

Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel

15 September 2020

Commenced: 6.00pm

Terminated: 7.10pm

Present: Councillors Glover (Chair), Mills (Deputy Chair), Alam, Billington, Bowden, Bowerman, Chadwick, Choksi, J Fitzpatrick, P Fitzpatrick, A Holland, Hollinshead, Jones, Lewis, Naylor, Pearce, Robinson, Sharif, Sweeton.

14. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel held on 28 July 2020 were approved as a correct record, subject to the following amendment.

That under Item 3, Impact of Covid-19 and Lockdown on the Local Economy, it be noted that discussion took place regarding the impact on local businesses and options going forward for the Council and wider partnerships to consider future support and nurturing facilities for business and enterprise in Tameside.

15. WALKING AND CYCLING

The Panel welcomed Councillor Warren Bray, Executive Member, Strategic Development and Transport; and Lee Holland, Head of Engineering Services, to provide information on consultation and project developments for walking and cycling in Tameside.

Members received a presentation on delivering the Bee Network in Tameside, with specific reference made to the local projects and timescales aimed to deliver sustainable improvements to walking and cycling. Projects of this nature require a long-term strategy and cooperation of partnerships and stakeholders to address key challenges, barriers and a need to transform the existing networks.

Developments in walking and cycling across Greater Manchester remain closely linked with initiatives to improve air quality and to address the inactivity of residents. It is estimated that Tameside currently generates approximately £26 million in what are considered to be avoidable costs to the NHS, specifically associated the inactivity of residents. It was reported that around 30% of all car journeys are less than 1km, the equivalent of a 10 to 15 minute walk, which contribute to traffic congestion and poor air quality.

During recent months, and as a direct result of Covid-19 restrictions and lockdown, there has been a significant reduction in vehicular traffic at a national, regional and local level. The number of walking and cycling journeys has increased exponentially and it is important to identify future opportunities to build on this. Projected benefits for residents include:

- Improvements in air quality
- Reduction in traffic / congestion
- Health improvements (physical and mental health)
- Innovative design and solutions
- Improving the local environment
- Putting people first

In responding to the pandemic, a regional ambition for recovery is to Build Back Better. This will also link closely with measures under development to ensure Greater Manchester is carbon

neutral by 2032. A map of the Bee Network shows 1800 miles of protected walking and cycling across GM. Mr Holland advised members that the Council is also working closely with neighbouring authorities when planning ways to improve access and connectivity of networks.

It was reported that the Council has submitted bids to the Mayor's Challenge Fund and to date has secured funding for 11 schemes, which equates to around £11.5 million. Local schemes are currently at the programme entry stage, with a two-year delivery plan ahead. In addition, the Council has secured £1.5 million of funding from Highways England to deliver a new cycling route from Hyde to Hollingworth. The options appraisal is under review and future consultation is planned later in the year. The Council has received additional grants as part of the Emergency Active Travel Fund.

A community-led approach to engagement, design and build will aim to improve community involvement in delivering the desired outcomes at a local level. A range of consultation projects took place in February and March in relation to parts of the Mayor's Challenge Fund. A second stage of consultation was developed on Safe Streets.

Councillor Bray and Mr Holland responded to a number of questions from the Panel on:

- The permanence of each scheme and long-term impacts on residents and communities
- Outcomes and timescales for the second phase of Emergency Active Travel Funding
- The data source for reported increase in walking and cycling trips, uptake in Tameside
- Existing barriers for residents to change behaviour to walking and cycling
- Staged journeys and access to an integrated transport network for residents, all modes of transport
- Infrastructure and safety for families with children to access major routes where cycling is to be promoted
- Scheme timetables to be circulated to members

Resolved: That Councillor Bray and Mr Holland be thanked for attending the meeting.

16. OMBUDSMAN ANNUAL REPORT FOR COMPLAINTS MONITORING

The Panel received the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Annual Report, as tabled at the meeting of Overview Panel on 7 September 2020.

17. GREATER MANCHESTER SCRUTINY

The Chair provided a verbal update on recent activity. Regular Scrutiny update emails will continue to include a link to all public papers for the Greater Manchester Combined Authority Scrutiny Committees.

18. CHAIR'S UPDATE

The Chair informed members that:

- All scrutiny members should have received a calendar invitation for the mid-year budget update meetings scheduled for 1pm and 6pm on 22 September 2020.
- Panel members will receive an email outside of the meeting, with an invitation to join a working group to progress activity specific to economic growth and recovery.

19. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note that the next meeting of the Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel will take place on 10 November 2020.

20. URGENT ITEMS

The Chair reported that there were no urgent items for consideration at this meeting.

CHAIR