

1 Executive Summary

1.1 To enhance Rochdale's business, residential and retail sectors, localised policy's and strategy's have identified a series of interventions, historic, current and proposed that follow the ethos of the GMLTP2. The latest strategy outlining the priorities for Rochdale is Aiming High – Pride of Place, which provides direction for efficient and effective use of funding and resources.

1.2 This and similar authority policy has assisted Rochdale MBC in sustaining strong partnerships across public and private sectors, contributing to the delivery of the shared Government and GM priorities. As a result some of the areas of work that are already showing encouraging measured results are:

- the statistics for Road Traffic Casualties and Collisions for Rochdale currently exceeding the targets
- bus lanes, pedestrian crossing provisions and travel plans have assisted improve access to public transport, walking and cycling
- the long term programme of developments to support the economy, employment and quality of life

1.3 The introduction of improved public transport and safer sustainable travel has already assisted to spearhead regeneration. The landmark and partially completed KingswayBusinessPark aims to be a site for regional, national and international businesses and has been subject to positive feedback from the commerce sector. The site is in a prime location within proximity of the motorway network for freight movement, and access to the QBC and planned Metrolink 3a routes for commuter travel. This significant development has been created and jointly funded by the RDA, ERDF and RMBC with the supporting public transport and sustainable travel links identified and developed in partnership with GMPTE.

1.4 Significant improvements to the public transport network have evolved and the planned QBC works in partnership with GMPTE are scheduled for full completion in summer 2008. This coincides with development of the new bus interchange in Rochdale Town Centre where preparatory site works are already progressing. Alongside the bus interchange new council

buildings to facilitate key local authority offices are to be developed, improving access to public information and services.

1.5 New scheme monitoring systems now provide details of the contribution schemes and the overall programme make towards a series of local, GMLTP2 and value for money targets. Improved traffic movement, travel options and access to employment, primary and further education have already been implemented with positive results across Rochdale and Heywood. Whilst the Townships of Middleton and Pennines are currently considering a series of significant transport studies and scheme proposals with the objective to improve retail and employment centres and provide a safer highway infrastructure.

2 Regeneration, Local & Wider Priorities

2.1 Rochdale is reaping the benefits of strategically based forward planning through the UDP and the links identified between land use and the LTP targets on mode shift, congestion and public transport. This has resulted in successful collaborations with partnerships formed between Rochdale MBC, private developers and the Rochdale Development Agency with monetary support from the Environmental Regeneration Development Fund creating enhanced investment opportunities. This process is combining improvements within the economy, environment and transport network and is reflected within the Rochdale Town centre Supplementary Planning Document, to specifically guide redevelopment and revitalisation of a major part of Rochdale Town Centre.

2.2 The Rochdale Renaissance Masterplan identified strategic gateways and corridors to concentrate investment whilst achieving environmental improvements. The spine road at Junction 21 of the M62 was recognized in it, and recently implemented. The theme within the Masterplan is for accessible and sustainable transport and it aims for radical improvements to the public transport network and the Quality Bus Corridor. Improvements for efficient movement of public transport have been implemented along the Oldham Road QBC alongside other key links of the A627, the A58 and the A664. All routes identified deliver economic benefits to the area and are part of the strategic route network that links Rochdale to the motorway network.

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2.3 A template of effective Master Planning and partnership working is reflected in the new development of the Kingsway Business Park (KBP), located in Rochdale next to the M62 junction 21. (see also Context chapter of main document) This major scheme obtained developer contributions to improve the existing highway and also included the provision of a new spine road to accommodate the traffic impacts of the KBP. Appropriate vehicular access is now available to the site from the M62 and therefore prior to the site being populated, wide ranging transport logistics have been developed to respond to the additional demand on the capacity of local roads. In addition a new stop at the KBP has been identified as part of the imminent Metrolink 3a extension which will connect with the walking and cycling links recently provided. To promote the sustainable travel of the new provisions a specific KBP Travel Plan Coordinator has been appointed to engage the companies in helping to limit the number of single occupancy car trips created to the site. Cycle and walking routes are identified and will be enhanced through a range of funding opportunities with Sustrans, Cycle England and developer contributions.



2.4 At the Heywood Distribution Park located close to the motorway network, there have been environmental improvements to support a reduction in the volumes of traffic accessing the site. The installation of new access road to the Distribution Park has helped to direct traffic to appropriate routes and a new Puffin Crossing has been installed for safe movement of pedestrians on the A58 at Heap Bridge. In addition the Council is currently working with the developer on a Freight Quality Partnership.

2.5 To sustain a consistent approach within regeneration with limiting restrictive effects on the environment and economic growth, all planning applications are assessed with regard to safeguarding the countryside and provision of complimentary accessible highway designs. All new developments identified to have an impact on local transport are asked to identify and produce appropriate Travel Plan measures as part of their Planning Application.

2.6 Rochdale's Town Centre Supplementary Planning Document on Transport & Access is the approved policy which sets out the development framework for the redevelopment of Rochdale town centre. This sets out the hierarchy of users, promotes connectivity and supports the provision of the new bus interchange and proviso of Metrolink 3a and 3b. This directs the forthcoming town centre re-development to, reduce and where possible remove through general through traffic and recognise pedestrian desire lines and consider the use and access of public realm. Through these aspirations Rochdale Town Centre can become

commercially viable and sustainable to compliment the existing hillside topography and the Riverside Area alongside the River Roch.

2.7 Heywood Vision & Strategic Framework recognises the value of travel in the area and is the approved document which underpins LTP objectives for future transportation improvement schemes within Heywood.

2.8 Access routes to Heywood Town Centre are identified as major gateways to the Borough of Rochdale, and presents excellent opportunities to create a sense of arrival and a quality profile and image for Heywood. The key gateways are:

- M62 junction 19
- M66 junction 3 HeapBridge

2.9 The major corridors in this area are a focus for investment and improvement and include the A58 which was identified in the GM demand and network management group for improvement. Already the QBC has been implemented and will be reviewed further within the next stages of GMLTP2.

2.10 In this area the East Lancashire Rail Station has been restored as a heritage station and recently identified for further assessment to determine its viability as a contributor to improving the rail transport provisions across to Bury, Rawtenstall and Greater Manchester within the proposals of the GM TIF project. Subject to stringent evaluation of the transport logistics for acceptable travel timing, ticketing, access and financial support this may provide an improved connectivity between Heywood and the City Region. This line could in the future prove to hold potential to serve rail freight to HeywoodDistributionPark.

2.11 In the interest of local safety all Planning Applications are investigated in accordance with the government led 'Safer by Design' and 'Crime Concern' standards. This is in addition to any Highway implications which we as a Highway Authority are responsible for and the health and safety for all road users is a primary consideration when assessing Planning Applications. The Disability Discrimination Act is widely used to achieve acceptable access requirements and provisions for road users is assessed in the vicinity of new developments through a road user hierarchy;

- Pedestrians
- Cyclists
- Public Transport Users
- Specialist Service Vehicles
- Other motor traffic

2.12 Further developments with the PCT have been processed with a range of agreed sustainable travel improvements and travel plans, due for completion in 2008/09 and include;

- Joint Service Centre Heywood PCT & Rochdale MBC
- PCT Centre granted planning permission in Belfield
- PCT Centre granted planning permission in Deeplish

3 Congestion

Local Congestion Action Plan

3.1 The localised levels of congestion across Rochdale have been identified through measurement and trend data. A range of influential factors were identified that could be approached through improvements to the physical infrastructure, refinement of signalisation timings, information and education.

3.2 Rochdale has geographical challenges that determine delivery of physical control measures along strategic routes. As result there are a number of considerations to route improvements. The alignment of the highway, status of neighbouring structures, structural capability, allocation of highway available to road user groups is widely varied as you travel across the borough. Key routes of the **A58** and **A627** are prime examples of this combination of factors. The A58 between Littleborough and Rochdale Town centre is one of Greater Manchester's congestion monitoring routes (Route 15) -see Congestion and network management Duty chapter in main report

3.3 To accommodate a step change in the flow of traffic major improvements to nodes of congestion, especially within close proximity of Rochdale Town Centre were identified for improvement measures to compliment the desired outcomes of the QBC programme.

3.4 Changes to traffic type and growth in the last decade utilising the highway network linked to Sudden Roundabout, located south of Rochdale

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Town Centre and north of junction 20 of the M62, had exceeded the original design capacity of the roundabout. The exact constraints of this design were identified through traffic flow and collision data investigations with many design options considered prior to the new signalisation being selected as the most acceptable facility.

3.5 The new signals serving the junctions at Sudden utilised by commuter, freight, and retail traffic will improve the movement of vehicles by controlling the flow of traffic through the junction more efficiently and safely than previously. The improved design now allocates specific bus route provision with enhanced pedestrian crossing facilities that provide access for employment, retail and residential trips.

3.6 On the west side of the Town Centre junction improvements have been required at Townhead. The cross roads of St Mary's Gate, Whitworth Street, Yorkshire Street and John Street had become notoriously busy, impeded pedestrian crossing and had recorded a significant number of road traffic collisions. Following the public consultation, work has been carried out to replace the existing gyratory with a signal controlled junction. Improvements to the layout aim to reduce congestion improve bus journey times and provide better pedestrian and cycle facilities.

3.7 Near to the Townhead junction improvement, a new pedestrian crossing has replaced an unattractive subway on Whitworth Road and Yorkshire Street, providing an overall safer and more acceptable crossing improves the levels of walking access between surrounding retail and residential areas.

3.8 In addition, public realm within Townhead will be enhanced through the provision of new public space with final design and usage currently being reviewed. The local community support the concept of public space next to the new junction which is intended as one of the gateways into Rochdale Town Centre, alongside the forthcoming redevelopment proposals for the retail and business community of the centre of Rochdale.

3.9 Across the Borough there have been extensive improvements to the Northern Orbital corridor which serve the route between Manchester, Rochdale and Middleton alongside the corridor for Ashton - Hyde - Oldham - Rochdale. The QBC works are substantially complete with a total of 307 bus stop upgrades

that now meet the GMPTE standards, with raised bus stop platforms which confirm to current DDA requirements.

Smarter Choices

3.10 Underpinning all these physical changes on the infrastructure are measures to improve knowledge of the changes, and to educate people on safer sustainable travel. This is contributing to reducing the number of trips by car and an increased ability to safely use key routes to the schools in the vicinity. All schools across Rochdale have been engaged in the travel plan process, with a number of travel plan initiatives in schools being sustained long term. This includes assistance in the route planning and road safety training to run 3 walking buses.

3.11 A recently introduced intervention to improve access to walking is located close to Rochdale Town Centre. The Broadfield Primary School walking bus has been supplied with a "key switch" activated by the walking bus drivers/leaders to ensure safer crossing of all pupils at once using the bus. This provides an on demand pedestrian phase of the traffic signals at the crossing facility located on the dual carriage way at Manchester Road and Dane Street.

Public transport improvements

3.12 Preparatory work has been carried out for the Rochdale Interchange major scheme, (see congestion and network management duty chapter of main report) which is currently under consideration by DfT. Site clearance, demolition and service diversion has been completed and remediation works (dealing with contaminated land, work to the river wall and ground investigation) will be completed in Summer 2008

3.13 Littleborough is one of a number of stations in GM where rail operators, local authorities and GMPTE fund station adoption groups.(see congestion and network management duty chapter of main report)

4 Accessibility

4.1 Rochdale is an area of physical and cultural diversity. This results in a wide range of mechanisms to support the growth of residential and business communities and underpin a sustained economy with increased growth potential. Through improved transport and travel

infrastructure to facilitate efficient movement between sites for employment, education and social activity this can be achieved. Walking is a mode of travel available to most and often overlooked. Rochdale has continued to service this mode through work streams that provide soft and hard measures.

proposed relocation of the bus station in Rochdale will incorporate measures to ensure safer access and movement of pedestrians.

The Travel Plan

4.2 These sustained roles work on developing Travel Plans with schools, and includes walking initiatives such as “Walk On Wednesday”, “Walk to School Week” and “Green Miles”. Promotions successfully targets 20% of the schools annually, and is currently on target for this year. The program is agreed by the borough’s School Travel Steering Group (at which the local highway authority is represented) & the Council’s Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy.

4.3 The Travel Plan processes in Rochdale have continued following the termination of the government bursary programme to fund local authority Travel Coordinators, and School Travel Advisers. These posts and roles have been maintained by Rochdale MBC and continue to support walking activity as a specific measure to reduce the levels of car dependency. This has been achieved by working with relevant partners including school communities. This ethos of travel planning is transferred across to new developments where Travel Plans are a necessary element of new sites for educational ventures.

4.4 Within other educational establishments, Rochdale’s only College “Hopwood Hall” has a travel plan for both of its campuses:

- **Rochdale Campus** is in the heart of Rochdale, 12 miles (19 km) from Manchester. Rochdale bus station is a five minute walk away.
- **Middleton Campus** is located in the green-belt and is only 8 miles (13 km) from Manchester. Public transport travels onto the site, with five dedicated bus services from Rochdale, Newhey, Failsworth, Shaw and Heywood

4.5 The recently completed and ongoing QBC junction improvement schemes within Rochdale is improving pedestrian access to nearby bus stops by providing safer and more attractive crossing facilities at junctions and bus stops. The

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The Rights of Way Improvement Plan

4.6 The Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) has been produced. The ROWIP consists of 2 stages, Stage 1 being a description of the existing state of the ROW network and an assessment of likely future needs, and Stage 2 being a Statement of Action with plans to deal with the findings detailed in Stage 1. This has provided a preliminary assessment:

- of the extent to which the rights of way is available to different groups of users,
- areas deficient in rights of way,
- inconsistencies or anomalies in relation to individual rights of way status,
- opportunities to improve the network, including restoration of severed links.

4.7 This has identified areas which do not have a definitive map or are unmapped, and of the wider highway network, cycle tracks and permissive routes including towpaths and woodland routes. This has identified **ameasured increase for SOAs BVPI 178 – ease of use - from 34% in 2005/06 to 90% in 2007/08.**

4.8 On completion of the assessment as above, the authority was in a position to make an informed assessment of the matters set out in S60(2) of the CROW Act. This assessment forms the basis of the Statement of Action that is an integral part of the authority's improvement plan, describing the existing and future needs of different classes of users and the accessibility to visually impaired or mobility impaired people as required by the DDA. This recognition of the areas where provision for one or more class of user is deficient or likely to be deficient and at what scale will highlight areas for change to direct future resources **Rochdale's TAMP** states that detailed inspection of all walking routes is carried out on foot on a frequency reflective of their usage, e.g Primary walking routes once a month. A footway maintenance hierarchy is included in the TAMP, prioritising the well used walking routes to be maintained as a priority over the lesser used route. The best value indicators "Dangerous Roads and Pavements repaired within 24 Hours" (BV105) and Percentage of Pedestrian Crossings with facilities for disabled people (BV 165) are measured as part of the TAMP.

4.9 Whilst there is no equivalent to the LTP implementation requirement for the ROWIP, additional funding has been allocated through the links identified to LTP. Urban routes from residential areas to the countryside were also identified early in the process and were supported by a 2 year grant from the Stronger Safer Communities Fund in order to upgrade and signpost routes on designated urban fringe areas, hopefully to entice people further onto the ROW network.

4.10 To improve connectivity of the network changes to the path status is considered and has been evolving by working closely with bridleway groups. A series of 3 routes to link Castleton, Rochdale, Smithy Bridge and Littleborough stations are currently being assessed for appropriate status with signage and leaflets to support and the Countryside Services producing leaflets. The associated landowners have been identified and partnership working with local user groups has developed. Development of promoted routes has been progressed through engagement with Tourism and Strategic Planning Officers .

4.11 Additional resources are being exploited to fund a large scale programme of signage Borough wide and this will help to support the ROWIP outcome to create one new path per year to be added to the Definitive Map. Consultation is currently taking place on the type and route of new paths to ensure this is driven and not imposed by RMBC.

4.12 The process is ongoing on a wide range of initiatives to encourage walking trips such as improving links from residential areas to the countryside, Improved connectivity of the network by changes to path status, develop promoted routes by liaising with Tourism Officer & Strategic Planning Teams, coordinate links between definitive and permissive paths and signpost and way marking of all routes. The best value indicator "Percentage of the total length of footpaths and other rights of way which are easy to use by members of the public"(BV178) reached a rating of 59% in March 2008.

4.13 Physical accessibility

4.14 GMPTE has continued to improve the coverage of the bus network, by subsidising non commercial bus services and providing door to door Local Link services, two of which now operate in Rochdale: Deeplish and Middleton. A 'Flexible

Transport Group' has been set up so that Heywood New Heart Community Transport, Rochdale Community Transport, and RoFTRA (Rochdale Federation Tenants and Residents Association) can share booking systems with Local Link. This means they can make fuller use of their vehicles and give more people the chance to travel.

4.15 The Department of Health's 'Partnerships for Older People Project (POPP)' has improved access to healthcare through joint working between Rochdale, GMPTE and the voluntary sector. A travel co-ordinator arranges journeys trips with local community transport operators and a volunteer driver scheme takes people to health appointments.

4.16 Bus access improvements to Kingsway Business Park have been identified, to be implemented as the site develops.

4.17 In Rochdale, as in other Districts, a number of measures, described in more detail in the main document, have also made the public transport network easier for everyone to use throughout Greater Manchester:

- Free bus travel for over 60s and disabled people (and free rail and Metrolink travel in Greater Manchester after 9.30)
- An increasing number of accessible vehicles in the bus fleet, complemented by raised kerbs, giving virtually level access, on the QBC routes
- Measures to reduce vandalism and anti social behaviour, such as fitting CCTV to bus shelters, a Patrol and Response service covering bus stations and the bus network and 'Gateway Checks', where the Police board buses along with ticket inspectors
- Measures to help people with disabilities to travel, including improvements

5 Road Safety

5.1 Progress to meet national and local road safety targets is on track:

- 33% reduction in all killed and seriously injured casualties by 2004-06 compared to the base of 1994-98.
- 43% reduction in child KSI casualties by 2004-06 compared to the base of 1994-98.

- 47% reduction in pedestrian casualties in 2006.
- 39% reduction in pedal cycle casualties in 2006.
- Achieved the target for slight casualty rate with a 30% reduction in 2006.

5.2 This trend recorded contributes to the GMLTP2 road safety targets reflect the structured approach to developing the Local Safety Schemes. This is underpinned by an ongoing review of best practise and is part of an ISO endorsed Quality Management Systems to ensure consistency of assessment and identification of remedial measures. A quantifiable number of safety engineering measures at sites where the vulnerable road users are at risk have evolved, in support of GMLTP2 headline targets for accessibility and modal shift.

5.3 The introduction and devolvement of the recently formulated regional townships process has had an impact on the number and type of local safety schemes delivered. Positive engagement with local communities has formed and helped to identify and develop interventions that address local needs and aspirations. This has enabled delivery of road safety schemes that would previously have been outside parameters of the traditional prioritisation process. This arrangement has helped to facilitate the preparation of local safety and traffic management schemes in partnership with other government agencies and funding has established an overall improvement in scheme delivery.

5.4 The previously identified priority within the 1st quarter of GMLTP2 for Road Safety in Rochdale was the introduction of area wide traffic calming schemes within residential areas. These schemes have been implemented and monitored and the emphasis has now shifted and directed at junction and link improvements on the strategic network. Within this there is a particular focus identified to reduce vehicle speeds and increase access to safer pedestrian movements and crossing points.

5.5 Overall safety improvements for all road users have been achieved through the installation of 20 interactive signs across the borough at strategic points within the network. An additional 10 solar powered signs are scheduled for 2008/09. The move to solar powered signs reflects an ongoing commitment to reducing energy

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consumption with speed camera signs located within existing mobile speed camera sites, to raise awareness and reduce vehicle speeds.

5.6 Safer sustainable travel to school schemes have continued with support and promotion for the introduction of 'School Zones' outside schools not currently within 20mph zones. These zones are aimed at raising driver awareness by either introducing mandatory 20mph speed limits or installing improved high visibility signage and road markings.

5.7 The Rochdale allocation from the Drivesafe initiative is funding a dedicated Community Road Safety Officer post. The key objective is to continue the ethos of the Neighbourhood Road Safety Initiative which ended in March 2007. This post will continue to create, nurture and strengthen the links with community groups, youth groups, Surestart, Youth Service, PCT, Fire Service and Greater Manchester Police.

5.8 Road Safety has engaged the Fire and Rescue Service and Connexions Youth Service in partnership to tackle issues of juveniles who have or are close to being involved with car crime. This group is often involved in anti social behaviour which may ultimately contribute to collision and casualties without this preventative intervention.

5.9 The Road Safety Unit has sustained delivery to 100% of Primary Schools with specifically designed education and training programmes with an increased emphasis placed on providing the skills required for safer independent travel, and to also help reduce the volume of car journeys to school. This included National Standard level 2 cycle training being delivered to 25% of the Year 6 pupils in 07/08 and in 2008/09 all Year 6 pupils in Rochdale will be offered this cycle training programme, made possible through additional DfT funding.

5.10 Year 6 pupils are invited to attend "Crucial Crew" the, Multi-Agency event covering various life skills to help the child to self-assess risks and deal with hazards. On average each year 2000 pupils, representing 60% of the boroughs schools attend.

5.11 There have been 50% of the Boroughs High Schools in receipt of a selection of innovative and interactive road safety programmes designed to respond to local issues. This is aimed at

encouraging behavioural change and the older child's understanding and approach to the increased independent travel developing at this age. In addition there has been a partnership with BSM to provide some of the High Schools Year 11 pupils with an opportunity to participate in their first instructed off-road lesson.

5.12 In response to local issues there has been a continuation of the successful In-Car Safety package, aimed at Rochdale MBC staff who as part of their employment or business, transport children in their vehicles. This scheme is also delivered to parents at all the Boroughs Children and Family Centres.

6 Air Quality & the Environment

6.1 There a number of projects implemented and being developed within Rochdale that indirectly contribute to Air Quality. Whilst highway schemes are often instigated to respond to road traffic casualty levels and to improve the movement of traffic, consideration has been given to pedestrian and cycle access requirements.

6.2 This has been reflected in many highway improvement schemes located near to educational establishments, district centres and public transport provisions. For example junction improvements to increase the flow of traffic on the A58 included the introduction of a toucan crossing at its junction with Birch Road providing improved pedestrian access to Wardle High School and links to the 3 Bridges Cycle Way route.

6.3 The increase in cycling facilitates has been ongoing, providing safer options to travel by this mode with many routes provided off road or via quieter roads. To encourage the next generation of commuters to access greener modes the commitment to delivering cycle training within schools has been sustained. The new National Standard training at Level 2 provides the skills required to cycle on most journeys to schools and support towards journey planning for walk and cycling achieved through the school travel plans.

6.4 There are two specific freight schemes being developed within Rochdale. These works are concentrated at key trip generators for freight movements.

- Heywood Distribution Park has been engaged to develop a site specific Freight Quality Partnership as part of the highway

improvements in the area. (see congestion section of this Annexe) This will also support safer movement of pedestrians and cyclists.

- In partnership with Manchester City Council a weight reduction scheme in Middleton is proposed, subject to signing approval from DfT, to reduce the movement of the types and size of vehicles travelling through residential and retail centres.

6.5 Rochdale has a commitment to developing a comprehensive and integrated Climate Change Action Plan in 2008/09, designed to tackle CO2 emissions reduction and climate change adaptation across the borough. Reducing transport emissions will be a key objective in this new action plan. Reducing Per Capita CO2 emissions and future proofing against climate change impacts are new priority areas in Rochdale's Local Area Agreement. In the coming months all stakeholders will be consulted and invited to participate in the development, co-ordination of this work and delivery against what have to be extremely challenging CO2 reduction targets.

7 Asset Management & Maintenance Issues

7.1 The Rochdale Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP) has identified links to the GMLTP2 objectives and targets. These links encompass requirements for a sustained and improved transport infrastructure for all road users, and to prioritise the highway users and status as appropriate. This supports other key documents such as the Rochdale Aiming High Strategic Plan which identifies the contribution made to the Community Strategy - Pride of Place.

7.2 The TAMP is currently in a draft format and is subject to internal consultation. It has been produced in line with recommendations and guidelines from the County Surveyors Society and the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy guidance on Asset Valuation.

7.3 Through the transport priorities framework identified, there is the requirement for an ongoing strategic relationship to be preserved from the on set of TAMP development. This will ensure that the rapidly changing transport infrastructure across Rochdale is appropriate to sustain and accommodate anticipated changes in travel requirements. It is envisaged that the robust investigative work that has, and is due to be

recorded and assessed will optimise the fiscal value and priorities of LTP allocations and make use of future external funding opportunities.

7.4 The TAMP Action Plan is designed to aid successful growth of the document and facilitate tangible implementation for all partners. Through identification of the required levels of service to be accommodated within Legislative Requirements, Customer Expectations, Best Practise Guidelines and Corporate Documentation, a phased programme of short/medium/long term targets has been identified. Further work is required to achieve standards and requirements for data storage and the inventory of the asset register. This will help to identify the gross replacement costs of the assets and is calculated working towards depreciation cost.

7.5 The levels of the service agreement are under development and subject to further discussion with the relevant departments within Rochdale MBC. This is identified and responded to within the Action Plan processes and is subject to identification of levels and types of funding for delivery. There are no specific locations, areas or routes identified at his stage and these will be detailed within the Action Plan phase of publishing the TAMP. This will identify the priorities of reactive, routine and programmed maintenance within an agreed service delivery programme.

7.6 Alongside the asset management requirements of the TAMP, Rochdale MBC highways street lighting maintenance functions are developing a significant investment opportunity of a Private Finance Initiative (PFI). The procurement of the PFI for street lighting in Rochdale is predicted for inception in 2009, but at this point still remains subject to tender and contractor appointment processes. Through the Greater Manchester well- utilised joint working approach, an opportunity has been identified and is being considered for partnering with neighbouring authority Oldham MBC on this long term improvement project (see Oldham Annexe)

8 Use of Resources

8.1 Rochdale MBC has been experiencing a period of significant change, more specifically within the management and finances of the Highways and Engineering Department. This has

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been a challenging time for all involved, adapting to and implementing new improved control and monitoring systems.

- April 2006 was the Inception of The Impact Partnership, the strategic collaboration made up of Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council, Mouchel Parkman and Agilisys. The Impact Partnership delivers Highways, Property and ICT services to support the regeneration of Rochdale Borough over a period of 15 years. The aim is to help create new, local jobs in order to reinvigorate the local economy and to make the Borough a place where people want to work, live, socialise, and visit for retail and leisure.

8.2 One of the key functions of the Impact Partnership is to create a new building in Rochdale Town Centre to accommodate the services under the partnership. The new building will not only accommodate the partnership but also provide a site for retail and social activities. This will contribute to the overall regeneration plans for the Town Centre, with a positive impact on the local economy and image of the area. New and improved transport provisions are developing for bus and Metrolink travel to the centre to increase sustainable travel access to the area.

8.3 Within the Impact Partnership, the Mouchel organisation has procured a similar Strategic Service Delivery Partnership with Oldham Council as the Unity partnership (see Oldham annexe). Rochdale already has a successful history of working with Oldham, for example as evidenced in the work undertaken on the Housing Market Renewal Strategy, restoration of the Rochdale Canal, and Trading Standards work, and a further project with shared interests and resources is evolving. Whilst it is clear that both Councils have their own objectives and it has been recognised that to align these would be highly complex, a major scheme such as Metrolink will benefit from the shared information, skills and resources of the respective partnerships.

8.4 The following services are included in the Rochdale Strategic Partnership:

- Design & Maintenance
- Estates
- Rethinking Construction & Asset Management
- Reactive Maintenance

- Highways & Engineering
- IT services
- Payroll

8.5 Since the inception of the Strategic Partnership 264 new jobs have been created within the services of the Impact Partnership.

- In 2005/06 an agreement was made for devolved powers to be granted to the local townships for the LTP highways capital programme. Decisions are now granted through delegated powers for local highway improvement schemes. To ensure the wider interests of the Borough are not hindered funding is secured for the implementation of highway schemes of strategic importance, and the remainder proportionately allocated to the 4 townships of Rochdale, Middleton, Pennines and Heywood.

8.6 Programme management and monitoring of the schemes within the capital programme has improved for the delivery of individual schemes and of the overall programme. The devolution of powers to approve individual schemes to townships provides a mechanism to identify and remedy local transportation issues through local agreements. A consistent engagement with townships and local residential and business communities is achieved through this process which provides a local Township Office(r) for concerns to be raised.

8.7 In addition new IT systems have been formatted in house and piloted to help improve resource planning and scheme priority. New systems will identify the contributions made to value for money exercises, the shared LTP objectives and local aspirations achieved from highway schemes within capital funding allocations.

8.8 Recently the development of a corporate call centre has brought about improvements in response time and quality of services currently provided to customers who contact the Council by telephone. The Partnership has provided experience and expertise to set up the call-centre, and provided an improved IT hardware & Software, telephony, staff and management system which has enabled more efficient time management of staff resources in the Highways and Engineering Department.

9 Future Plans

- Rochdale Transport Interchange – site acquired and preliminary site clearance work completed
- Metrolink 3a – design principals for the route through Rochdale into the town centre perimeter roads have been developed. This does not include 3b at this time (the 3b proposed on street track and Town Centre stop is subject to TIF approvals)
- Improved Pedestrian access – Consultations with stake holders to enhance safer pedestrian movements between retail and transport provisions
- Transport modelling – as detailed design standards have evolved some traffic direction and movements have changed and therefore access for road traffic is being assessed
- A58 Congestion Corridor
- Heywood Southern Relief Road to M62 J19
- Heywood Town Centre Relief Road
- Middleton Corridor Improvements