Our Cultural Heart – Phase 1 Library Travel Plan

1. Introduction & Purpose

Our Cultural Heart (OCH) is a mixed-use cultural quarter in Huddersfield town centre, comprising a library, food hall, museum & gallery, outdoor event space/public square, urban park and multi storey car park and venue.

This Travel Plan relates to a partial discharge of Condition 19 by setting out how sustainable travel will be promoted, managed, monitored, and embedded within Council owned and managed assets, namely the library in phase 1. It excludes the food hall and outdoor event space, the former of which shall be subject to its own Travel Plan (as will be the case with future buildings and their uses).

At the time of drafting this document, the food hall and library (which also accommodates the West Yorkshire Archive Services) are under construction. Pre-construction works have commenced for the museum and gallery, with additional phases in development.

The Travel Plan has been devised to encourage sustainable travel, reduce single-occupancy car trips, ensure accessibility, and provide continuity for successive tenants/services. This Travel Plan promotes both sustainable and active travel including walking, wheeling and cycling.

2. Site Context

Primary users for the purposes of this Travel Plan are staff working within the library, with visitors and contractors considered where relevant.

The site is also well located to make use of good public transport connections, with a bus station and railway station located nearby. It is well served by established pedestrian and cycle routes, as well as public car parks in close proximity, many of which provide EV charging facilities.

The Travel Plan design and measures consider staff needs, including those with disabilities, ensuring equitable access to travel information, facilities and route options.

3. Travel Plan Management

A Travel Plan Coordinator will be appointed to oversee the management and implementation of this Travel Plan. This may be part of the library team, of via the wider function of the Council. The Travel Plan will be reviewed collectively annually, with a formal update every 5 years. Its role and responsibility for implementation shall be viewed within the context of travel plan measures implemented by the Council for its staff across the whole estate.

The Travel Plan Coordinator will ensure that travel discussions form part of routine team communication and that staff receive support in planning active and sustainable journeys. Measures, information and processes will be inclusive and accessible to all staff, including those with disabilities.

4. Active and Sustainable Travel Measures

Active travel options (walking, wheeling and cycling) contribute to staff health and wellbeing and reduce environmental impacts. These benefits will be promoted in staff communications.

Travel information and facilities will be designed to meet the needs of staff with disabilities, ensuring that active and sustainable travel choices are accessible and supported.

For work-related journeys, staff will be encouraged to use active or sustainable modes wherever possible, following the travel hierarchy set out in the Kirklees Transport Strategy. Pool cars and Enterprise Car Club vehicles are available options where vehicle use is essential.

The following measures will be implemented within the library itself or within the wider context of OCH.

Walking and Wheeling

- Clear, well-lit pedestrian routes.
- Wayfinding signage including integration with the Events Management Plan.
- Step-free access, ramps or lift services and safe crossings.

Cycling

- Secure cycle parking.
- Lockers, showers and changing facilities for staff.
- Promotion of Cycle to Work scheme for Kirklees Council employees.

Public Transport

- Travel information boards and a component part travel webpage.
- Staff induction packs with sustainable travel guidance with information on Council travel incentive schemes.
- Kirklees Council offers employees interest-free travel loans to buy annual public transport season tickets through the MCard scheme. Annual business passes are also available for individual services.
- Coordination with event scheduling to avoid peak congestion.

Car Use (minimisation)

- On-site parking limited to service vehicles.
- Promotion of nearby public car parks with EV charging.
- Kirklees Council have teamed up with the other West Yorkshire authorities and LiftShare, Britain's largest car sharing network to offer employees access to a car sharing scheme.

5. Targets, Monitoring & Reporting

A baseline survey will be undertaken within six months of occupation to assess travel patterns. The baseline survey will focus primarily on staff commuting and work-related travel patterns. Based on the findings, appropriate targets and reporting measures will then be established that can be integrated into the annual Travel Plan reviews.

6. Promotion & Engagement

Promotional literature will be provided via notice boards within the staff spaces, or Council intranet and may include details on sustainable travel options, such as QR codes linking directly to each component’s travel webpage.

Managers will support staff to plan journeys using the full range of active and sustainable modes. Health, wellbeing and environmental benefits will be highlighted in campaigns and induction materials

7. Longevity & Handover

The Travel Plan obligations will be embedded in operational practices, such as within team meetings and alike. Successive service users will be required to appoint a Travel Plan Coordinator and continue monitoring. Inclusive and sustainable travel considerations must continue through handovers. A central repository of reports and data will be maintained for continuity.

8. Initial Action Plan

Travel Plan Coordinator to be appointed. Travel information included on information boards and launch travel webpages.

Cycle parking and staff end-of-trip facilities delivered within the asset or other Council owned and managed facilities nearby.

Baseline surveys conducted within 6 months of occupation, targets and monitoring requirements agreed