

MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

REPORT FOR INFORMATION

COMMITTEE: Physical Environment Overview and Scrutiny

DATE: 17 October 2006

SUBJECT: Pedestrian Strategy

REPORT OF: Head of Transport
Head of Engineering

PUPOSE OF THE REPORT

To inform committee of progress made towards the implementation of the GM Walking Strategy and to outline key areas of activity through which Manchester City Council is promoting walking as a sustainable mode of transport and a means of improving health.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee: -

- Notes the content of this report;
- Indicates its support for the key areas of activity to promote and support walking across the City.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS FOR THE REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET

Measures to support pedestrian activity and improve road safety are primarily budgeted for within the City Council's LTP Highways Capital Budget and the Transport Thematic Partnership's Neighbourhood Renewal Fund. ERDF and Sections 106 and 278 funding from private developers have also been used to provide pedestrian schemes.

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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Greater Manchester Local Transport Plan 2 (GMLTP2)
Greater Manchester Walking Strategy

WARDS AFFECTED

All

IMPLICATIONS FOR

Environment	Employment	Anti- Poverty	Equality	Human Rights
Yes	Yes	No	No	No

Implications for Employment:

Promotion of walking as a sustainable mode of transport can increase accessibility to employment centres.

Implications for Environment:

Pedestrian improvement schemes include a range of measures that benefit the environment:

- Through improved public realm and footway provision, local environments become more attractive
- Walking activity programmes can increase use of and access to local parks and green spaces
- If more short journeys are undertaken on foot rather than by car, benefits arise in terms of a reduction in levels of congestion and improvements in air quality.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The recent publication of the Greater Manchester Local Transport Plan 2 (GMLTP2) has provided an opportunity to reassess the direction of work programmes aimed at supporting and increasing pedestrian activity. The GMLTP2 confirmed the over-arching strategic approach to walking is to increase the levels of walking activity, whilst sustaining a reduction in road traffic accidents involving the pedestrian.
- 1.2 GMLTP2 encompasses a range of supporting strategies and action plans to direct the development of specific areas of work. The Greater Manchester Walking Strategy is the key document within GMLTP2, which guides priorities and action relating to pedestrians. Manchester City Council is committed to implementing a range of walking schemes and initiatives to directly contribute to the GM Walking Strategy and GMLTP2 targets.
- 1.3 The GM Walking Strategy has been recently reviewed to determine if amendments to the walking actions and targets are required as a result of GMLTP2. This review confirmed that there is no significant change needed to the strategic approach of the walking strategy; therefore the action plan table (see Appendix 1) has been updated independently. As this action plan fully complements the approach undertaken within Manchester, the City Council will be working to implement its priorities across the city.
- 1.4 The main objective of the GM Walking Strategy is to work towards achieving the GMLTP2 walking target over the period 2006-2011: to stop the decline in walking trips after an initial 5% decrease, where walking is the main mode. Research demonstrates that no singular characteristic in travel trends is responsible for the change shown in walking rates over the last decade, which has been a steady decline. There is therefore no single intervention that can reverse this trend. Many factors have contributed to this decline and therefore a joined up approach across many agencies and partners will be required.
- 1.5 The key areas of activity linked to the GM Walking Strategy Action Plan within Manchester are outlined below. The action plan will be reviewed annually by the GMLTP2 Walking Sub Group and amendments to activities and priorities will be made if appropriate.

2. Travel Plans – Schools, Other Educational Establishments, Trips To Work

- 2.1 Travel Plans are important tools for increasing walking rates to and from specific sites, facilities and organisations. Further details on how Travel Plans are supporting increased levels of walking and road safety for pedestrians are contained within the Travel Change report elsewhere on this agenda.

3. Manchester Pedestrian Prioritisation Strategy – Routes to Centres and Public Transport

- 3.1 The Government's Action Plan for increasing levels of walking and cycling in England ('Walking and Cycling: an Action Plan') prompted the preparation of a Pedestrian Prioritisation Strategy for Manchester. This is an evolving document, to bring Manchester's actions for walking into line with the Government's Action Plan, taking account of GMLTP2 objectives and the City Council's priorities for inclusion and regeneration. In preparing the Strategy, there is a requirement to draw up an implementation plan, which allows for the development of criteria for defining priorities for pedestrian improvements over the five year period of GMLTP2. This implementation plan will assist the City Council with its resource allocation process and set out a framework for taking the Strategy forward.
- 3.2 The District Centre Prioritisation Strategy was subsequently prepared as a tool for determining how to implement the Manchester Pedestrian Prioritisation Strategy. This strategy provides a system of evaluating and prioritising District Centres for pedestrian improvement schemes, whilst providing opportunities to achieve an increase in walking levels. The purpose of this exercise is to inform the decision-making process for identifying schemes for implementation in the next five years through the Highways Capital Programme.
- 3.3 Due to the difficulties in funding improvement schemes in all of Manchester's 16 district centres over a short period of time, criteria were set to assist in the prioritisation of centres. The 3 district centres that rank highest according to the evaluation criteria adopted were **Gorton, Cheetham Hill and Longsight**. The criteria used to determine these priority centres included:
- Road traffic accidents / collisions
 - Traffic flows
 - Pedestrian flows from/to key pedestrian generators
 - Deprivation - measure of the relative social characteristics of the centres' catchment area
 - Crime-related walking deterrents, both actual crime and fear of crime
 - Retail Strategy ranking - higher scores were allocated to centres which were deemed to be performing well in order to maintain their economic function
- 3.4 The next stage will be to analyse the current situation and identify specific needs to improve the pedestrian facilities and overall accessibility of the priority district centres. Although Gorton is first on the ranking list, the area is subject to major regeneration plans. Therefore, an appropriate timescale for analysis and scheme development will be agreed with the NEM regeneration team. An

accessibility study has been completed for Longsight and major environmental improvements are taking place in partnership with the South Manchester Regeneration Team and the Local Traders Association. The works completed in Longsight are mainly environmental improvements as the junctions and crossing facilities have been improved in recent years as part of the implementation of the QBC programme. In addition the following improvement works have been implemented:

- Street lighting has been improved with a replacement higher quality system
- High quality paving has been installed throughout the district centre
- District centre signs and improvements to the approach to a pedestrian underpass have been undertaken

Cheetham will be the next district centre to have an accessibility study completed to identify needs in the next financial year.

3.5 For monitoring purposes, baseline information will be gathered before implementation of works in the district centres in order to determine the impact of the measures on the levels of walking. The range of works that may be considered for implementation include:

- Junction improvements
- Pedestrian crossing upgrades from zebra/pelican to puffin
- New pedestrian controlled and uncontrolled crossings
- Pedestrian refuge islands
- Improved street lighting
- Drop kerbs and tactile paving
- Footway widening
- Upgrade existing pedestrian facilities to DDA standards
- Landscape improvements (including planting, new street furniture, quality paving, etc.)

3.6 In addition to the work in the district centres, minor schemes of pedestrian improvements will continue within the Highways Capital Programme. These minor schemes will include reacting to access for disabled issues, obstructions on footways and road crossing improvements.

4. Transport Asset Management Plan

- 4.1 Manchester City Council is preparing a Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP). The plan supports walking activity through identification of the maintenance requirement of Manchester's pedestrian infrastructure, including footways and footpaths. This Plan will be used as a service improvement driver and to support GMLTP2 submissions. GMLTP2 mandatory targets include footway maintenance.
- 4.2 The TAMP will provide the means of identifying short, medium and long-term priorities in respect of the various elements that make up Manchester's transport assets. These elements include the highway infrastructure of pavements, drainage, signs, markings, street furniture, and street lighting. The City Council will also be seeking to work with the owners / managers on non highway authority transport routes e.g. routes through parks, canal towpaths, housing estates etc, which contribute to providing access to the wider transport network. It is recognised that within the TAMP the various sections covering the different network elements will progress at different speeds. It is further recognised that the TAMP will need to be further developed and reviewed on an ongoing basis.

5. Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP)

- 5.1 The production of a Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP) is a statutory requirement determined by DEFRA. Manchester City Council has begun the process of formulating the first Manchester RoWIP based upon the DEFRA Statutory Guidance. The Manchester RoWIP will become an integral part of the transport plan for Manchester and will support the objectives outlined in the GMLTP2 and Walking Strategy respectively. It is intended that the focus of the Manchester RoWIP will be on providing safe and desirable off-highway routes to allow the residents of Manchester to access local facilities.
- 5.2 The draft Stage One RoWIP was approved in April 2005 by the Local Access Forum (LAF) and is being used as the basis for the production of the full RoWIP to be approved in 2007. The content of the Stage One RoWIP is a statement of intent, which sets the scene for the full Manchester RoWIP to be prepared.

6. Concise Pedestrian and Cycling Audit

- 6.1 The Concise Pedestrian and Cycling Audit (COPECAT) audit process was designed by GM walking and cycling officers in 2003 to provide a consistent approach to the development of pedestrian and cycling facilities. COPECAT provides a minimum standard to be adopted across Greater Manchester, which helps to promote a seamless approach to cross boundary travel and facilities. It is hoped that when used alongside the Road User Hierarchy, the needs of the most

vulnerable road users will be addressed and hazards reduced, therefore contributing to sustaining levels of walking.

6.2 COPECAT is an easy-to-use auditing tool for Local Authority engineers and planners. It assists the design and implementation of high-quality facilities, which meet the needs of pedestrians and cyclists. This is achieved by offering a flexible audit system, which ensures that all the key issues are considered in the planning, design and implementation process, saving staff time and money. Through the audit it is hoped that an improved performance in the levels of cycling and walking can be achieved.

6.3 In 2005/06 the City Council carried out consultations with representatives from the GM Pedestrians Association, North Manchester PCT and the Transport Pool, which provided an opportunity to review COPECAT from a non-engineering perspective. The purpose of the review was to determine:

- If any localised issues for pedestrians in Manchester had been omitted
- Better links with development control, travel planning and the rights of way work areas.

The result of this consultation exercise with walking representatives is currently being used as a template for a similar review with cyclist groups. Ultimately the Manchester review will be used as guidance to produce an updated version of the Greater Manchester COPECAT audit document.

7. Pedestrian Road Safety

7.1 The levels of road traffic accidents (RTAs) involving pedestrians at specific locations/routes and a reduced perception of road safety associated with walking activity can adversely affect the levels of walking. GMLTP2 continues to challenge this problem with road safety targets to reduce the levels of RTAs, whilst increasing levels of walking.

7.2 There are many strands of work to improve road safety. This requires a range of disciplines to work together on information collation, analysis and project delivery. Some examples of the workstreams involved are:

- Collision investigation – this covers analysis of RTAs to determine locations for accident remedial measures.
- Pedestrian crossings installation – implementation is subject to analysis of vehicle/pedestrian volumes and RTAs
- Safer Routes To School – a total of 42 schemes will be implemented over the period 2003/04 - 2006/07 incorporating a range of measure that include 20 MPH speed restrictions, footway and highway improvements around Manchester schools

- Pedestrian mapping and signage – over recent years, improved pedestrian signage has been provided between areas of pedestrian activity, particularly within the city centre and at district centres along with the provision of improved walking route maps
- Monitoring – the performance of schemes in achieving RTA reductions can be measured through accident numbers compared to cost of scheme calculations. Levels of walking achieved through road safety and travel planning initiatives are identified through various survey techniques and automated pedestrian counters. The monitoring of both road safety improvements and changes in levels of walking activity will continue to be developed over the next few years.

Engineering and Enforcement

- 7.3 A range of traffic engineering and enforcement measures is implemented by the City Council to improve pedestrian road safety. An example of the latest scheme designed to improve pedestrian safety and provide an improved pedestrian environment is the Cross Street/Corporation Street Temporary closure between 11.00 and 19.00 to all vehicles except Metroshuttle. This scheme has been introduced on an experimental basis and a decision whether or not to make the closure permanent will be taken early in 2007.
- 7.4 Since the re-opening of Cross Street in 1999 there had been a substantial number of collisions, mainly involving pedestrians and buses. In light of this, a scheme was promoted on an experimental basis to restrict all traffic (except for Metroshuttle buses) from the Cross Street, Corporation Street corridor for eight hours each day between 11am and 7pm. This eight-hour period was chosen because all of the nine killed or seriously injured casualties between November 1999 and July 2005 occurred between 11am and 7pm. The eight-hour period also closely matched the heaviest footfall in this area, whilst still allowing for the increased vehicular activity in the early evening associated with entertainment activity, for example at the Printworks development.
- 7.5 The scheme has resulted in a positive impact on RTA reduction in the short time since implementation. There have been no recorded pedestrian accidents when the bollards are raised over the months from mid February 2006 until the end of July 2006. In the months prior to the imposition of the bollards (October 2005 until mid February 2006) there were three recorded pedestrian accidents, two of which involved incidents with buses. Therefore a 100% reduction in recorded RTAs has been achieved within this short period of evaluation.

Education, Training and Publicity

- 7.6 Inexperience of the walking environment, crossings and access to public transport routes can result in reduced walking activity and increased RTAs.
- 7.7 The City Council has a statutory responsibility for road safety which requires the provision of education, training and publicity (ETP) relating to road safety. The work of the Manchester Road Safety Unit focuses on many different groups and individuals, with successful initiatives including:
- Junior Road Safety Quiz
 - Junior Road Safety Officers Schemes
 - School Crossing Patrol service
 - Pedestrian Training
- 7.8 The Road Safety Unit has recently introduced the Step Outside project to help tackle the problems of child RTA casualties, in particular child pedestrian / vehicle collisions. Most accidents to children happen on quiet residential roads that are familiar to them. Current good practice across road safety professionals has emphasised the need for children to be given practical opportunities to use the roads with adult supervision, this project hopes to promote this philosophy. Although the programme is specifically targeted for use in schools it can be used for any group of children e.g. community groups, cubs, brownies etc. The aim is to develop awareness of the local road environment through practical pedestrian training. This training programme is designed to:
- Improve children's performance as pedestrians.
 - Prepare children for independence as road users and encourage the continuing need for adult supervision.

Practical experience as a pedestrian is an essential life skill known to contribute to reduced RTA occurrence, and also has the potential to increase walking as a mode of travel.

8. Walking and Health Initiatives

- 8.1 Access to healthy walking environments and walking activities within the community can often encourage increased rates of walking. Manchester has developed initiatives locally to encourage increased levels of walking and thereby, to improve health.
- 8.2 The Community Mapping Project - funded through Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and delivered by the Joint Health Unit and Manchester University, this project aims to encourage an increase of walking activity through provision of easily understandable maps. Maps will contain information on existing walking routes and advice on levels of footway gradients, surface condition, pedestrian crossing types and

locations and landmark structures to act as a guide along routes. The progress of the maps developed can be viewed on www.sed.manchester.ac.uk/mapping/. The key aim of the project is to encourage participation in healthier lifestyles and increased levels of walking.

- 8.3 The Walking the Way to Health Initiative (WHI) - WHI initiatives aim to get more people walking in their own communities, especially those who take little exercise or live in areas of poor health. An Oxfordshire GP, Dr William Bird, started the concept of Health Walks for his patients at Sonning Common Health Centre in April 1995. In 2000 WHI became an initiative of the British Heart Foundation and the Countryside Agency and now benefits from extra funding from the Big Lottery Fund. WHI has helped to create nationally over 350 local health walk schemes and has trained over 20,000 volunteer walk leaders. Since 2000, it is estimated to have encouraged over a million people to walk more.
- 8.4 The walks across Manchester are advertised in the local press and Manchester Leisure produces a quarterly Health Walks leaflet giving information on walks across the city. These leaflets are available from leisure centres, libraries and some doctors' surgeries. Further details of the walks can be found on www.whi.org.uk.

9. Conclusion

- 9.1 In line with national travel trends, there has been significant reduction in walking activity over the last decade across Manchester, which has been matched by an increase in car travel. The need to tackle both of these trends has been fully reflected in GMLTP2. The reduction in levels of walking is a major concern as reduced levels of physical activity are being linked to increased levels of poor health including obesity, coronary heart disease and diabetes.
- 9.2 Manchester City Council is demonstrating a commitment to work towards increasing the levels of walking activity across the city. Many different actions are being taken which are aimed at changing travel behaviour, some of which are summarised in this report. Further updates on progress in Manchester towards delivering GMLTP2 walking targets and the objectives of the GM Walking Strategy can be provided for future meetings.

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