in the Borough in the period since 2010, and responds to the 10 recommendations made by the Scrutiny Panel on a point by point basis.

### Recommendation(s)

- That the content of this report be accepted as the Council's response to the Scrutiny Panel's recommendations.
- That the work of Council Officers be commended in securing such significant grant funding for investment in cycling in the Borough in recent years
- That the Council continues to work with partners, particularly Sustrans and TfGM , to secure continued investment in cycling; and that a long term programme of cycle investment schemes is developed in partnership with the Trafford Cycle Forum
- That a new Cycling Strategy for Trafford be produced to guide future investment in the cycle network
- That opportunities be taken to maximise promotion of Trafford as a cycle-friendly Borough
- That officers continue to ensure that the best possible level of provision for cyclists in incorporated into new developments in Trafford
- That the Council continues to work with partners and through the development control process to improve cycle parking provision in the Borough
- That the Leader of the Council, Councillor Sean Anstee, take on a role to champion cycling in the Borough, including the role of Patron of the Trafford Cycle Forum, subject to the agreement of the Forum at its next meeting.

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Background Papers: Commuter Cycling Review: Findings of Topic Group (letter from the Chair of the Topic Group to the Executive Member)

Financial Impact:	None
Legal Impact:	None
Human Resources Impact:	None
Asset Management Impact:	None
E-Government Impact:	None
Risk Management Impact:	None
Health and Safety Impact:	None

## **1 Context**

A scrutiny panel was established in early 2014 in order to undertake a review of cycling in Trafford. The remit of the review included consideration of all aspects of the Council's services as they relate to cycling, with a focus on services within the Economic Growth, Environment and Infrastructure Directorate, but also considering services provided by other directorates within the Council, and also the Council's relationship with partner agencies, such as Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) and Sustrans. The panel reported in July 2014.

The panel particularly noted the positive progress which is currently being made by the Council with regard to the major capital investments currently being made in cycle infrastructure, following successful funding submissions to a number of different funding streams. The review concluded by providing a series of ten recommendations for consideration by the Council with regard to cycling.

This report represents the Council's response to recommendations of the Panel. It begins with an explanation of the funds which have been secured for cycling in recent years, and the schemes which have been/are being/will be delivered with these funds. There then follows a detailed response to each of the panel's ten recommendations.

## **2 Current Funding and Schemes**

The Council has been successful in recent years in securing a range of grant funding associated with the provision of new cycle infrastructure. In many cases this has been supported by the Council's own match funding, and by match funding supplied by third parties. The table below summarises the major cycling schemes which have been delivered/are being delivered in Trafford by the Council and its partners over the period since 2010, which totals over £6m in value.

<b>Project</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Funding Partners</b>	<b>Date completed</b>
Bridgewater Way Phase 1 (Sale Waterside to Edge Lane, Stretford and associated access routes)	£720k	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trafford Council</li> <li>• Sustrans</li> <li>• Bridgewater Canal Trust</li> </ul>	Summer 2010
Bridgewater Way Phase 2 (Edge Lane, Stretford, to Waters Meeting and associated access routes)	£845k	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustrans</li> <li>• Trafford Council</li> <li>• Bridgewater Canal Trust</li> </ul>	Summer 2011
Bridgewater Way Phase 3 (Sale Waterside to Marsland Road and associated access routes)	£520k	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trafford Council</li> <li>• Sustrans</li> <li>• Bridgewater Canal Trust</li> </ul>	Autumn 2010
Bridgewater Way Phase 4a/b (Barton Aqueduct to Parkway and associated access routes)	£496k	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trafford Council</li> <li>• TfGM/Department for Transport (Local Sustainable Transport Fund)</li> <li>• Bridgewater Canal Trust</li> </ul>	Spring 2013
Bridgewater Way Phase 4c (Parkway to Kelloggs Basin and associated access routes)	£434k	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TfGM/Department for Transport (Local Sustainable Transport Fund)</li> <li>• Trafford Partnership</li> <li>• Trafford Council</li> </ul>	Winter 2013/14
Bridgewater Way Phase 5 (Marsland Road, Sale, to Broadheath)	£704k	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TfGM/Department for Transport (Local Sustainable Transport Fund)</li> <li>• Trafford Partnership</li> <li>• Trafford Council</li> <li>• Bridgewater Canal Company</li> <li>• Bridgewater Canal Trust</li> </ul>	Autumn 2014
Bridgewater Way Phase 6 (Kelloggs Basin to Europa Gate and associated access routes)	£219k	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TfGM/Department for Transport (Local Sustainable Transport Fund)</li> <li>• Trafford Council</li> <li>• Bridgewater Canal Trust</li> </ul>	Autumn/Winter 2014
Bridgewater Way Phase 7 (Europa Gate to Castlefield and associated access routes)	£1.1m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TfGM/Department for Transport (Cycle City Ambition Grant)</li> <li>• Trafford Council</li> <li>• Bridgewater Canal Trust</li> </ul>	Spring 2015
A56 Parallel Routes Cycle Safety Scheme	£340k	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Department for Transport (Cycle Safety Fund)</li> <li>• Trafford Council</li> <li>• Greater Manchester Casualty Reduction Partnership</li> </ul>	Spring 2014
Airport City Cycleway (Brooks Drive)	£400k	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TfGM/Department for Transport (Cycle City Ambition Grant)</li> <li>• Trafford Council</li> </ul>	Autumn 2014
Carrington-Flixton Station Cycle Route	£340k	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TfGM/Department for Transport (Cycle City Ambition Grant)</li> <li>• Trafford Council</li> </ul>	Winter 2014/15

### 3 Responses to Scrutiny Panel Recommendations

The Scrutiny Panel made a series of 10 recommendations with regard to the Council's services for cycling going forward. This section provides a response to each of those recommendations in turn.

***Recommendation 1:*** *The Transpennine Trail is appreciated as a valued location for off road cycling, but sections are currently in a poor state of repair. With this in mind the Topic Group Members recommend that the Council should establish dialogue with all the landowners and organisations with an interest in the trail, to ensure that ongoing maintenance is given a higher priority.*

The Council, through the Trafford Countryside Management Partnership (TCMP) has already commenced dialogue with some landowners/stakeholders including Langtree, United Utilities, Environment Agency and Sustrans to ask for their help in the management of the trail. The Trans Pennine Trail Memorandum of Understanding originally signed when the grant from the Millennium Commission was obtained in 2001, identifies that partner authorities are responsible for ensuring that the trail is well maintained. The majority of the trail is over Trafford Council land although there are sections over land owned by Langtree and United Utilities and other smaller land owners.

The southern section from Black Moss Lane, Broadheath to Heatley (approx. 5kms) is maintained by Bollin Valley Partnership on behalf of Trafford Council and is in a well maintained condition. A recent visual survey has been undertaken along the remainder of the route and some problems have been identified. A section of the route that runs through land now owned by Langtree, (former Shell Carrington site) close to the edge of Sale West will require work to upgrade the path and thin adjacent vegetation that contributes to the poor trail surface within the area. TCMP has approached Langtree to see if they are able to help resolve these issues. Another area that has been identified as being problematic is the northern section of the trail, along Kickety Brook and more specifically an area from Chester Rd to Bridgewater Canal where path improvement works together with vegetation clearance are required to bring this section up to standard. This section is owned by Trafford Council and work will be undertaken during early 2015 to improve this area through a combination of capital works and vegetation management by volunteers and Groundforce.

The TCMP will be meeting with the TPT Trafford volunteers shortly to discuss these improvements and to try to find a way forward to improve the condition of the trail.

***Recommendation 2:*** *Topic Group Members were advised that there had been an increase in cycling, associated with investment which has been made in Trafford, and it is recommended that communication be improved to promote Trafford as a successful Borough for cycling.*

It is recognised that more could be done to promote the Council's efforts with regard to improving conditions for cyclists. Often, the Council's ability to promote what we do is constrained by available officer and financial resource. However, launch

events are held when new facilities open (at the time of writing one is due to be held for the upgraded Brooks Drive route on 29<sup>th</sup> October). The Council's Traffic, Transport and Road Safety Section engages with the Council's Communications and Marketing team to ensure that coverage of such events is maximised. Opportunities to further promote our efforts, for example through dedicated route information leaflets, will be explored further.

***Recommendation 3:*** *It is recommended that a leading figurehead such as the Leader of the Council, could be considered to champion cycling in Trafford, and that photograph opportunities should be explored.*

Further to the conclusion of the review, the Leader of the Council has agreed to take on a role championing cycling in the Borough. Subject to formal election by the Trafford Cycle Forum at their next meeting, he will also be taking on the role of Patron of the Cycle Forum, and will be attending future meetings whenever his diary permits.

***Recommendation 4:*** *Members were informed that a Trafford based Cycling Strategy was being compiled, and request that when completed the Strategy should be presented to a future Scrutiny Committee meeting.*

The commencement of the Strategy has been delayed pending the publication of the wider Greater Manchester Cycle Strategy, which has been produced by TfGM, though Trafford chaired a county-wide officer working group to undertake the initial research and development work on the document. Now that the GM Strategy has been completed, funding will be allocated within the 2015/16 financial year to produce a new Trafford Cycle Strategy. The Strategy will articulate a vision for cycling in Trafford in the period to 2025, over which the authorities within Greater Manchester are aiming to quadruple levels of cycling.

The Strategy will celebrate the Council's achievements to date for cycling, and articulate a vision for the continued development of the cycle network in Trafford. It will include an action plan of priority projects aimed at increasing uptake of cycling. A key function of the document will be the development of a prioritised programme of projects, aimed at delivering the vision articulated by the Greater Manchester Cycle Strategy, to place the Council in the best possible position to benefit from potential future funding streams for cycling.

Once completed, the Strategy will be presented to a future Scrutiny Committee Meeting.

***Recommendation 5:*** *It is recommended that encouragement be given, through the Cycling Strategy if appropriate, to the affording of priority to the maintenance of sections of highways used particularly by cyclists, such as cycle lanes, or the 2m of carriageway closest to the kerb where no cycle lane is present, wherever this is feasible.*

The Council's current Highways Safety Inspection Policy already affords maintenance priority to marked cycle lanes. The depth at which potholes are considered actionable in a marked cycle lane is half that of the rest of the

carriageway (25mm as opposed to 50mm). However, there would be a very substantial cost involved in extending this level of priority to the kerbside 2m of carriageway width on all roads in the Borough. Regrettably, given the severe pressure on the Council's maintenance budget, such a proposal is unaffordable at the present time.

***Recommendation 6:*** *It is proposed that closer working be promoted between the Council's Highways and Planning departments and developers, to ensure that high quality facilities for cyclists – routes, parking / storage facilities and shower / change facilities - be included in the highways / transport infrastructure associated with new developments subject to future planning applications. The importance of building in high quality, convenient cycle storage to residential developments is particularly highlighted.*

The Council has adopted minimum standards for levels of cycle parking through its Supplementary Planning Document 3: Parking Standards and Design (SPD3), adopted in 2012. The document also contains extensive guidance on best practice in relation to cycle parking, which was produced in consultation with local cyclists through the Trafford Cycle Forum.

Highways and Planning officers are rigorous in enforcing these standards through the development control process. We see the enablement of journeys by bike as a key part of the mix when working to reduce car-borne travel to new developments. Developers see the benefits of including high quality cycle parking provision, as the Council is, in certain circumstances, more willing to accept a reduced level of car parking provision, if high quality provision is made for sustainable transport, including cycle parking provision which meets the Council's standards, within the development proposals.

Developer contributions through Section 106 funds have been an important source of match funding for securing the recent major investment in cycle schemes in the Borough, and the Council continues to be active in seeking financial contributions from developers for delivering cycling schemes.

The Council requires that developments of a significant size provide an appropriate Transport Assessment as part of the development control process, to assess the impact of the development in transport terms and design in any appropriate mitigation to minimise that impact. This document is assessed by the Council to ensure it is robust and that assessment includes careful consideration of access to the development by bike and opportunities to improve this as part of the development process.

Developments of significant size are also required to provide a Travel Plan, which represents the developer's commitment to minimising car-borne trips to the development and driving modal shift to non-car modes, including cycling. The Travel Plan will include measurable, time-bound targets for modal split, and an action plan which sets out how the targets will be met. Targets and action plan measures always make reference to increasing levels of cycling associated with a development.

***Recommendation 7: The Topic Group would welcome the provision of better cycle parking at large facilities in Trafford to include all sporting arenas, Trafford's parks, and shopping areas including: the Trafford Centre, Stretford Mall, Sale, Altrincham, and Urmston town centres.***

The Council undertook an extensive project to improve cycle parking facilities in Trafford in 2012. This included undertaking a survey of existing and potential high priority future cycle parking locations around the Borough, in partnership with volunteers from the Trafford Cycle Forum. Approximately 170 'Sheffield' style cycle stands were installed following the survey at high priority locations, providing parking for around 340 bikes at strategic locations around the Borough. Many were installed at local shopping parades. However it is recognised that cycle parking coverage is not yet as comprehensive as we would like, and the Council is committed to working to address this over the coming years. Key actions will be as follows:

- At locations within the public realm which are under the Council's control (mainly within the adopted highway but also other land which may be owned or controlled by the Council), the Council has the opportunity to prioritise its own funding to introduce new or improved cycle parking. Funding will be prioritised within the 2015/16 financial year for a further round of cycle parking installations in locations such as this
- As part of the above process, opportunities will be sought to encourage private owners of land within the public realm (for example, privately owned shop frontages) to provide cycle parking at identified priority locations. This could include the Council subsidising the provision of such facilities, though this would only be possible on a relatively small scale.
- The Development Control process is the Council's main tool to ensure that cycle parking is provided by relevant third parties, within their private premises, for use by employees, customers or visitors. The Council already has minimum standards for cycle parking at new developments, as reference elsewhere in this report. The Council will continue to be vigilant in applying these standards. It is through this process that the most likely opportunities for improving cycle parking at large scale venues such as the Old Trafford stadia, and the Trafford Centre, will arise. Clearly, this process is limited to new developments in its scope, and the Council has no power to force 3<sup>rd</sup> parties to provide new cycle parking outside of the Development Control process.

***Recommendation 8: Topic Group Members recognise that there are events held in the Greater Manchester area promoting the use of bicycles, and recommend that the Council should form better links to tie in with the event organisers to promote cycling in Trafford.***

A number of organisations, particularly TfGM, Sustrans and British Cycling, are active in organising events promoting cycling in Greater Manchester. These organisations all have access to significant revenue funded staff resources to promote cycling, which Trafford Council does not. Regrettably, the Council will not be in a financial position to provide any such staff resource in the foreseeable future.

Our capacity for involvement in such events is, therefore, significantly constrained by officer resources.

However, we recognise that opportunities exist to promote events being organised by other organisations, and the Council will continue to maximise such opportunities as far as possible in the future.

***Recommendation 9: The Topic Group would be pleased if the introduction of Member Cycle Champions was to be mainstreamed from each political party, so as to ensure that there will be continuity for the future of promoting cycling in Trafford.***

There is already a good level of Member involvement in cycling in Trafford, particularly through the Trafford Cycle Forum. Councillors Chilton (Conservative) and Cordingley (Labour) have been particularly active in promoting cycling in recent years. Cllr Chilton is currently the vice chair of Trafford Cycle Forum and both Councillors regularly attend Cycle Forum meetings. Both are also members of the TfGM Committee and are active in promoting cycling in that wider arena.

Any formalising of these member roles would be a matter for the individual political groups to take forward. However, such a move would be welcomed by the Council.

***Recommendation 10: The work of Council officers in securing the high level of capital investment in cycling, as outlined above, is welcomed. However, this will provide only the start of what we would like to see achieved for cyclists in Trafford in the long term. It is recommended that officers continue to work with partners, particularly with Sustrans and TfGM, to secure continued investment in cycling; and that they develop a long term programme of cycle investment schemes in partnership with the Trafford Cycle Forum.***

The major investment in cycle infrastructure which has been made possible in Trafford in the last 5 years through the successful partnership working with partner organisations, particularly TfGM, Sustrans and Peel, has begun the development of a properly integrated cycle network in Trafford. It is recognised that there is a long way still to go to realise that vision, and that a sustained level of investment is required.

The Council is committed to continue to work with partners to secure funds for cycle improvement schemes, and to committing its own funds as match funding to attract greater levels of grant funding: an approach which has worked very successfully in the past.

We have already developed a programme of prioritised cycle schemes for future implementation, in consultation with the Cycle Forum, and this will be developed further through the future preparation of a new Cycle Strategy for Trafford, as discussed elsewhere in this report.

We know that, nationally, evidence suggests that the single most important barrier to more people taking up cycling is the lack of available good quality cycle infrastructure. Ultimately, the Council's success in further increasing levels of cycling

will therefore depend on securing further funding to continue the development of the cycle network, working with partners. Our efforts to date have already secured significant investment for the period to 2016, and the Council is committed to continuing to use our best endeavours to secure that continued investment in the medium to longer term.

#### **4 Recommendations**

A full list of recommendations is provided at the front of the report.