

Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 19 July 2017

Present:

Councillor Paul – in the Chair

Akbar, Shaukat Ali, Appleby, Chohan, Green, Hughes, Igbon, Kirkpatrick, Leech, Ludford, Noor, Rawson and Sadler

Councillor Stogia, Executive Member for the Environment

Jonny Sadler, Programme Director, Manchester Climate Change Agency

Apologies:

Councillors Azra Ali and Longsdon

NESC/17/29 Urgent Business

The Chair had invited the Scrutiny Team Leader to inform the Committee of the 'Call In' procedure. The Scrutiny Team Leader informed the Committee that the process to be followed to 'Call In' a key decision was prescribed within the Constitution at Part 4 Section E (Scrutiny Procedure Rules).

Decision

To note the verbal report.

NESC/17/30 Minutes

Decisions

1. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 21 June 2017 as a correct record.
2. To receive the minutes of the Road Safety Around Schools Task and Finish Group meeting held on 27 June 2017.

NESC/17/31 Manchester Climate Change Agency: progress report 2015-17

The Committee considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive, Growth and Neighbourhoods and the Programme Director, Manchester Climate Change Agency. The report provided Members with a summary of the Agency's work to date over the period September 2015 to June 2017. The Head of Policy, Partnerships and Research introduced the report.

The Committee then welcomed Jonny Sadler, Programme Director, Manchester Climate Change Agency who delivered a presentation to the Committee that

described that the Manchester Climate Change Agency was established in 2015 to support, encourage and enable organisations and individuals in Manchester to contribute towards delivering on the City's commitments on climate change. He described the background to the establishment of the Agency; progress from 2015 to 2017 and the priorities for 2017/18.

The Executive Member for the Environment said that she welcomed the report and the accompanying presentation stating that it represented positive steps in enabling the City to achieve its carbon reduction targets by working in partnership with a range of stakeholders and experts.

A Member asked about the implications of the Brexit referendum on future funding noting that a significant proportion of funding to deliver this programme of activity is derived from Europe. Mr Sadler said that whilst there was uncertainty regarding future funding sources, the Agency had established a constructive relationship with the European Commission and funding had been secured from Europe following the referendum decision. He said that alternative funding sources were being explored with UK Government Agencies such as the Arts Council and Lottery Funding. The Chair said that a possible funding source to consider would be the Bloomberg Cities funding.

In response to a Members comment regarding measurable outcomes and how this was described within the report, Mr Sadler described the need to be clear about the performance of the city against the Manchester Climate Change Strategy for 2017-50, which includes specific objectives, and the performance of the Agency against its objectives. Noting that the Agency acts as an agent to enable change amongst partners and stakeholders across the city, but that the Agency is not solely responsible for the delivery of the city's strategy; it is the city's collective responsibility. Mr Sadler set out that the Agency's performance against its objectives is reported to the Agency's Board of Directors and in its publicly available annual report. Changes to the Agency's objectives, KPIs, and reporting is a subject that Agency directors may wish to address as the organisation now moves out of its initial set-up phase. The Chair recommended that a performance dashboard be established that could be used to provide a summary of progress against the citywide climate change strategy.

Mr Sadler further described that the Agency worked collaboratively across Greater Manchester with colleagues and partners to share good practice, however the Agency was established in Manchester to provide a resource in the City.

Members discussed the importance of the inclusion of schools and young people in climate change projects. A Member commented that she had attended an event that had included young people that had been very positive, this was confirmed by other Members who had attended similar events. A Member commented that by including and engaging young people in the discussion around climate change they would act as agents for change. Mr Sadler said that this was understood and that the new Manchester Climate Change Board, which is currently being established, will include two young people representatives, aged 16-25. And that the application process is open until 6 October 2017. The Chair recommended that a report be submitted for consideration at a future meeting that described the work undertaken by the

Manchester Climate Change Agency and partners in schools to engage school children to act on climate change.

Mr Sadler said that they also work closely with the Universities to engage with young people and visitors to the City through a variety of arts and cultural events. He said that the Agency continued to identify gaps of provision across the city and sought to identify partners to address this. He further thanked Members for their continued contribution to this programme and sharing their local knowledge.

A Member commented on the important and valuable role that housing providers across the city had played in supporting this area of work with their tenants. The Member recommend that information on this be included in future update reports.

The Chair recommended that a report be submitted for consideration at a future meeting of the Committee regarding transport and carbon emissions. He said that the scope of the report will be discussed and agreed in consultation with the Chair of the Economy Scrutiny Committee.

Decisions

1. To note the report;
2. That a report be submitted for consideration at a future meeting of the Committee that describes the work undertaken by the Manchester Climate Change Agency and partners in schools to engage school children to act on climate change
3. That a report be submitted for consideration at a future meeting of the Committee regarding transport and carbon emissions. The scope of this report will be discussed and agreed in consultation with the Chair of the Economy Scrutiny Committee; and
4. That a performance dashboard be established that could be used to provide a summary of progress against the citywide climate change strategy.

NESC/17/32 Manchester City Council Climate Change Action Plan Update

The Committee considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Growth and Neighbourhoods) that provided an update on progress towards the target of a 41% reduction on the Council's direct CO2 emissions by 2020 from a 2009/10 baseline. The Policy and Partnerships Manager introduced the report.

In response to Members questions the Policy and Partnerships Manager said that conversations were currently ongoing with Housing Providers to explore the options to deliver Carbon Literacy training to more of their tenants, he further commented that he had appreciated the feedback from Members who had completed the Carbon Literacy training. He said that the carbon reduction target of 41% was appropriate for Manchester and each core city set its own target. He said that Manchester purchased green electricity however the emissions factors were calculated using a national formula.

In response to a comment from a Member regarding the report including measurable targets the Policy and Partnerships Manager said that Climate Change quarterly progress reports were published online on the Council's website.

The Executive Member for the Environment responded to comments from Members regarding the length of time taken to retrofit the street lighting to the more efficient LED lighting. She said that this programme of work would involve approximately 56,000 street lights across the City and conversations were ongoing with the contractor to deliver this work. In response to a Member's question asking whether the contractor would recruit Manchester residents to deliver this programme of work the Executive Member for the Environment said she would look into this.

Members then discussed the possibility of the City producing its own energy and using geothermal energy. The Policy and Partnerships Manager said in addition to heat network that was being installed for the Civic Quarter, which would connect to a number of buildings, other possibilities to expand this were currently being explored and further information would be provided to the Committee at a future date.

A Member sought clarification regarding the calculation of building emissions and if these included buildings that had been transferred from the Council's estate. The Policy and Partnerships Manager said that he would confirm this and inform the Committee. The Chair recommended that a report be submitted for consideration at an appropriate time that provided information on the measures taken to reduce the carbon emissions of the buildings estate, this report would include information on those buildings that were transferred from the Council's estate.

Members then discussed the Communications and Engagement Plan that had been submitted for information. In response to comments from Members, the Policy and Partnerships Manager said that by using the Our Manchester strategy and strength based ways of working, the plan would be inclusive; using a variety of techniques and methods to engage with residents and stimulate debate and discussion around the issue of carbon reduction across all wards. He said that the plan was designed to engage with residents and stakeholders including schools, the Youth Council and Housing Providers.

Decision

1. To note the report;
2. To request that the next monitoring report details measures taken to reduce the Carbon Emissions of the buildings estate. This report will include information on those buildings that are transferred from the Council's estate.

NESC/17/33 Statement of Community Involvement

The Committee considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Growth and Neighbourhoods). The report sought Executive approval to consult on the draft Statement of Community Involvement. The requirement to produce a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is set out in national planning legislation. The SCI sets out how the community and other stakeholders will 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 Committee had been invited to comment on the report prior to submission to Executive. The Head of Policy, Partnerships and Research and the Planning and Infrastructure Manager introduced the report.

The Executive Member for the Environment welcomed the draft Statement of Community Involvement and said that it represented an opportunity to champion the Our Manchester strategy and to engage with, and hear the views of the residents of Manchester. She said that consideration would be given to publicising consultations so as to encourage as many residents as possible to contribute to the discussion.

Members welcomed the commitment to resident consultation; however they commented that consideration needed to be given to managing resident expectations with regard to planning matters. Members said that consideration had to be given to producing clear written guidance that was then made available to residents that explained the wider planning process and the guidance and legislation that had to be followed.

A Member commented that consideration need to be given to ensure that there was enough staff to enable Members of the public to come into the town hall to talk about a planning application by appointment.

A Member commented that consultations with residents needed to take into consideration that not all residents had English as their first language and that it was not always appropriate to use online consultations. The Planning and Infrastructure Manager acknowledged this comment and said that the most appropriate methods to consult with residents would be used.

Decisions

1. To request that the Executive consider the importance of members of the public being able to access planning officers by appointment at the town hall to discuss planning applications as suggested in the Statement of Community Involvement, and suggest that staffing must be sufficient to enable this to happen.
2. To request that the Executive consider that the Statement of Community Involvement should briefly summarise the legal framework within which the Council, as local planning authority, operates in making decisions on planning applications, and asked that subsequent consultations also explain this framework.
3. The Committee endorsed the recommendation, subject to the above that Executive:

1. Approves the draft Statement of Community Involvement (attached) for consultation.

2. Notes that following consultation, a further report will be required to approve the final Statement of Community Involvement and recommend it for adoption.

NESC/17/34 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.

A Member requested that any Key Decisions taken following publication of the Register of Key decisions and the publication of the Overview Report are annotated in the papers that are supplied to the Committee. This recommendation was supported by the Committee.

A Member requested that the items to be scheduled be listed for consideration at either the October or November meeting. The Chair said that he had noted the comments and he would be discussing the work programme and agreeing the scheduling of reports with officers.

A Member said that a recommendation should be made to investigate options for the Council to adopt paperless working and present any proposals to the relevant Scrutiny Committee(s) and decision making body for consideration.

Decisions

1. To note the report and approve the work programme subject to the above comments.
2. To recommend that Key Decisions taken following publication of the Register of Key decisions and the publication of the Overview Report are annotated in the papers that are supplied to the Committee.
3. To recommend that the Scrutiny Team Leader investigate options for the Council to adopt paperless working and present any proposals to the relevant Scrutiny Committee(s) and decision making body for consideration.