

## **Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2017**

#### **Present:**

Councillor Appleby – in the Chair

Councillors Azra Ali, Shaukat Ali, Chohan, Hughes, Igbon, Kirkpatrick, Leech, Noor, Rawson and Sadler

Councillor Stogia, Executive Member for the Environment

Councillor Shilton Godwin, Lead Member Active Travel

Pete Abel, Love Your Bike

**Apologies:** Councillors Akbar and Paul

#### **NESC/17/56          Appointment of Chair**

Councillor Appleby was nominated to Chair the meeting. This was seconded and approved.

#### **Decision**

To appoint Councillor Appleby as Chair for the meeting.

#### **NESC/17/57          Minutes**

#### **Decisions**

1. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2017 as a correct record.
2. To note the minutes of the Road Safety Around Schools Task and Finish Group meeting of 22 November 2017.

#### **NESC/17/58          Cycle City Ambition Grant**

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director of Highways that updated Members on the delivery of cycling infrastructure and the schools program funded through the first and second phases of the Government funded Cycle City Ambition Grant (CCAG).

The Strategic Director of Highways referred to the main points and themes within the report which included:-

- Phase 1 of the CCAG had been completed and results from monitoring and evaluation work had shown that the improved infrastructure had led to increased levels of cycling;
- Further funding of £22.1m from DFT had been secured for Greater Manchester

to deliver Phase 2 of the CCAG, which would include the Manchester to Chorlton Cycleway Scheme, Piccadilly to Victoria (Northern Quarter) and Stretford Road;

- Part of the CCAG2 programme would provide improved links to schools facilities to encourage a cycling culture as part of a Partner Cycle School Programme;
- Additional cycle parking funding had been allocated by TfGM to each district; and
- The future funding requirements to develop a comprehensive network needed to make cycling a preferred mode of transport

The Lead Member for Active Travel, Councillor Shiton Godwin, informed the Committee that improving cycle lanes, especially the introduction of segregated cycle paths was an important priority for the Council. She said if cyclists felt safer, more people would be encouraged to cycle, which would help reduce congestion levels and enable people to move efficiently around the city.

The Committee considered the views from Mr P Abel, a representative of Love Your Bike. He welcomed the opportunity for his group to feed into the proposed plans for the Chorlton Scheme and commented that there were sections of the Wilmslow Road cycle route in Fallowfield that needed to be improved. He said that he would like to see the Chorlton scheme be a high quality, segregated cycle path and consideration needed to be given to making the Brooks Bar junction safer for cyclists. He said that the road between Hulme and the University should be considered for future schemes. He concluded by saying that imaginative cycle storage, especially for terraced properties and on street schemes needed to be provided across the city to support and encourage the use of cycles.

Some of the key points that arose from the Committees discussions were:-

- What lessons had been learnt from the stage one scheme;
- When would stage 2 plans be available for Members to view and comment upon;
- The need to recognise the needs of different cyclists; and
- Members commented on the lack of cycle schemes in North Manchester.

The Strategic Director of Highways responded to the comments from Members by advising that an appropriate consultation period would commence in early 2018 and Members would be informed of this before the consultation exercise started and plans would also be shared. The outcomes of the consultation exercise would then inform a detailed programme of works to start next year. He said that where physically possible they would always seek to install segregated cycle pathways, and Officers continued to review locations where future schemes could be implemented, including in North Manchester. He said that work was also being progressed at a Greater Manchester level to best deliver and fund future schemes and he welcomed comments and feedback from Members and the Love Your Bike group to help inform these discussions. He said that Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) and Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) were also looking at the issue of congestion.

He said that he recognised the concerns expressed about the Brooks Bar junction and that this key junction would be looked at in detail to ensure this was safe for cyclists and would consult with cyclist group to deliver a high quality and safe scheme, that took into consideration the needs of all cyclists.

He said that the provision of cycle parking was relatively low cost and he would review where these were located and welcomed any feedback from Members.

The Executive Member for the Environment said that the lesson she had learnt from the Wilmslow Road scheme had been the importance of listening to the views of Members, residents and local businesses to fully understand their experience to provide a detailed understanding of how the road, and any side roads are used. She said whilst being mindful of resources she was committed to working with all partners to deliver high quality, safe schemes as soon as possible to help support and encourage cycling across the city.

### **Decision**

To note the report.

### **NESC/17/59            Transport and Carbon Emissions**

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director, Highways Transportation and Engineering, presented by the Head of Policy, Partnerships and Research which set out the policy context for carbon emissions from transport and the actions taking place to reduce these emission.

The Head of Policy, Partnerships and Research referred to the main points and themes within the report which included:-

- The significant investment in transport infrastructure that had taken place to support carbon reductions;
- Data on City Centre journeys and carbon implications; and
- The uncertainties associated with forecasts to reduce emissions.

Some of the key points that arose from the Committees discussions were:-

- Clarification was sought on the projected number of journeys into the City Centre undertaken by car by 2040;
- The rationale for having both a 2020 and 2050 emissions target;
- The impact of new developments close to the city centre contributing to the increase in rates of walking into the city centre or is this as a result of behaviour change;
- The affordability and provision of public transport;
- Pollution levels on Oxford Road;
- The implications from taxi emissions from taxis licensed outside of the Manchester area;
- Promotion and engagement with schools ; and
- Including this topic at Ward Coordination meetings.

The Head of Policy, Partnerships and Research said that he welcomed the request from Members to include this subject at Ward Coordination meetings and said he would seek to progress this. In response to the projected number of journeys into the City Centre undertaken by car by 2040 he said this forecast is based on current data analysis. With regard to the 2020 target he said that this was still useful as it instigated immediate actions to deliver the carbon zero target by 2050, however the 2020 target was influenced by external factors such as the how the National Grid was powered and the emissions factors that this gave rise to. This was kept under constant review.

He said that he did not currently have data which compared carbon emissions on Oxford Road today with the position before the cycle scheme and associated traffic restrictions were introduced but indicated that these could be provided in future. He said that he also recognised a comment made by a Member that the northern part of the Oxford Road/Wilmslow Road cycle lane was more heavily used than the southern element but increases in usage had happened along the whole corridor. More analysis of this could be provided if required.

He said that the increase in new housing developments close to, and in the city centre had significantly contributed to the increase in numbers of journeys undertaken by walking.

In response to the comments regarding Metrolink and the impact of fare increases particularly for younger residents and vulnerable residents he said that the impacts would have been modelled by Metrolink and Transport for Greater Manchester and would be monitored by them once implemented.

It was reported that a review of taxi licensing at a Greater Manchester (GM) level was currently underway and included the issue of emissions standards and testing. He said that Manchester City Council Officers were involved in this work and the outcomes of this review could be reported back to the Committee.

He said that the Manchester A Certain Future (MACF) Steering Group were actively involved with promoting the issue of reducing carbon emissions and climate change within schools and they had recently established a Youth Group to support this area of activity.

The Executive Member for the Environment said that she was working closely with TfGM to deliver the 2020 and 2050 emissions target. She said that the 2020 target assisted with keeping this work in focus and that the Mayor had called for a Green Summit to look at the 2050 emissions target and a review of the work underway to deliver this. She said that the Chancellor had recently announced additional funding for the Transforming City Fund for GM and this would help develop priority projects around the issue of connectivity and congestion. Members welcomed this as they had commented that a number of bus routes had been withdrawn due to routes not being profitable for bus companies, leaving many older residents isolated. The Executive Member for the Environment said that TfGM were looking at the issue of affordability and accessibility and that the Mayor had also indicated that he may exercise his franchise powers.

## Decision

To note the report.

[Councillors Azra Ali and Noor declared a personal and non prejudicial interest as appointed members of the Transport for Greater Manchester Committee]

### **NESC/17/60 Highway Planned Maintenance and Repairs**

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director, Highways, Transport and Engineering which provided the Committee with an update on the Highways Delivery Plan.

The Strategic Director of Highways referred to the main points and themes within the report which included:-

- Information on enhancements in repair performance, quality control, and management of the Service.
- Management of quality and performance of Utility Companies;
- The effectiveness of quality checking and approvals of sub contractor work;
- Improvements in delivering appropriate repairs; and
- The recruitment to a new Highways leadership structure to drive and realise ambitious improvement and efficiency objectives

Some of the key points that arose from the Committees discussions were:-

- Members sought reassurance that the new method of recording defects and inspection data was accurate;
- The issue of standards of repairs undertaken following utility works, in particular Virgin Media;
- Concerns were raised regarding the practice of contractors when undertaking highways work,
- Gullies being left blocked following highways work resulting in a hazard to cyclists and pedestrians;
- How to report highways issues out of hours; and
- How additional funding was secured.

The Head of City Wide Highways responded to the issues raised by Members stating that the new method of recording a single defect for repair provided a much more accurate picture and a more robust platform for future monitoring and reporting of performance. He said that he was confident that the backlog of work would continue to reduce and that significant investment had been made to ensure works were inspected following completion and he was confident that the figures reported were accurate.

He said that he was aware of the issues concerning Virgin Media and that a lot of work had been done with this company to ensure any repair work to the highways was delivered to the required standard. He said that progress had been made and that this work continued to be closely monitored. He said that highways were

inspected twice a year and the Council then became responsible for any repairs once identified during the inspection, and also liable from any claims from residents. He said that they did work closely with the utility companies to ensure that remedial works were delivered to a safe and acceptable standard in the first instance.

He said that they also worked closely with utility companies when works were scheduled to ensure that works were coordinated with minimum disruption. He said that when the three month notice of the intention to commence works was issued this then allowed for negotiations between services to schedule the delivery of works so they were undertaken in a timely manner. In response to a comment from a Member regarding works not commencing by the advertised start date he said he would look into the particular case.

He said that often when potholes reappeared this was indicative of wider road failings and the approach adopted to repairs now was to instigate large patch repairs rather than short term repairs to individual pot holes.

In response to the comments regarding blocked gullies and debris on pathways following works he said that there was clear guidance issued regarding what standards were expected with regard to clearing obstructions, and he would investigate the comments from Members further. He also said that they took the issues raised regarding the contractors working practices very seriously and would seek to address this. He said that if Members had any concerns they should inform the contact centre.

In response to the issue of funding he explained that each highway authority completed a self-assessment questionnaire annually to determine the share of the incentive fund they were eligible for. This involved an assessment to determine performance against three overall bands. Manchester's strong and improving performance was reflected in the fact that the Council was currently progressing towards the highest band for how it delivered its highway maintenance function and this would enable the drawdown of funding and the details of this would be provided to Members.

The Strategic Director, Highways Transport and Engineering said that he would circulate a chart that described the new management and reporting structure to all Members and provide the list of all roads identified for highways repairs.

## **Decision**

To note the report.

## **NESC/17/61 Statement of Community Involvement**

The Committee received the Executive report of the Deputy Chief Executive, Growth and Neighbourhoods that invited the Members to comment on the recommendation to the Executive that they:

- Adopt the refreshed Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) which had been aligned with the Our Manchester approach to engaging the local community and other stakeholders in the planning process.
- The SCI set out how the community and other stakeholders would have the opportunity to be involved in the preparation of Local Development Documents, how they would be able to get involved in Neighbourhood Planning processes and how they would be consulted on planning applications and planning frameworks.
- The requirement to produce a Statement of Community Involvement was set out in national planning legislation.

The Head of Policy, Partnerships and Research introduced the report and some of the key points that arose from the Committees discussions were:-

- The importance of managing residents expectations about what could and could not be achieved in the context of national planning legislation;
- The need for developers to engage with residents in a meaningful and respectful manner and listen to the concerns of residents; and
- Whilst welcoming the use of social media to maximise the response rate to a consultation it was important to recognise that this medium was not the most appropriate for some residents and paper copies should always be available.

The Planning and Infrastructure Manager said that all of the comments raised by the Members were accepted and understood.

The Executive Member for the Environment said that the Statement of Community Involvement had been amended to incorporate the comments received during the consultation exercise. She wanted the document to be easy to read, user friendly and not too technical so as to enable residents to use and understand it. She said that it was important to engage with residents at the earliest stage of the planning process and welcomed any suggestions from Members on how best to achieve this.

## **Decisions**

The Committee endorses the recommendations that the Executive:

- 1) Adopts the Statement of Community Involvement (attached in Appendix A).
- 2) Approves the Council's response to the comments made during the public consultation period (attached in Appendix B)
- 3) Delegates to the Deputy Chief Executive (Growth & Neighbourhoods) in consultation with the Leader and the Executive Member for Environment & Skills, the approval of any detailed amendments to the final Statement of Community Involvement; the inclusion of an appendix to the SCI which provides a case study demonstrating good practice by developers in early engagement at pre-application stage and during the preparation of planning frameworks, and the subsequent adoption of the SCI.

- 4) Delegates to the Executive Member for Environment and Skills further exploration of potential ways of acknowledging receipt of comments on planning applications and planning frameworks.

### **NESC/17/62          Overview Report**

The report of the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit which contained key decisions within the Committee's remit and responses to previous recommendations was submitted for comment. Members were also invited to agree the Committee's future work programme.

### **Decision**

To note the report and approve the work programme.