

GREATER MANCHESTER TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Date: 11th December 2020

Subject: Walking Programme Update

Report of: Richard Nickson

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report explores the range of activities and measures being taken across GM to support the ambition of the 2040 Transport Strategy. It highlights the policy areas, partnership activities, and, infrastructure plans being implemented under the Made To Move steps to success to contribute the GM target of 1 million more daily sustainable journeys including 350,000 additional daily walking trips.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The report is for information and the GMTCC is requested to note the content of this report.

[This must include any proposed exemption from the potential Call in process of the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee's]

Recommendation:

Members are asked to note the contents of the report.

CONTACT OFFICERS:

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Report authors must identify which paragraph relating to the following issues

Equalities Implications:

There are positive equality implications to related to this programme of work.

Climate Change Impact Assessment and Mitigation Measures –

Walking and cycling forms a crucial element of our decarbonisation plans and strategies and the impacts of these sustainable modes are considered in the 2040 Transport Strategy and associated delivery plans.

Risk Management:

Individual schemes are managed under appropriate levels of project and programme management including detailed risk assessment and management.

Legal Considerations:

There are no specific legal implications of this paper. Individual schemes, consultations and programmes are managed in accordance with relevant and applicable regulations and guidance.

Financial Consequences – Revenue:

None.

Financial Consequences – Capital:

None.

Number of attachments to the report: None

Comments/recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Committee

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

- **2040 Transport Strategy.**
- **The Walking and Cycling strategy is embodied in the Made to Move Report (December 2017).**
- **Greater Manchester’s Local Cycling and Walking Investment Plan; “Change a region to Change a nation” (January 2020)**

TRACKING/PROCESS		[All sections to be completed]
Does this report relate to a major strategic decision, as set out in the GMCA Constitution		No
EXEMPTION FROM CALL IN		
Are there any aspects in this report which means it should be considered to be exempt from call in by the relevant Scrutiny Committee on the grounds of urgency?		For information only
GM Transport Committee	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	
[Date considered at GM Transport Cttee if appropriate]	[Date considered by the relevant Overview & Scrutiny Committee]	

1. INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Walking and cycling currently already play a significant role in the transport mix of GM making up 30% of all trips. The 2040 Transport Strategy envisages dramatic and ambitious changes to both modes. It is our intent that we will reduce death on the roads and ensure that poor perceptions of personal security are no longer a significant barrier to walking and cycling. This requires a comprehensive network of off-road and on-road walking and cycling routes. It is important, however, to recognise that the needs of these modes are not entirely the same, and, it is important that issues of conflict between those walking and those riding bikes are addressed where this is a potential issue, and, this demands high quality, segregated provision for the modes in critical areas, often when crossing roads, or where high flows can be expected of either or both modes.
- 1.2 This report concentrates on walking and introduces many of the measures that residents say will help them walk more. This includes the provision of safe space on the road with new crossings, protected junctions and low traffic neighbourhoods; a focus on working with schools and families to reduce inequality and the negative impacts of congested roads; and working to reduce road danger through safer management of our roads.

2. THE POWER OF WALKING

Market insight

- 2.1 Walking is as close to a universal form of transport you can get. In research conducted by TfGM, 53% of Greater Manchester residents are classified as walking 'champions'. By comparison only 4% are classified as cycling 'champions' and 13% bus 'champions'. This does

mean that there is still potential for significant growth, with only 4% of people classified as 'rejectors' of walking as a form of transport.

- 2.2 Walking trips do not typically exceed 30 minutes, which is around 2 kilometres, but this still means millions of journeys in Greater Manchester could be walked. 30% of journeys under 1 kilometre and 62% of journeys between 1 kilometre and 2 kilometres are made by car. 40% of people consider pedestrians to have too little consideration in road space allocation. To encourage more walking, residents say that better pavements and crossings are required.
- 2.3 Walking rates are strongly related to trip distance, which depends on land use patterns and availability of public transport. If people rely solely on cars, then walking rates will be low. This means higher-density living and good public transport will make walking more convenient than driving. There are positive signs that this shift is occurring in Greater Manchester, with walking rates slowly increasing over the last five years. Walking for travel increased by 1.2% from 2017/18 to 2018/19. To accelerate this shift, walking short journeys must be made more convenient than driving.
- 2.4 The impact of the pandemic has had a positive effect on residents' perceptions of walking from those who responded to the TfGM survey on travel demand, with three in ten saying they found walking a good way to get around during lockdown and a fifth saying they felt safer walking due to less traffic in their area. Nearly half claimed that the experience of walking during lockdown will prompt them to do so more often as restrictions ease, with a large minority agreeing they will shop more locally via foot. Now is the opportunity to embed this change.

Walking to reduce inequality

- 2.5 Walking (including people who use mobility aids) is a mode that can be accessible to all. It has beneficial impacts for society in terms of tackling congestion but also significant personal benefits for physical and mental health, helping individuals tackling a range of issues. Evidence exists that walking can increase well-being, and help address significant issues such as obesity, heart disease, various cancers and diabetes. Elements of our intended strategy seek to enable access for those with mobility or other impairments, and these include improving infrastructure, and providing access to a range of transport services.
- 2.6 Greater Manchester's active travel programme has attracted interest from the London Marathon Charitable Trust as way of reducing health inequality. In August 2020, TfGM announced that it had been awarded a £1 million grant from the London Marathon Charitable Trust to inspire people across Greater Manchester to walk more, with a particular focus on those we know experience more barriers, including BAME communities, women and children and those from socially deprived communities.
- 2.7 The project will work with 10,000 people in schools and community organisations to increase levels of physical activity through active travel, by delivering skills sessions, providing new

equipment, delivering group rides and running inspirational events in communities across Greater Manchester. The project will run for three years from September 2020. Individuals or community groups who want to be involved can find out more by sending an email to cycleandstride@tfgm.com.

- 2.8 Travel for work, education or leisure purposes is generally viewed as an everyday activity that is performed without any great difficulty and often independently. However, access is often not straightforward for some individuals and groups within society and TfGM has developed a community-focused Travel Confidence Resource. This resource is aimed at ethnic minority groups, people with disabilities and those from more socially deprived areas to have the confidence and knowledge to walk more often (as well as accessing other ways of travelling). For example, a community project in Brinnington resulted in the development of a professionally illustrated map with 3,000 copies soon to be made available to the local community.

Walking to School

- 2.9 Walking to school is the dominant form of transport for under-16s but we all know the negative impacts caused by so many people driving short distances to school. This year Living Streets, supported by TfGM, will deliver the award-winning 'WOW' programme to more schools in Greater Manchester than ever before, with a target of 178 this year. This will be made up of schools continuing to be supported from the previous year and new schools being recruited.
- 2.10 The WOW programme is an initiative where children self-report how they get to school every day using the interactive WOW Travel Tracker. If they travel sustainably (walk, cycle, scoot, or park and stride) once a week for a month, they earn rewards. On average, WOW schools see a 30% reduction in car journeys taken to the school gate and a 23% increase in walking rates during participation in the programme.
- 2.11 Teaching resources and 'Top Tips' for parents to encourage walking have been created online to support COVID recovery (tailored to key stages 1,2 and 3): <https://tfgm.com/public-transport/schools/tips-for-parents>. Furthermore a 'fit and fun way to travel' (which includes walking) suite of teaching resources is available at www.cleanairgm.com.
- 2.12 Primary school active travel maps are available for schools in Greater Manchester. Using information supplied by a school, a bespoke map is created, which centres the school and highlights walking routes, park and stride locations and boundaries for 5/10/15-minute walks to school. The map can be created quickly and is backed by a TfGM-created template which has information on sustainable travel modes for families and activities to do on the school run – including a 'bear family' that can be coloured in by children.

- 2.13 20 schools and colleges will be funded through the Congestion Deal to support COVID recovery and reduce congestion by increasing levels of active travel. Dedicated officer support will be available to find the best solutions for each organisation and neighbourhood. Confirmation of the final list will be made before the end of the year.
- 2.14 ModeshiftSTARS will expand this year to all ten Greater Manchester councils following successful operating in Wigan. ModeshiftSTARS is a national travel planning and accreditation platform to reduce car use and increase walking and cycling to school. This year, TfGM is offering funding to all 10 Greater Manchester districts for their ModeshiftSTARS licence (which runs for 12 months). This will provide a Greater Manchester-wide tool to monitor increases in Active Travel and encourage and reward schools through bronze, silver and gold accreditation.
- 2.15 As a result of Greater Manchester's successful Active Travel Fund award announced by the Department of Transport it is proposed that the additional funding be focussed on delivering School Streets packages across Greater Manchester due to the interest from councils, and it fits with the requirement of the fund. School Streets help prioritise walking at pick-up and drop-off time and can lead to dramatic increases in active travel and a dramatic reduction in motor traffic and associated collisions and air pollution. The aim will be to work with Greater Manchester councils and schools that are already engaged in some of the programmes described in this paper.

GM Walking City Region Ambition

- 2.16 The Walking Ambition launched in February 2019 as part of GM Moving. The aim is to enable the greatest number of people possible to routinely walk for pleasure, personal or environmental benefit, and travel convenience. The ambition recognises the exceptional role walking can play to support increased physical activity levels across the population in Greater Manchester. It is an evidence-based movement and it recognises the opportunity to support and enhance the investment in Greater Manchester infrastructure (as set out in the Made to Move vision). The GM Walking Ambition has some key approaches including:
- GM Walking Hub – the GM Walking website is a hub of information and resources including walking groups and routes.
 - GM Walking Grants – working with Greater Manchester Centre for Voluntary Organisations, a total of £225,000 in GM Walking grants has been allocated to voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations to support increased walking. The next round of grants has been now launched to support activity safely during COVID restrictions.
 - The Greater Manchester Way marketing campaign is all about inspiring people to consider walking in their everyday lives using local residents telling what walking means to them.
 - The Daily Mile – Greater Manchester is close to reaching 500 schools doing The Daily Mile and we are developing a toolkit for communities and workplaces to utilise this approach in their place.

- The Let's Walk Festival was held in October and went virtual for the first time. Over 20 million steps were taken from 1,836 walking records entered, with 92% of participants saying they would take part again.

3. PRIORITISING WALKING IN OUR STREETS

Bee Network for walking

- 3.1 The Bee Network is planned on the principle of connecting neighbourhoods and reducing traffic rat running in residential areas, which will benefit very local short trips that should be walked. It comprises three core elements of infrastructure that must meet the 'double-buggy' test for walking: low-traffic routes connected by crossings, protected space on main roads, and active neighbourhoods.

Active 'walking' Neighbourhoods

- 3.2 Also known as Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, Active Neighbourhoods reduce the amount of motor traffic in residential areas by preventing rat-running on what should be quiet roads. Typically, filter points – a mixture of bollards, planters and bus gates – at strategic points are used to prevent cars from cutting through the neighbourhood seeking to avoid the main road. Access is maintained to all properties for residents, deliveries and emergency services. Demand for action has grown following a dramatic increase in traffic of residential roads – up 44% on C and Uncategorised roads in Greater Manchester over the last ten years.
- 3.3 Typically, this approach dramatically reduces the speed and volume of motor traffic across the entire neighbourhood. This has a corresponding improvement in air quality and a reduction in collisions. Long-term studies have shown that people living in low traffic neighbourhoods live longer, with higher levels of physical activity (particularly walking), and most importantly people are happier. Part of the aim of the Bee Network is to prevent rat-running in every neighbourhood in Greater Manchester.
- 3.4 While these schemes can generate opposition, they are extremely popular, with a recent Department for Transport survey showing 6:1 in favour. They become even more popular over time: initial opposition to the Waltham Forest 'Mini-Holland' scheme stood at 44% but five years later just 1.7% would want it scrapped.
- 3.5 There are currently 55 active neighbourhoods in development in Greater Manchester funded via the Mayor's Challenge Fund (Transforming Cities Fund), Safe Streets Save Lives, DfT Emergency Active Travel Fund and the recently announced DfT Active Travel Fund.

Better crossings for walking

- 3.6 The majority of the network is created by connecting existing quiet roads with controlled crossings over main roads. These may be parallel zebra crossings or parallel signal junctions so people walking and cycling have their own space. The first phase of the Greater Manchester Bee

Network Crossings project is being delivered in collaboration with TfGM with 18 protected crossings in Bury and Manchester.

Walking on main roads

- 3.7 While the most talked-about features on main road schemes tend to be the protected cycle tracks, there are notable new features being used in Greater Manchester to meet the double-buggy test for walking. This includes no shared space on the pavement (mixing people walking and cycling) which diminishes the level of comfort for pedestrians. This means minimising use of toucan and puffin crossings and instead using parallel signal junctions that give people walking and cycling dedicated space. Other notable features include side road entry treatments to reduce the distance for people crossing the road, and raised tables to slow motor traffic and make it easier for those with reduced mobility. Features such as regular places to sit and the addition of shade using trees are also essential elements to enable more walking trips by older people and carers.

4. WALKING POLICY AND STRATEGY

Streets for All Design Guide

- 4.1 The GMCA (November 2019) recommended that all schemes used for walking and cycling should meet the design principles used in the Mayor's Cycling and Walking Challenge Fund. To assist this and create a common approach to design, a technical 'Streets for All' design guide is in development which will contain standard detail for common highway features. This will mean a common level of service for all modes. The Guide will be developed in sections starting with walking, cycling and bus priority.

Protected side road zebra crossings

- 4.2 Transport Research Laboratory on behalf of TfGM and the GMCA is conducting research into the effectiveness of side road zebras to change road user behaviour and make it much easier to cross the road. The research is due to conclude in early 2021.
- 4.3 There is no method for giving pedestrians legal priority when crossing the mouth of a side road. The common mitigation measure is to set back the crossing away from the mouth of the side road; however, this approach moves pedestrians away from the desire line, meaning the vast majority of people would not use it. Other approaches include side road entry treatments designed to slow turning traffic, but these are prohibitively expensive (£40k-£150k) from all but priority high street schemes. A side road zebra can cost as little as £300. If proved to be effective, this approach would be transformational for walking by making crossings easy and cheap to install for every local authority in the country.

Consultation to prevent vehicles parking on the pavement

- 4.4 It is the ambition of Greater Manchester for all pavements to be kept clear of parked vehicles. Pavements are for people not vehicles, but as time has gone by and vehicle

ownership has increased, we have become accustomed to parking on the pavement to allow more traffic on the road, forgetting that pavements should be a sanctuary for parents, carers, children, the elderly and the disabled. Too often they are blocked or narrowed so someone pushing a double buggy cannot comfortably use them. Moving parked vehicles off the pavement would represent the single biggest increase in protected space for pedestrians of any policy measure available.

- 4.5 The Department for Transport supports this view and sought feedback on proposals to reduce pavement parking in England. This follows moves in Scotland and Wales to do similar. TfGM submitted a consultation response on behalf of the GMCA and the ten local councils supporting the prevention of parking on the pavement in the long term but stated that sufficient time and resources are required to plan for such a move. In the meantime, powers are sought to allow simpler Traffic Regulation Orders to prevent pavement parking and enable civil enforcement powers. GM's priority is first to prevent pavement parking on the Bee Network and then to extend to other priority areas.

Consultation to amend the Highway Code to enhance pedestrian priority

- 4.6 TfGM has responded in support of the objectives in the Government consultation on revisions to the Highway Code to improve safety and priority at junctions for pedestrians. If implemented, the measures would support the overall aims in Greater Manchester to increase walking rates by making roads safer and more convenient for people crossing the road. The changes would assist in the delivery of the Streets for All design guide as they strengthen the rules around junctions and make it simpler to find highways engineering solutions that prioritise people crossing the road.

Members are asked to note the contents of the report.