

Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 12 January 2023

Present:

Councillor Shilton Godwin – in the Chair
Councillors Doswell, Holt, Ilyas, Nunney and Wright

Apologies: Councillors Hughes, Lyons and Razaq

Also present:

Councillor Craig, Leader of the Council
Councillor Rawlins, Executive Member for Environment and Transport
Councillor Foley, Deputy Executive Member for Environment and Transport
Councillor Igbon, Executive Member for Vibrant Neighbourhoods
Councillor Ahmed Ali, Deputy Executive Member for Vibrant Neighbourhoods
Neil Robinson, CSR and Future Airspace Director, Manchester Airports Group
Andy Clarke, Head of Corporate Affairs, Manchester Airport
Samantha Nicholson, Manchester Climate Change Agency

ECCSC/23/1 Urgent Business - Large Scale Renewable Energy Generation - Solar Farm Purchase

The Chair invited the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer to address the Committee on the report that is listed on the agenda for the meeting of Executive, 18 January 2023 entitled 'Large Scale Renewable Energy Generation - Solar Farm Purchase'.

The Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer stated that following the meeting of the Executive an update report would be submitted to the Committee for consideration at a time to be agreed in consultation with the Chair.

Decision

To note the update.

ECCSC/23/2 Minutes

Decision

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2022 as a correct record.

ECCSC/23/3 Waste Collection Over the Christmas Period - Verbal Update

The Committee received a verbal report on the waste collection service over the Christmas period.

The Strategic Lead, Waste Recycling and Street Cleaning stated:

- That compared to previous years there had been a reduction in the number of reported incidents and fly tipping;
- Planning for the increase in waste over the Christmas period was anticipated and taken into account when planning service delivery;
- Collection dates had been adjusted to take into account bank holidays over the Christmas period;
- Changes to these dates had been communicated to residents, the contact centre and key stakeholders such as housing providers;
- Availability of the Household Waste and Recycling Centres had been promoted;
- Delays and missed bins collections had occurred due to vehicle malfunctions and staff shortages due to illness;
- In the event of these incidents the agreed contingency plans were instigated, and missed bins were collected as soon possible, usually the next day with residents informed of these arrangements;
- This was the first year that electric vehicle had been used and analysis of their performance would be undertaken to understand any challenges experienced and this learning would inform future service delivery planning over the Christmas period;
- Street cleansing had continued to take place, noting that the water supplies for machinery had been affected by the bought of prolonged freezing weather;
- Cycle lanes would be inspected, and any areas of concern identified would be addressed by Biffa;
- The department worked closely with the Highways Department to ensure cycle lanes were designed to ensure they were accessible and could be cleaned easily by Biffa crews;
- Different departments worked together to coordinate activities to reduce the incidents of pooling of water on highways;
- If residents and/or Members wished to report missed bin collections, they should do this via the contact centre;
- Members had been provided with the Annual Leaf Removal Programme, noting the impact of the spell of cold weather on the timing of leaf fall;
- A lessons learnt exercise would be undertaken to inform future planning; and
- Recommending that all residents subscribe to the alerts system that provided bespoke information on bin collections and any issues with the service.

In response to a specific question raised regarding the potential for additional collections of paper and cardboard over the Christmas period the Committee were advised that the volumes of waste from the different streams would be analysed to inform the future planning of service delivery over this busy period.

Decision

To note the verbal update.

ECCSC/23/4 Manchester Airport and Aviation Emissions

The Committee considered the joint report of Manchester City Council, Manchester Climate Change Agency and Manchester Airports Group that provided an update on

progress since the 9 December 2021 report the Committee received which considered the relationship between aviation and the city's carbon emissions.

Key points and themes in the report and accompanying presentation included:

- Setting out the Council's role in relation to reducing aviation emissions and its relationship to Manchester Airports Group (MAG) who own and operate three United Kingdom airports, including Manchester Airport;
- An update from the Manchester Climate Change Agency which provided an extract from the 2022 Update to the Manchester Climate Change Framework setting out the citywide position in relation to aviation emissions; and
- An update from the MAG on the international position in relation to aviation emissions, the approach taken by the UK Government and MAG's own work to reduce emissions from flights to and from Manchester Airport and from ground operations.

Some of the key points that arose from the Committee's discussions were: -

- Recognising and welcoming the leadership demonstrated to date by the Council, MAG and the Manchester Climate Change Agency on this important issue;
- Noting however that the projections provided remain incompatible with restraining carbon emissions to 1.5%
- Noting that the report and information provided was more open and transparent;
- Previous updates had included graphs to articulate the rate of emissions against projected targets and asked that these be included in any future updates;
- The need to reduce domestic business travel and calling for an improved, sustainable and reliable rails service to support this;
- What were that targets for increased passenger numbers and associated travel at the airport;
- More needed to be done by Government, including consideration of the introduction of a frequent flyer tax;
- Was the Jet Zero Strategy target of 10% of fuel must be sustainable alternative fuels (SAF) by 2030 challenging enough;
- What was the approach taken to private jets at the airport; and
- Asking for MAG to take their leadership to the next level within the sector so that the sector accelerates its activity to reduce emissions.

Neil Robinson, Manchester Airports Group responded to questions and comments by stating that MAG had welcomed the rigorous challenge and debate with partners on the issue of addressing aviation emissions and they were keen to lead on this issue with the wider industry. He stated that MAG had delivered on their commitment to decarbonisation, noting that all MAG's airports continue to be certified as carbon neutral. He advised that the majority of flights undertaken from Manchester airport were for leisure, adding that the number of private jets using Manchester airport was very small. He advised that most domestic flights were to destinations which either crossed over a body of water, or where the alternative mode of transport would take longer than 4 hours. The exception was Heathrow, a large airport that acted as a hub for other international destinations. He stated that it was important to manage emissions associated with whatever mode of transport was taken.

In terms of decarbonisation, Neil Robinson, Manchester Airports Group informed the Committee that the projected industry figures were very broadly a 10% reduction in aviation emissions over the next decade, facilitated due to efficiencies realised by aircraft entering the fleet; a further 20% increase in the following decade to be achieved as a result of the increased take up of SAF and a further 40% increase in the next decade due to an acceleration of technologies, adding that these projections reflected those of the Government's Jet Zero Strategy. He stated that the industry would still have associated residual emissions and it was important to be honest and transparent about this. He commented that as the scale of decarbonisation nationally accelerated, emissions associated with the aviation industry would appear to remain high, but it was important to understand these figures in relative terms. He advised that the Jet Zero Strategy demanded that any residual emissions would need to be compensated for, either via carbon removal or carbon offsetting. He stated that the increased costs associated with these requirements would drive and further stimulate industry efficiencies and technological improvements. Members asked that further information on the carbon offsetting proposals were circulated following the meeting.

Neil Robinson, Manchester Airports Group advised that with exception of the impact of COVID-19 the airport had witnessed sustained growth, as high as 10% year on year growth in passenger numbers and it was anticipated that future growth would be continued. He advised that it was important to acknowledge the significant economic and social value that the airport brought to the city and wider city region. He commented that the airport accounted for approximately 25,000 jobs on site with an additional 75,000 jobs in the associated supply chain. He stated that any growth needed to be delivered within safe and agreed environmental limits. He stated that the emissions limits imposed on the industry would stimulate improvements across the sector and incentivise technological progress within the industry. In terms of projected passenger demand he advised that this modelling would be provided following the meeting.

In regard to SAF, he stated that a lot of the initial safety concerns had been addressed, adding that a significant amount of work had been done in the industry to provide an assurance in this regard. He stated that the challenge now was to facilitate the production of this at scale. He advised that significantly large investment would be required and as such any potential investor needed an assurance that they would see a viable return. He advised that in other countries a price support mechanism had been introduced to support this investment and he called upon the Government to introduce the same in the UK. He stated that this presented a great opportunity to stimulate economic growth and job creation in the UK, and in particular in the North West. He also commented that discussions were ongoing as to how the manufacture of SAF could be an opportunity to use residual waste from Manchester and support a circular waste economy.

The Leader of the Council stated that MAG in partnership with the Council and the Manchester Climate Change Agency were taking national leadership on the issue of aviation emissions. She called for increased national leadership on the issue from the Government and an increased commitment to the delivery of reliable and sustainable rail travel. She stated that she supported the delivery of HS2, commenting that the

introduction of improved connectivity would reduce the need for internal domestic flights.

Decision

To note the report.

ECCSC/23/5 Manchester City Council Climate Change Action Plan - Quarter 3 Update Report

The Committee considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer that provided an update on progress in delivering the Council's Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) during Quarter 3 2022-23 (October – December 2022).

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Providing an introduction and background;
- Key messages from the Quarter 3 progress report;
- Noting that since 2020, the Council had remained within its carbon budget each year and the Quarter 3 report showed continued progress being made with the Council on track to meet its 2025 target;
- Key achievements in this quarter; and
- Data on CO2 emissions.

Some of the key points that arose from the Committee's discussions were: -

- Welcoming the report and the good work described;
- Recognising that this good work was being promoted amongst partners and key stakeholders;
- Congratulating all staff involved in the programmes that had received awards and national recognition; and
- The need to promote active travel amongst staff.

The Zero Carbon Manager described how dedicated resources had been allocated to increase capacity within the team to look at staff active travel. She stated that this is an area identified as requiring additional attention which it is receiving and improvements were beginning to be realised and she was confident that improvements would be achieved. She said this included increased use of different channels of communication with staff and work with the Parks Teams. She advised that more information on this specific work would be provided at the next meeting.

The Committee noted that they would be considering the Manchester Green and Blue Strategy at their March meeting and Chair asked that this included information on nature-based solutions.

In response to a question from a Member who asked if there had been any analysis of any increase in the use of journeys undertaken by cars as a result of the disruption to the train service, the Strategic Lead, Resources & Programmes stated that he would take this enquiry away from the meeting and respond.

The Executive Member for Environment and Transport stated that the learning from all the work described was cascaded and informed all the work of the Council. She stated that was everyone's business to take action and responsibility to address climate change.

Decision

To note the report.

ECCSC/23/6 Draft Terms of Reference and Work Programme for the Climate Change Ward Action Plans Task and Finish Group

The Committee considered the report of the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit that set out the proposed terms of reference and work programme for the Climate Change Ward Action Plans Task and Finish group.

The Committee were invited to agree the membership of the Task and Finish Group; agree the terms of reference for the Task and Finish Group and agree the work programme of the Task and Finish Group, which will be reviewed by the group at each of its meetings.

Decision

1. To endorse the terms of reference for the Task and Finish Group and agree the work programme of the Task and Finish Group.
2. To appoint Councillors Doswell, Shilton Godwin and Wright (Chair), as members of the Task and Finish Group.

ECCSC/23/7 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 information on what support the Council can offer to leasehold owner-occupiers and tenants who maybe experiencing resistance from the property owner regarding installing energy efficiency improvements to the property be provided in either the Housing Retrofit update report scheduled for March 2023 or the update report on the Local Area Energy Plan.

Decision

The Committee notes the report and agrees the work programme, noting the above amendment.