



Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee

Date: Thursday, 9 March 2023

Time: 10.00 am

Venue: Council Antechamber, Level 2, Town Hall Extension

Everyone is welcome to attend this committee meeting.

There will be a private meeting for Committee Members only at 9:30am in Room 2006, 2nd Floor, Town Hall Extension.

Access to the Council Antechamber

Public access to the Council Antechamber is on Level 2 of the Town Hall Extension, using the lift or stairs in the lobby of the Mount Street entrance to the Extension. That lobby can also be reached from the St. Peter's Square entrance and from Library Walk. **There is no public access from the Lloyd Street entrances of the Extension.**

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Membership of the Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee

Councillors - Shilton Godwin (Chair), Doswell, Holt, Hughes, Ilyas, Jeavons, Lyons, Chohan, Nunney, Razaq and Wright

Agenda

1. Urgent Business

To consider any items which the Chair has agreed to have submitted as urgent.

2. Appeals

To consider any appeals from the public against refusal to allow inspection of background documents and/or the inclusion of items in the confidential part of the agenda.

3. Interests

To allow Members an opportunity to declare any personal, prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interest they might have in any items which appear on this agenda; and [b] record any items from which they are precluded from voting as a result of Council Tax/Council rent arrears. Members with a personal interest should declare that interest at the start of the item under consideration. If members also have a prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interest they must withdraw from the meeting during the consideration of the item.

4. Minutes

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2023.

To receive the minutes of the Climate Change Ward Action Plans Task and Finish Group meeting held on 23 February 2023.

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| 4A. Minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2023 | 5 - 16 |
| 4B. Minutes of the Climate Change Ward Action Plans Task and Finish Group meeting held on 23 February 2023 | 17 – 20 |
| 5. Housing Retrofit
Report of the Strategic Director, Growth and Development

This report provides an update to Scrutiny Committee on the Council’s proposals to decarbonise the city’s housing, incorporating an update on Green Skills and provides an opportunity for members to contribute to and influence these policy areas. | 21 – 44 |
| 6. Manchester Green and Blue Strategy and Implementation Plan
Report of the Director of Planning, Building Control and Licensing

This report provides the annual update on the delivery of the Green and Blue Implementation Plan together with information on the delivery of the Tree Action Plan. | 45 – 92 |

7. **Parks and Open Spaces - Parks Climate Change Action Plan** 93 – 102
Report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods)

This report provides an overview of Manchester's Parks Climate Change Action Plan. The report sets out the background to the development of the plan, how the plan aligns to the wider ambition of the Council and an overview of the action plan.

8. **Bereavement Services - Approach to Environmental Sustainability** 103 - 114
Report of Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods)

This report provides an update on progress on the management of the delivery of cemetery and crematorium services, describing how the activities contribute to carbon reduction, biodiversity, and sustainability.

9. **Zero Carbon Culture** 115 - 129
Report of the Strategic Lead, Resources & Programmes

This report provides an overview of the progress that the Council's Culture Team has made in responding to the climate emergency, and how the team is working in partnership with the cultural sector to support Manchester's progress towards its 2038 zero carbon target.

10. **Embedding a Zero-Carbon Workforce Culture** 129 - 136
Report of the Assistant Chief Executive

This report provides information on the progress being made towards embedding a zero-carbon culture within the Council.

11. **Overview Report** 137 - 142
Report of the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit

This is a monthly report, which includes the recommendations monitor, relevant key decisions, the Committee's work programme and any items for information.

Information about the Committee

Scrutiny Committees represent the interests of local people about important issues that affect them. They look at how the decisions, policies and services of the Council and other key public agencies impact on the city and its residents. Scrutiny Committees do not take decisions but can make recommendations to decision makers about how they are delivering the Manchester Strategy, an agreed vision for a better Manchester that is shared by public agencies across the city.

The Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee areas of interest include The Climate Change Strategy, Waste, Carbon Emissions, Neighbourhood Working, Flood Management, Planning policy and related enforcement and Parks and Green Spaces.

The Council wants to consult people as fully as possible before making decisions that affect them. Members of the public do not have a right to speak at meetings but may do so if invited by the Chair. If you have a special interest in an item on the agenda and want to speak, tell the Committee Officer, who will pass on your request to the Chair. Groups of people will usually be asked to nominate a spokesperson. The Council wants its meetings to be as open as possible but occasionally there will be some confidential business. Brief reasons for confidentiality will be shown on the agenda sheet.

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Smoking is not allowed in Council buildings.

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Further Information

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This agenda was issued on **Wednesday 1 March 2023** by the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit, Manchester City Council, Level 2, Town Hall Extension (Library Walk Elevation), Manchester M60 2LA

Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2023

Present:

Councillor Shilton Godwin – in the Chair
Councillors Chohan, Holt, Hughes, Ilyas, Lyons, Nunney, Razaq and Wright

Apologies: Councillor Doswell

Also present:

Councillor Akbar, Executive Member for Finance and Resources
Councillor Stanton, Deputy Executive Member for Finance and Resources
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
Councillor White, Executive Member for Housing and Development
Councillor Johns, Chair of the Economy Scrutiny Committee

ECCSC/23/08 Minute's Silence For All Victims Of The Earthquake in Turkey and Syria

The Committee and all those present observed a minute's silence to remember all those victims of the recent earthquake in Turkey and Syria.

ECCSC/23/09 Minutes

Decision

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 12 January 2023 as a correct record.

ECCSC/23/10 Revenue Budget Update

The Committee considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer that set out the latest forecast revenue budget position, and the next steps.

Following the provisional finance settlement announced 19 December the Council was forecasting a balanced budget for 2023/24 and 2024/25. The risk had moved to the next Spending review period 2025/26 where a shortfall of £57m was forecast. This reduced to £40m after the proposed use of £17m smoothing reserves.

The report further described that in November 2022 scrutiny committees were presented with cuts and saving options totaling £42.3m over three years for consideration. The provisional settlement on 19 December reflected a change in government policy and provided more funding than initially expected. This had given the opportunity to review the quantum and phasing of savings. It was now proposed that options of £36.2m were progressed. The settlement also gives some scope for targeted investments which would put the council in a more sustainable position to face the next spending review in 2025.

The Executive Member for Finance and Resources paid tribute to the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer and her team for all of their hard work in bringing forward the suite of budget reports following the settlement announcements. He stated that the budget settlement needed to be considered in the context of over a decade of austerity that had been imposed on Manchester. He stated that the result of this was that the Council's budget had reduced by £428m over this period, and that if the city had received the average cut in funding, Manchester would be £77m per year better off.

He commented that the decision to cut local authority funding was a result of ideological decisions taken by the Government, noting that the Government had failed to recognise or apologise for the instability they had caused to the national economy. He further referenced the impact of inflation, population growth in the city and the cost-of-living crisis that all impacted on budgetary pressures. He commented that the Government had failed to communicate their financial decisions for the city, noting the recent experience of announcements of the Levelling Up bids.

The Executive Member for Finance and Resources stated that the funding decisions of the Government had effectively forced the Council to increase Council Tax. He advised that the Council was able to deliver a balanced budget and Council Tax would be used to support the most vulnerable residents in the city; support the social care sector and invest in the future of the city.

The Executive Member for Finance and Resources stated that despite the challenges the budget proposed a further £1m investment into waste and street cleaning. This would support Basic Services and Street Cleaning and was in addition to the £1m investment into waste and street cleaning put forward as part of the 2022/23 budget. It was further proposed that there be a further investment of £1.2m to support specific activity in and around the City Centre, District Centres and key arterial routes.

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

- Noting the importance of considering the suite of budget reports in the context of 13 years of cuts and austerity;
- Stating that the Government's funding was unfair; and
- Recognising the hard work of Executive Members and officers in bringing forward the suite of reports.

Decision

To note the report and endorse the recommendation that the Executive approve these budget proposals.

ECCSC/23/11 Neighbourhood Directorate 2023/24 Budget

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) that provided a further update on the priorities for the services in the remit of this committee and detailed the changes to the initial revenue budget options proposed by officers in November 2022.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Providing an overview of services and priorities;
- Information relating to the service budget and proposed changes, noting that the overall Neighbourhood budget is £130m, the services under the remit of this scrutiny had gross budgets of £66.057m and net budgets of £60.603m with 176 FTE;
- There was no projected workforce impact of activity to deliver the savings;
- Investment and Growth Proposals;
- Future opportunities and risks; and
- Noting that consideration had been given to how the proposed savings could impact on different protected or disadvantaged groups.

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

- How would the additional investment described in the Investment and Growth proposals be used and allocated across the city; and
- Welcoming the proposal to defer the introduction of charging for replacement recycling bins until 2025/26.

The Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) stated that he welcomed the investment described by the Executive Member for Finance and Resources and as outlined in the Investment and Growth proposals, however it was important to recognise that there were immense pressures on the service as a result of years of budget cuts. He commented that the detail as to how this investment was to be allocated and used was yet to be finalised. He advised that by working with Biffa it was anticipated that this funding would be used to tackle hotspots and problematic areas. He stated that if Members had suggestions for areas for attention, he would welcome this feedback.

The Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) addressed the discussion on the introduction of charging for replacement recycling bins. He commented that this had originally been suggested as a savings option prior to the final settlement announcement. He described that further modelling on this proposal would be undertaken. The Executive Member for Finance and Resources commented that the decision to defer this decision was the correct one, especially in the context of the cost-of-living crisis.

The Executive Member for Vibrant Neighbourhoods commented that the continued cuts to funding had severely impacted on the Council's ability to deliver services and Departments had been forced to find efficiencies year on year. She stated that all opportunities for investment to support local communities would continue to be pursued. She stated that Neighbourhood Teams would continue to work in partnership with business, voluntary organisations, such as Keep Britain Tidy to engage with residents, local communities and elected Members on the issue of waste and recycling.

Decision

To note the report and endorse the recommendation that the Executive approve these budget proposals.

ECCSC/23/12 Zero Carbon 2023/24 Budget Report

The Committee considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer that provided an overview of the funding secured and invested to date to enable delivery of Manchester City Council's Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) 2020-2025.

The report also set out what had been delivered as a result of the additional revenue funding provided from the Council's budget for 2022/23 and highlighted the priority actions to be delivered between 2023-25.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Providing an introduction and background;
- Information on the funding to deliver Manchester City Council's Climate Change Action Plan 2020-25;
- Noting that to date, the Council had already put in place investment of approximately £227m to deliver the 5-year Climate Change Action Plan along with an additional direct revenue investment of £800k secured as part of the 2022/23 budget setting;
- Noting that the additional revenue investment of £800k which was secured as part of the 2022/23 budget setting was providing important additional capacity, particularly in delivering the city-wide actions;
- Describing progress during 2022/23 against a number of work streams; and
- Priorities for 2023/24.

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

- Recognising the significant and ambitious work undertaken as described to address climate change;
- Thanking the Executive Member for Environment and Transport and her Deputy and all officers concerned for their commitment to this work; and
- What was the plan to convert the remaining 50% of our waste collection fleet to be replaced by electric vehicles.

The Zero Carbon Manager stated that the refreshed Climate Change Action Plan that had been considered by the Committee included a specific workstream action to develop a business case for exploring how to convert the remaining 50% of our waste collection fleet to be replaced by electric vehicles, adding that this was to be completed by July 2024.

The Executive Member for Environment and Transport stated that climate change was at the forefront of all decision making across Directorates. She reiterated the position that it was everyone's responsibility to take actions to address climate change. She commented that the report clearly articulated the positive outcomes the continued investment in this area of activity had on reducing carbon emissions. She stated that Manchester remained committed to addressing the issue of climate

change despite the failure of the Government to take this issue seriously, especially on the important issue of housing retrofitting.

In response to a question raised regarding the ambitions and targets of the Manchester Food Board and their Sustainable Food Policy it was suggested that a more detailed report on this specific subject area be considered at a future meeting of the committee.

The Chair in concluding this item of business stated that she welcomed the continued commitment to invest in actions to address climate change and fully endorsed the report.

Decision

To note the report.

ECCSC/23/13 Draft Manchester Active Travel Strategy and Investment Plan

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director (Development) that presented the final draft Manchester Active Travel Strategy and Investment Plan.

The Committee had been invited to comment on the report prior to it being considered by the Executive.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Providing an introduction and background;
- Describing the development of the Manchester Active Travel Strategy and Investment Plan;
- Information on the consultation process and describing the key themes arising from the public consultation; and
- Providing an update on Staff Travel policy.

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

- Welcoming the strategy, noting that it clearly articulated the commitment, ambition, vision and principles;
- Sustainable transport was a constant issue raised by residents when speaking with elected Members;
- Consideration needed to be given to the format and imagery used on documents to ensure it was appropriate and reflected Manchester;
- Noting that road crossings were an important feature that could be introduced to support walking;
- The need for connectivity across wards;
- The importance of a reliable bus service;
- The need to tackle off road bikes but retain access to green open spaces;
- More information was sought on Vision Zero; and

- Requesting a further detailed report on Staff Active Travel be submitted for consideration in the new municipal year.

The Executive Member for Environment and Transport thanked all of the team for their work in bringing forward this strategy. She further paid tribute to her former deputy, Councillor Taylor who had led on this issue previously. She stated that it was important to recognise that this was a work in progress and the strategy would be reviewed and updated going forward, noting the comments expressed regarding appropriate imagery and the section that discussed targets for primary school children and secondary school children and associated travel to school. She recognised the comments from the Members' discussion that the notion of active travel cut across many different issues, including health, education and accessibility. She stated that the report articulated the scale of ambition the Council had for the city and the residents of Manchester. She commented that this strategy had been drafted in consultation with a range of partners and complemented and supported other Council strategies, such as Healthier Lives, Clean Air and Zero Carbon.

The Executive Member for Environment and Transport commented that this was a person-centred strategy, adding that an important aspect would be behaviour change in relation to transport adding that this could only be achieved if the systems were in place to encourage and support this. She further commented that a report on Vision Zero would be included on the Committee's work programme at an appropriate time to coordinate with when this would be considered by the TfGM Transport Committee.

The Deputy Executive Member for Environment and Transport paid tribute to officers for organising and delivering meaningful and well attended public consultation events, adding that this had been recognised and valued by residents. She further welcomed the recognition of the views captured at the Young People's Green Summit.

The Strategic Director (Development) commented that the Economy Scrutiny Committee would be considering the Growth and Development Budget paper that further discussed resources to deliver on this ambition.

The Interim Head of Infrastructure and Environment advised that Active Travel was a key element of the Sustainable Travel Strategy, and Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) were working closely on the issue of public transport, including bus services.

The Committee welcomed Councillor Johns, Chair of the Economy Scrutiny Committee. He stated that the Economy Scrutiny Committee had scrutinised the development of this plan at their meetings of July 2022 and more recently in January 2023. He recognised and welcomed that key issues and considerations raised by the Committee had been included into the draft strategy, however there were issues that had been raised that he felt had not been adequately addressed, in particular in relation to the integration of public transport; building works and developments and gully cleaning and maintenance, with specific reference to those on cycle paths.

The Executive Member for Environment and Transport stated that the draft strategy would be reviewed to strengthen these references in the report and thanked Councillor Johns for his contribution.

Decision

The Committee recommend that the Executive approve and endorse the Manchester Active Travel Strategy and Investment Plan.

Decision

ECCSC/23/14 Zero Carbon Focused Communications and Engagement Update

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Strategic Communications, and Director, Manchester Climate Change Agency that provided an overview of the investment into zero carbon focused communications, and early assessment of impact.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Providing an introduction and background;
- Information in relation to the research that had been conducted commissioned prior to the COVID-19 pandemic;
- Information in regard to communications activity;
- Information on the Behavioural Change Campaign;
- Communications linked to the refreshed Climate Change Framework;
- Information on the integrated citywide communications campaign;
- Information on the approach to citywide engagement activity;
- Manchester Climate Change Agency activity; and
- Reporting mechanisms.

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

- Noting the positive work undertaken by residents in Whalley Range in relation to zero carbon and recommending that the video that showcased this resident engagement be shown at a meeting of full Council;
- Noting that the research referred to within the report was pre pandemic and asking if there was an intention to undertake this exercise again; and
- How was impact and reach measured and did we work with other core cities and share good practice on this area of activity.

The Head of Strategic Communications stated a consistent approach was taken across all departments and policies to ensure that the key messaging on the issue of zero carbon was aligned. He advised that using intelligence and research enabled the assessment of how these key messages landed, noting that the impact and outcomes would not always be immediately apparent. He further discussed the limitations of using Twitter as a measure, adding that a more valuable route was to engage in networks and in conversations with residents and communities on the issue of zero carbon. He commented that Neighbourhood Teams were key to

working with residents, understanding what mattered to them and supporting initiatives on the issue of zero carbon. He further stated that good practice on this, and a range of related activities was shared with councils across Greater Manchester and with the Core Cities network.

In response to the 2019 research referred to in the report, he advised that this had provided a very useful baseline, however recognising the impact of the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis the intention was to commission this research again.

The Executive Member for Environment and Transport stated that she received regular reports on this area of activity and the approach was regularly reviewed to ensure it maximised impact. She further stated that she would welcome feedback on the Members Newsletter that had been produced and periodically circulated.

The Executive Member for Environment and Transport noted the comments from the Committee regarding the request to have the video shown at Council and she advised that she would discuss this with the Leader.

Decision

To note the report and recommend that the Executive Member for Environment and Transport discuss with the Leader the request to have the video referred to by Councillor Holt shown at a meeting of Council.

ECCSC/23/15 Household Waste and Recycling Rates Campaigns

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) that provided an update on the approach to communications and engagement with Manchester residents to reduce their own carbon impact by reducing the waste they produced, reusing what they could and disposing of or recycling items using legitimate routes.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Providing an introduction and background;
- Providing an update on the Resource & Waste Strategy (2018);
- Information on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), noting that EPR was intended to transfer the full cost of dealing with packaging waste from Local Authorities to producers;
- Data in relation to recycling performance;
- Information on relation to communications and campaigns;
- Information on the approach to engagement; noting that it was important to note that communication and campaigns were not the same as engagement; and
- Describing the priorities for 2023/24.

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

- Welcoming the introduction of a Deposit Return Scheme (DRS), stating that this should reduce the incidents of litter and increase recycling rates;

- Expressing disappointment that glass bottles would not be collected by DRS in England;
- Expressing concern that incidents of flytipping were increasing and consideration needed to be given to relaxing the restrictions at Household Waste and Recycling Centres to enable small business to dispose of their waste;
- Consideration needed to be given to introducing additional collections, particularly for cardboard during the Christmas period;
- Consideration needed to be given to the format of the annual recycling calendars, especially the font size used; and
- The number of free Bulky Waste collection offer needed to be increased per household.

The Project Manager, Service Improvement stated that the Deposit Return Scheme was welcomed and commented that this could potentially realise savings to the Authority. He stated that the frustrations regarding glass not being included were shared. He commented that the issue of flytipping was understood and campaigns and work, both at a local level and GM level were underway to address this. In regard to Christmas collections, he commented that planning had already commenced for this activity across all waste streams.

The Head of Strategic Communications referred to the comments raised regarding the calendars by stating that this document contained a lot of information and that the font size would be reviewed following the feedback from Members. He stated that residents could also receive information and notification reminders via email.

The Executive Member for Vibrant Neighbourhoods stated that a detailed report on the enforcement activity to address flytipping was reported to the Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee. She requested that the Scrutiny Support Officer circulate the latest report for information to members of this Committee.

The Project Manager, Service Improvement stated Household Waste and Recycling Centres were not intended for waste resulting from commercial activity. He acknowledged the issue expressed regarding the permit scheme and added that this was to be reviewed. With regard to the Bulky Waste collection service, he added that the vast majority of these requests for service were undertaken free of charge, and the service was committed to working with residents if they were approached with a request for any additional collections. The Executive Member for Vibrant Neighbourhoods added that this service needed to be considered in the context of the wider budget and pressures on this service.

Decision

To note the report.

ECCSC/23/16 Planning Policy and Climate Change

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Planning, Building Control and Licensing that considered how planning policy contributed to addressing climate change.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Providing a general overview of current planning policy;
- An update on emerging planning policy, Places for Everyone and the Manchester Local Plan;
- A summary of proposals announced at the national level on 22 December 2022;
- Key information on carbon standards for new build homes; flooding mitigation and heat island mitigation;
- A summary of the current consultation on updates to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF); and
- Potential future changes to NPPF via the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill.

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

- Recognising the challenges and barriers some residents had experienced when attempting to install energy efficiency measures to their homes due to the physical limitations of the building, consideration needed to be given to future proofing properties through the planning policy;
- Discussion of the approach to enforcement of planning conditions, adding that residents needed confidence that agreements entered into as part of planning agreement were upheld and adhered to;
- Noting the carbon emissions associated with the construction phase of developments;
- Recognising that the National Planning Policy Framework was a critical development in addressing climate change; and
- Recognising the importance of wildlife corridors to support and enhance biodiversity and that the National Planning Policy Framework should be used to maximise the delivery of these.

The Director of Planning, Building Control and Licensing stated that climate change was at the forefront of all considerations and commented that a report entitled 'Local Plan Update' was to be considered at the Economy Scrutiny Committee that afternoon. In response to the comment raised regarding future proofing properties she commented that a distinction needed to be made between new build and retrofitting. She commented that a holistic approach was taken to energy efficiency and climate change by considering this in a wider context of place making and the wider physical environment, including supporting biodiversity. She advised that submissions would be made to the Future Homes Standard consultation, noting the Government had made a commitment to introducing a Future Homes Standard by 2025, for new build homes to be future-proofed with low carbon heating and world-leading levels of energy efficiency.

The Director of Planning, Building Control and Licensing stated that they worked within existing legislation to enhance and maximise environmental benefits when negotiating with developers, making reference to bike storage and higher insulation standards in new developments. She added that good practice and experiences from other Authorities were also considered.

In regard to enforcement of planning conditions, the Director of Planning, Building Control and Licensing stated that this was achieved via the conditions attached to a

planning consent and associated legal agreements. She stated that in the vast majority of cases these were adhered to and that she would discuss the specific issue a Member had raised outside of the meeting.

The Planning and Infrastructure Manager acknowledged the comments raised regarding the levels of carbon associated with the construction phase of developments. He stated that a lot of research was underway to consider the materials used and viable alternatives and the findings of this would inform the Local Plan. The Committee requested that a report on this specific aspect of work relating to construction materials and carbon emissions be submitted for consideration at an appropriate time. The Director of Planning, Building Control and Licensing added that all developments were required to have an agreed Construction Management Plan to minimise the worst impacts as a result of development and made reference to the Considerate Constructors Scheme.

Decision

To note the report.

ECCSC/23/17 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.

In discussing the Work Programme, Members requested that reports on the following topics be scheduled for consideration in the new municipal year: Consumption based emissions (including food); Staff Travel policy; Vision Zero; Planning and Construction (with specific consideration of the emissions associated with the construction phase and materials); Biodiversity (including information on the findings of the open space audit); and the analysis of the impact of the additional investment of the £1m into waste and street cleaning that had been discussed as part of consideration of the budget report.

Decision

The Committee notes the report and agrees the March work programme.

ECCSC/23/18 Large Scale Renewable Energy Generation - Solar Farm Purchase (Part A)

The Committee considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer that provided information on the progress of negotiation and Due Diligence for the purchase of a Large-Scale Renewable Energy Generation Project to ensure the Council can achieve the CO₂ savings as set out in the Council's Climate Change Action Plan 2020-2025.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Providing an introduction and background; and
- Describing progress to date and next steps.

Decision

To note the report.

ECCSC/23/19 Exclusion of Press and Public

A recommendation was made that the press and public be excluded during consideration of the following items of business.

Decision

To exclude the press and public during consideration of the following items which involved consideration of exempt information as provided for in the Local Government Access to Information Act and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

**ECCSC/23/20 Large Scale Renewable Energy Generation - Solar Farm
Purchase (Part B)**

Decision

To note the report.

Climate Change Ward Action Plans Task and Finish Group

Minutes of the meeting held on 23 February 2023

Present:

Councillor Wright – In the Chair

Councillor Shilton Godwin

Apologies: Councillor Doswell

Also present:

Councillor Igbon, Executive Member for Vibrant Neighbourhoods

ECCSC/CCWAP/23/01 Climate Change Action Ward Plans - Introduction

The Task and Finish Group considered the report of the Head of Neighbourhoods and the Strategic Lead Neighbourhoods South that provided an introduction to Climate Change Action Ward Plans (CCAOWPs).

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Describing the current rationale and purpose of Climate Change Action Ward Plans (CCAOWPs);
- The framework on which these plans were produced;
- The role of Climate Change Officers within Neighbourhood Teams; and
- Providing examples of ward level CCAOWPs from each neighbourhood team.

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming all those present and reiterating the Terms of Reference of the Group, noting that these had been agreed by the Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee.

Some of the key points that arose from the Task and Finish Group's discussions were: -

- Discussing the template used to produce the CCAOWPs and questioning if this was too prescriptive to capture the ambitions of residents;
- Noting that some of the actions described in the examples provided did not initially appear to relate to climate change and asking if these could be reviewed;
- Recognising that the staff working in Neighbourhood Teams had a challenging and busy workload with multiple responsibilities;
- Recognising the difference between wards especially in regard to the prevalence of green space and the types of businesses within ward boundaries;
- Each ward had different opportunities and challenges to address climate change;
- Noting that a consistent approach should be applied across all ward plans, and these should draw upon examples of good practice identified;
- Discussing the need to have meaningful KPIs and measurable targets, noting that this was to be discussed in detail at the next meeting;

- Stating that KPIs needed to be consistent across all ward plans and stating that some outcomes could take years to realise and it was important to recognise and articulate this;
- Discussing the often perceived tension between CCAWPs and the Our Manchester approach to resident engagement, adding that many residents were already engaged in the subject of climate change, however recognising the need to ensure the plans were practical and deliverable yet still capture and articulating the voice of residents;
- To ensure CCWAPs were realistic, consideration needed to be given to being explicit in the plans to identify what activities were measurable and reportable and what were ambitions;
- CCWAPs should differentiate between what we committed to, what we sought to influence and what we would like to see. This approach recognised the powers and resources available so as not to devise a plan that was ultimately undeliverable;
- Welcoming the inclusion in one of the examples that clearly identified and differentiated those partner projects;
- Noting that granular data was available in regard to recycling rates, however recognising that capturing and measuring repair and reuse data was challenging;
- Questioning if the number of events held was a useful metric, adding that an imaginative approach was required and providing an example of a school fashion show to highlight upcycling;
- Data on active travel needed to be collected at a ward level, including that relating to school children;
- Data from different Council departments, such as Highways should be used to inform the reporting of metrics;
- Discussing the need to influence behaviour change and the need to improve the structures and opportunities in the first instance (such as active travel infrastructure etc) to enable this;
- Carbon literacy training needed to be available in all wards;
- Increased tree planting needed to be included in all CCWAPs, noting that targets and outcomes could then be easily obtained and reported;
- Noting that certain programmes and projects were not ward specific and suggesting that consideration should be given to including an additional section on the plans that detailed broader Place Based initiatives that supported initiatives to address climate change; and
- Considering if CCAWPs should be published and available to the public.

The Head of Neighbourhoods informed the Committee that the Manchester Climate Change Agency had been invited to attend the meeting but unfortunately could not attend. She advised that they would be present at the next meeting where the Group would have the substantive item on metrics and reporting. In response to the Members' discussions, she stated that the template was never intended to be restrictive. She said that whilst all wards had used the template the contents of the plans were very different and reflected the ambitions and priorities of the individual wards. She reiterated and endorsed the comments articulated by the Members that the plans needed to be deliverable and explicit regarding the ambitions that were not within our gift to deliver.

The Executive Member for Vibrant Neighbourhoods stated that it was everyone's responsibility, including the different departments of the Council, to take action to address climate change. She described that a significant amount of activity had been undertaken on the issue of behaviour change and reusing and recycling. She stated that in the context of the cost-of-living crisis this was more relevant than ever for many residents. She said this activity and awareness campaigns had been delivered in partnership with a range of organisations, such as Keep Britain Tidy. She further commented that consideration needed to be given to capturing and reporting a range of data from different sources, referring to the wealth of information that schools collected about pupil active travel.

In concluding this item of business, the Chair stated that the discussion and deliberations from this meeting would inform the final recommendations of the Group.

Decision

To note the report.

ECCSC/CCWAP/23/02 Work Programme of the Task and Finish Group

The Task and Finish Group considered the terms of reference and future work programme and were invited to make any amendments.

Decision

To note and approve the work programme.

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**Manchester City Council
Report for Information**

Report to: Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee – 9 March 2023

Subject: Housing Retrofit

Report of: Strategic Director, Growth and Development

Summary

This report provides an update to the Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee on the Council's proposals to decarbonise the city's housing, incorporating an update on Green Skills and provides an opportunity for members to contribute to and influence these policy areas.

Recommendations

Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee is invited to consider and comment on the report.

Wards Affected: All

Environmental Impact Assessment - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city

According to the Climate Change Framework 2022 Update [1], Manchester homes make up approximately a quarter of the city's total carbon emissions. This report details progress and ongoing and new activity to achieve delivery of zero carbon objectives in existing housing.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments

Key to the success of decarbonising Manchester's housing stock is the accessibility of funding, advice and services to all Manchester residents. In particular, we will need to ensure that just transition to low carbon is achieved through consideration of vulnerable households in the design of the Retrofit Plan. Well insulated homes can lead to multiple benefits, including but not limited to

- lower energy bills, and therefore reduced fuel poverty and
- improved health and wellbeing due to better thermal comfort during very cold and very hot periods of the year, reduced damp and mould and better indoor air quality.

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS/Contribution to the Strategy
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	Retrofit provides long term employment opportunities to Manchester businesses and residents. See Section 6.3.
A highly skilled city: world class and home-grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	Demand for highly skilled retrofit skills will provide opportunities for training and upskilling both new and existing operators. See Section 6.3.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	Retrofitting the city's housing stock will ensure healthier, more comfortable homes and in many cases provide for more affordable energy costs. This will result in improved health and wellbeing for Manchester residents.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	The Retrofit Plan will address the transition of Manchester's existing housing stock to zero carbon, and ensure the available housing meets the needs of the city's residents and visitors.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	N/A

Financial Consequences – Revenue

The activity described in this report has staffing and other revenue resource implications, which will be identified as matters develop. If we are successful in obtaining government funding to contribute to our programmes, these typically come with revenue resources to enable their delivery.

Financial Consequences – Capital

Capital resources will be required to deliver the programme of work to Manchester's council housing. As described in section 3.3, this will be supported in part by grant from Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF), should the Council be successful in our bid. Most of the proposed projects within the SHDF programme have approved budget and future reports to Executive will deal with the associated capital approvals relating to this programme.

For other housing, there may be capital resources involved/required and details of which will be identified as matters develop.

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact one of the contact officers above.

- Manchester Housing Strategy (June 2022)
- Report to Economy Scrutiny Committee (8 Sep 2022 Green Skills and Housing Retrofit)
- Housing Operations Asset Management Strategy 2022-2025
- Manchester Climate Change Framework (2020-25) – 2022 Update
- Manchester City Council’s Climate Change Action Plan 2020-2025 (Refreshed plan 2022-2025)
- Report to Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee (7 Feb 2023) and Executive (15th Feb 2023) – Housing Revenue Account 2023/24 to 2025/26.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Manchester has committed to becoming a zero-carbon city by 2038. With over a quarter of the city's carbon emissions generated by residential properties [1] (largely due to space heating and hot water), we must make urgent progress towards improving the energy efficiency of the housing stock and moving away from fossil fuel-based heating.
- 1.2 The Council's Housing Strategy commits the Council to targets of completing the zero-carbon retrofitting of a minimum of 1/3rd of the 67,300 homes managed by Manchester Housing Providers & achieve an EPC rating of B or above across this stock by 2032. It recognised the need and made a commitment to developing a cross tenure Retrofit Plan for the city, in order to meet these targets and ensure progress towards the wider 2038 zero carbon housing target.
- 1.3 The report to Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee in September 2022 explained why a Retrofit Plan is needed, the key issues for developing and delivering a large-scale decarbonisation programme in Manchester, stakeholders who will need to be involved in the delivery of the plan, and the programme for delivery. The September report was a first step towards developing the Retrofit Plan and it recognised and set out the scale and nature of the challenge and the need to work with and influence a broad range of internal and external partners and stakeholders across the housing retrofit system. Key stakeholders include social housing providers, private homeowners and landlords in the city, and the Council must lead by example in the scale and pace of retrofitting its own housing stock. It provided details of key contributory activity to this agenda over the past few years and the planned and ongoing activity.
- 1.4 A report was also taken to the Economy Scrutiny Committee in September 2022, relating to Green Skills. The Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee also recently requested information on what support the Council can offer to leasehold owner-occupiers and tenants who may be experiencing resistance from the property owner regarding installing energy efficiency improvements to the property. This is covered in section 5.
- 1.5 This report provides an update on the progress made since September, describing the key achievements and planned activity in housing retrofit. Incorporating an update on the Green Skills agenda, this report similarly describes progress and future activity in this important area.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The September Report provided considerable detail in relation to:
 - the decarbonisation targets for Manchester's residential properties,
 - the numbers of properties, their ownership distribution and general condition

- what is meant by retrofit and the measures that can be taken to decarbonise a home

2.2 Retrofit Targets

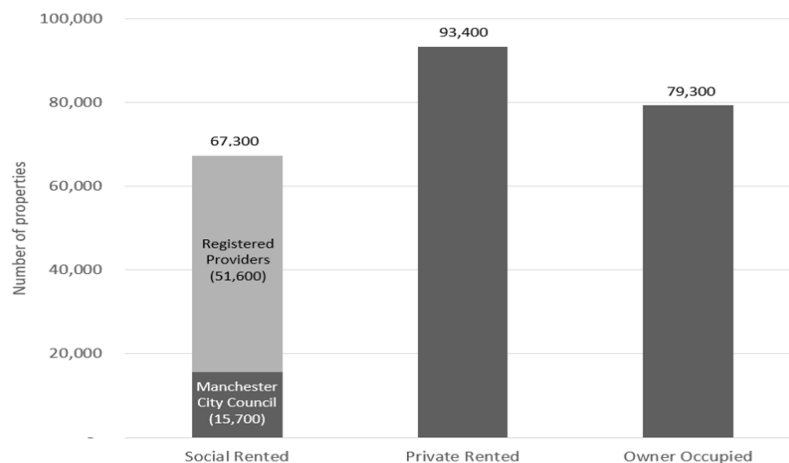
In 2019, Manchester set a target to become a zero-carbon city by 2038, with a challenging reduction of at least 50% of our direct CO₂ emissions by 2025. Housing is a key component in these objectives, contributing to around a quarter of the City’s Carbon emissions. According to the Climate Change Framework 2022 Update [1], in order to reduce emissions from the domestic building stock by 50%, we will need to retrofit 84,000 (cross-tenure) properties across the city. With the average cost of home retrofit estimated at £25,000–£30,000 [2], the total cost of achieving just 50% reduction in the CO₂ emissions is likely to be a minimum of £2.1bn.

2.3 In addition to the targets set out in the Climate Change Framework, the Council’s Housing Strategy 2022-32 sets a target of retrofitting at least a third of the city’s 67,300 social rented properties by 2032. There is a consensus within the Registered Providers (RPs) that this is a stretch target. The Council is expected to lead the way in retrofitting its properties, with approximately 60% of the Council’s own stock needing to be retrofitted by 2032 to meet the Housing Strategy target. The latter assumes that other Manchester RPs will retrofit 25% of their properties.

2.4 A significant scale of action is required to meet these targets, both internally for the Council’s own housing stock and creating demand and favourable conditions across the city for private homeowners and landlords to address their properties. The time to act is now; with the recent considerable energy price increases, we must reduce the energy demand of properties through improvements in energy efficiency in order to lower the occupiers’ energy bills.

2.5 Manchester Housing Stock

2.6 The number of properties owned by Manchester City Council, other RPs, owner occupiers and private landlords are shown below:



2.7 According to a modelling exercise carried out by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) in 2021 [3], Manchester housing across the different tenures has the following characteristics:

Dominated by pre-war, mid century terraced and semi-detached properties	Cavity and solid brick walls common <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High number of uninsulated cavity walls • Many properties unsuitable for cavity wall insulation 	Low levels of roof insulation
Most properties have double glazing, but single glazing still exists	Heating <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gas heating dominates (80%) • Electric storage heaters also common • Only 2% coverage on heat pumps 	Average EPC rating of D (Council Owned Housing Average EPC C)

2.8 Retrofit Measures

2.9 The majority of Manchester homes will need to be retrofitted in order for us to meet our targets. The retrofitting measures are likely to include:

- energy efficiency improvements, such as insulation of walls, roof and floors
- moving away from fossil fuel-based heating such as gas boilers to using low carbon systems such as heat pumps or connecting to heat networks.

3.0 Social housing, including Council owned housing

3.1 Progress and Emerging Plans for Decarbonising Council-owned Properties

3.2 The council owns approximately 15,700 homes. The majority of these (12,800) are managed by the Council's Housing Services. The Council also has 2,700 properties managed by contractors and funded by the private finance initiative (PFI). In addition to the properties managed by Housing Services and PFI contractors, the Council also owns a small number of properties (approx. 200 in total) which are managed by housing associations in West Gorton and Alderley Edge.

3.3 The following sections provide an update on the progress towards decarbonising the Council-owned properties since September, and the ongoing and future work planned to take them towards zero carbon.

3.4 Housing Services properties

3.5 The September report indicated that there had been significant achievements in the past in retrofitting these properties. This included, for example, £83m spend on retrofit since 2005 (resulting in a 49% reduction on Carbon emissions), securing and delivering external grants (£12m) and achieving an average EPC Band C rating for most properties.

- 3.6 Since the Scrutiny report in September, Housing Services have continued to successfully deliver the schemes supported by external funding. The largest of these is the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Homes As Energy Systems (HAES) project to retrofit 500 properties by the end of May 2023 and explained in more detail as a case study below.
- 3.7 We are continuing to consider updates to the Housing Services' Asset Management Strategy (AMS) 2022-25 and the development of an asset management plan which will inform the future capital programme and investment plan for our housing stock. Whilst the current AMS includes zero carbon objectives and planned capital works which will contribute to these objectives, it also acknowledges that there is a need to increase the scale and pace of retrofit to meet the wider zero-carbon objectives of the Council. We are currently undertaking technical work to update and build on previous archetype survey and modelling data. This is due to be completed by the end of March 2023 and will help underpin our housing retrofit plan and feed into our updated AMS. Alongside this, we are also working on a new Void Standard, underpinned by technical work and a voids pilot to consider the opportunities for energy works when a property becomes void, whilst balancing off the implications of increased void turnaround times and managing void rent loss.
- 3.8 One of the biggest challenges we face in decarbonising this housing stock is funding and affordability within the HRA. The challenges relating to general affordability and the management of competing priorities within the HRA (e.g., zero carbon, Decent Homes and other legislative requirements) were referenced in the September Scrutiny report. A Report to the Executive on 15th February 2023, concerning approvals relating to the HRA 2023/24 to 2025/26, set out the position and challenges in achieving zero carbon targets, including:
- The current 30-year HRA Business Plan does not include most works required to enable the Council to achieve its zero-carbon targets by 2038. The cost of retrofitting council stock today is estimated to be an additional c.£255m or c£16.5k per property. This is the cost over and above the works already planned.
 - The cost of this will not be achievable from within the ringfenced HRA without government support and/or changes to the current HRA regulations.
 - The current approved programme of capital expenditure for the financial years 2023/24 to 2025/26 is for approximately £137.4m and work is ongoing to review the capital programme to ensure that the it is both deliverable and affordable whilst aligning with Council priorities.
 - The approved programme does include some schemes that will support the Council in becoming carbon neutral by 2038. The main priorities for 2023/24 include Decent Homes Standards, Fire Safety, Damp and Mould and Decarbonisation.
 - The programme to reach zero-carbon needs to be delivered in manageable phases and proposals are being worked up which look at:
 - Cease fitting gas boilers in 2023/24

- Retrofitting properties as they become void
- Aligning works with decent homes and asset management works where possible.
- Developing a programme to retrofit a fixed amount of properties per annum to achieve economies of scale and to make sufficient progress on the zero carbon ambitions.
- The asset management plan which is under development will need to address important issues including ensuring decent homes standards are achieved and maintained, and carbon reduction and fuel poverty are addressed - resident engagement is a key part of developing this plan.

Case Study – Homes as Energy Systems Scheme

Homes as Energy Systems (HAES) is an ERDF-funded scheme, delivering an estimated 1,000 retrofit interventions in the Greater Manchester region. The 5-year energy efficiency and low carbon heating programme is coming to an end in May 2023.

Manchester City Council is retrofitting 540 of our properties through the scheme, with measures including ground and air source heat pumps to replace inefficient communal and individual gas boilers, photovoltaic systems, batteries and smart heating controls. Our key drivers for the project included:

- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions through better insulation and moving away from using gas boilers
- Improving tenants' comfort at home through warmer homes and reduction of draughts and allowing individual control of temperature levels
- Identifying and supporting tenants at risk of ill health due to cold homes and presence of damp and mould
- Reducing the Council's costs and financial risk by removing fixed heating charges and old inefficient heat meters
- Reducing the Council's asset risks due to damp and mould

HAES is our biggest retrofit scheme to date and has provided lots of useful learning around effective resident engagement and optimal use of the low carbon technologies and how to address technical, supply, skills and planning challenges on future retrofit programmes.

3.9 Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF)

- 3.10 As described above, maximising external funding to support our housing retrofit objectives is of crucial importance in assisting our HRA affordability challenges.
- 3.11 In November 2022, as part of a GM Consortium, the Council submitted a bid to BEIS (now DESNZ) under Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) wave 2.1. The consortium involves 17 other Housing Providers and relates to 6000 properties with a funding ask of £35m and total programme cost of £90m. Approximately half of the total bid (c3000) properties are within

Manchester, with the Council bid being the largest single bid for c1600 properties managed by Housing Services.

- 3.12 The Council's programme, supported by SHDF, involves 6 distinct and varied projects and includes: 7 High Rise blocks, Maisonettes, Heritage Properties, Individual Properties (which require boiler replacement) and a trial Void Project, all of which need to be delivered by September 2025. The majority of these projects were already within the capital programme and the SHDF funding will enable us to deliver housing retrofit alongside Decent Homes and other essential works such as those relating to building safety and fire safety compliance. The total estimated cost of these projects is c£50m and, with an anticipated SHDF grant of c£11m, a Council contribution of c£38m. The majority of the Council's required budget for these projects (c£23m) was confirmed (and approved) within the HRA report to Executive on 15th February 2023. Future reports to Executive (22nd March 2023 and 31st May 2023) will deal with the relevant capital approvals relating to the additional Council capital funding required and the increased budget due to SHDF grant, should we be successful in our bid.
- 3.13 It may be possible to provide an update on the outcome of our bid to the Scrutiny Committee as this is expected at the end of February/beginning of March. All indications are that we can be optimistic in relation to the success of our bid. Should we be unsuccessful in achieving part or all our funding ask, we will need to review these projects and consider the implications. The projects will continue to some degree given the commitment and existing approved internal capital funding.
- 3.14 There are some important requirements to note, including that the funding must be spent by the end March 2025 (we can continue to spend the Council's contribution up to September 2025), funding can only be used for defined retrofit measures, there is a minimum 50% contribution required for eligible measures by the Housing Provider and funding will not contribute to measures which take properties above EPC B and C. Nonetheless, as indicated, this funding is important in providing a much-needed contribution to the costs of retrofitting our own housing stock. It will also kick-start the large-scale action for the Council's own properties, including building internal resources, experience and skills and enhancing our ability to deliver more zero-carbon works over the coming years.
- 3.15 To manage our most obvious risks of us not delivering within these challenging timescales, and to engage a competitive market in a timely manner, we have commenced mobilisation of this programme. To enable this, we have obtained approval to spend and enter into contracts through the Council's Capital Approval Process (to the value of £400k) in advance of a funding outcome (on a risk balanced basis). We are also developing and implementing a procurement strategy, together with a resourcing (including staffing) strategy.
- 3.16 **PFI contracts**

- 3.17 The September report described in some detail the PFI contracts and pointed out that all the (2,700) homes under the Council's three PFI schemes have undergone energy efficiency and carbon reduction works, with the average EPC rating rising from band E to band C. It also indicated that we were working towards a target of having zero-carbon plans in place for all PFI-funded contracts by the end of March 2023, pointing out that the contracts are at different stages in their development of zero-carbon plans.
- 3.18 Positive progress has been made in the development of these plans, with Miles Platting PFI (1400 properties) building on their already established sustainability strategy and the other contracts, Plymouth Grove (500 properties) and Brunswick (800 properties) undertaking archetype surveys and modelling work to develop costed pathways to low carbon to meet the Council's zero-carbon strategic objectives. We are on track for draft strategies to be completed by the end of March 2023, with final strategies at the end of March 2024. Key challenges include incorporating these measures into historical, long-term contracts where zero-carbon was not prioritised and managing competing priorities of other essential works. Funding is perhaps the greatest challenge, in the context of no external funding (for properties at EPC C) and insufficient contract funding to deliver all priorities. Achieving operational savings is a potential option (i.e., omitting some work already in the contract and replacing it with low carbon alternatives). However, these will not fund the whole transition to zero-carbon and there are obvious implications on competing priorities. We are engaging with others including the NW Zero Carbon Hub on potential funding solutions for this area.
- 3.19 Another area being considered with the PFI contractors is the opportunity to connect to existing or create new Heat Networks. There are existing heat networks and communal heating in Plymouth Grove and Brunswick which require upgrading to lower carbon supplies and to improve efficiency. In relation to the latter, there is an opportunity for funding for feasibility and capital improvements under BEIS Heat Network Efficiency Fund to improve efficiency and create conditions for alternative heating sources. We are looking to bid within the first round of this feasibility funding at the end of March 2023, which is likely to lead to a capital bid under this programme.
- 3.20 **Other Council owned properties**
- 3.21 We will be continuing to look at arrangements and opportunities towards zero-carbon for our small number of properties (200) owned by the Council and managed by The Guinness Partnerships (West Gorton) and Peaks and Plains (Alderley Edge).
- 3.22 Note – from April 2023 the management of the properties in West Gorton will be brought in house within the existing Housing Services team.
- 3.23 **Other Social Rented Properties**
- 3.24 As described in the September report, in addition to the Council-owned homes, Registered Providers (Housing Associations) own a further 51,600

social homes in Manchester, with the majority (approximately 70%) of the social housing stock in Manchester being owned by four RPs:

- Manchester City Council (15,700 properties)
- Wythenshawe Community Housing Group (13,500 properties)
- One Manchester (11,800 properties) and
- Southway Housing Trust (5,700 properties).

- 3.25 The majority of Manchester Registered Providers (RPs) are members of the Manchester Housing Providers Partnership (MHPP) and its zero-carbon workstream.
- 3.26 The agreement of the MHPP members to work collaboratively to baseline their housing emissions, indicated in the September Scrutiny report, has progressed, with baseline information covering 85% of Members' stock having been completed. The four lead RPs (including ourselves) are now actively working together to develop costed investment plans to zero-carbon and share learning and this group will be widened out to all MHPP members in due course.
- 3.27 MHPP members are also developing and delivering several housing retrofit schemes, including ERDF funded schemes and SHDF funded schemes. Lessons learned from these schemes is also shared through the MHPP zero carbon sub-group. One of the largest of these schemes currently in delivery is described in more detail in the case study below.

Case Study – Arrowfield Low Carbon Communities Project

Southway Housing Trust is delivering an ERDF-funded project to retrofit around 360 homes on its Arrowfield estate in Chorlton. Works started in late 2022 and include the installation of energy efficiency measures and air source heat pumps on properties which were originally due a replacement gas boiler. Southway's aim is to reduce the estate's carbon emissions by up to 50% while delivering warmer more comfortable homes and engaging tenants in other carbon reduction initiatives. The project is due to complete in June 2023.

Lessons learnt from the Arrowfield project have included

- Timely engagement with residents through a dedicated engagement officer and project hub where residents can see the proposed air source heat pump in action
- The need to engage early with the DNO (Electricity North West) to ensure the installation of heat pumps can be carried out with appropriate grid infrastructure in place

3.28 Challenges relating to social housing

- 3.29 The significant challenges highlighted in the September report are still live issues for the Council in relation to our housing and our RP providers. These include:
- A large proportion of the housing stock requiring complete retrofit including installation of heat pumps/other renewable energy technologies, with costs originally estimated to be around £25k per property (and with cost inflation, now more likely to be c£30k).
 - Government funding being limited in scale and scope, with considerable bidding and delivery requirements.
 - Government imposed caps for social rent.
 - Competing priorities and increasing requirements imposed on RPs and the Council.
 - The ability of the market to respond to high quantity programmes from a relatively low base, with associated skills shortages and implications of high demand in a limited market e.g., cost increases, ability to procure enough quality organisations.
 - Even where funding exists, access to the properties to carry out work is difficult, and tenant engagement and buy-in is key to success.
 - A need to ensure that works – and transitions to renewable sources - do not cause unintended consequences forcing more people into fuel poverty.
- 3.30 It is hoped that the collaboration will help the RPs overcome some of the challenges, but with recognition that the targets are unlikely to be met without more support from central Government.

4.0 Private sector housing

4.1 Decarbonising Owner-occupied properties

- 4.2 The 79,300 owner-occupied properties are discussed below. The ‘willing to pay’ and ‘vulnerable and low-income’ households are covered separately, as schemes and help available for these groups differ. It is recognised that there are many other ways of segmenting the owner-occupied households and this is just one of them. Leasehold properties within the Council estates are discussed as a separate topic due to the unique challenges related to their decarbonisation.

4.3 Challenges

- 4.4 In general, there is a lack of accurate data on the condition of Manchester’s privately-owned housing which makes it difficult to plan retrofit interventions and measure the city’s progress towards net zero. With the current cost of living crisis, it is assumed that whilst there are likely to be significant numbers of ‘willing to pay’ households, their ability to pay for retrofit works has diminished. It is, therefore, even more important now to continue working on a range of financing options as an enabler for the city’s retrofit delivery.

4.5 **Willing to pay households**

4.6 As indicated in the September report to Scrutiny Committee, the GMCA procured a managing agent to provide impartial advice to homeowners on what they need to do to retrofit their homes, the likely costs and recommended steps to take in the process. The scheme, branded Your Home Better, helps alleviate the uncertainty that many homeowners currently have around how to retrofit their homes. The scheme was launched in June 2022.

4.7 The scheme continues to gain momentum, but given the significant challenges, has made a relatively slow start. As indicated, it is currently geared to benefit the willing to pay market and the intention is to bring in financial solutions for homeowners to access green finance products, which would likely make retrofitting more appealing to many owner occupiers. A very recent development on this has involved a financial offer for solar PV and batteries and Your Home Better is currently accepting expressions of interest from potential households. The scheme has ambitious plans to expand to become the retrofit agency of choice for the region and be able to meet the demand from Greater Manchester residents. We will continue to work with the GMCA to ensure a strong take up and maximise the benefits of the scheme to Manchester residents.

4.8 Additional help for the willing to pay households is available through the UK Government's Boiler Upgrade Scheme. GMCA has recently partnered with Octopus Energy to identify and approach owners of properties which already have adequate levels of home insulation to benefit from an air-source heat pump. Overall, 3,200 potentially suitable homes have been identified in Manchester through modelling and will be approached through a letter campaign. Households interested in an air-source heat pump can apply for a more detailed survey to be done in their home. It is noted that this offer is again aimed at the 'willing to pay' customers, as the remaining balance (total cost minus the government Boiler Upgrade Scheme grant of £5,000) will need to be paid by the homeowner. For a typical house the homeowner contribution is expected to be in the region of £4,000, although this may increase to approximately £7,000 for more complicated jobs.

4.9 **Vulnerable/low-income households**

4.10 Our work continues to identify and access funding schemes and routes for the vulnerable and low-income households in Manchester and there have been developments in these opportunities since the September report. There are currently significant amounts of funding available through national schemes such as the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) and the possibility of other funding opportunities from Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ – formerly BEIS). Local Manchester-specific funding includes the Council's own Home Energy Loan Plan (HELP) and the Warm Homes Manchester scheme. More information about each of the currently available schemes is given below.

4.11 **The Energy Company Obligation (ECO)**

4.12 This focuses on supporting low-income and vulnerable and fuel-poor households through installation of insulation and heating measures. The policy aims to reduce fuel poverty and energy bills in the long-term and reduce carbon emissions. All obligated energy suppliers are required to deliver measures under ECO4 (the fourth round of the ECO programme). The scheme is available to those homeowners who are in receipt of means tested benefits and live in EPC D–G rated properties; however, the Council can also refer private tenure households that are considered to be living in fuel poverty or are on a low income and vulnerable – this is known as ECO Flex. Manchester City Council is delivering ECO Flex through GMCA appointed delivery contractors and will be targeting to improve approximately 1,200 homes through ECO Flex between April 2023 and March 2026.

4.13 **Other government funding - Homes Upgrade Grant 2 (HUG2).**

4.14 This funding opportunity was launched to Councils/Combined Authorities in 2022 by BEIS (now DESNZ). It provides grant for energy efficiency measures to be installed in owner occupied and privately rented properties (where the landlord owns less than 4 properties in total) and in certain prescribed Lower Super Output areas or where household incomes are below £31k. Eligible properties must not use gas as their main heating fuel and have relatively low energy performance.

4.15 The Council are awaiting the outcome of a bid for 500 properties and c£10.4m funding. If successful, it is expected that our projects will largely target poorly insulated, electrically heated apartment blocks in the city. The first stage of work will involve identifying neighbourhoods with clusters of eligible properties, with some engagement of residents and landlords to gauge levels of interest.

4.16 HELP is the Council's scheme for assisting homeowners and some private sector landlords to get access to low interest finance. Interest free loans for up to £10,000 can be made for energy efficiency works and heating system upgrades (administration charges apply). Loans are typically paid back within a maximum of seven years, or on sale of the property/death of the assisted person. Care and Repair Manchester administer the scheme on the Council's behalf and the majority of residents who take advantage of this scheme are elderly and often in crisis.

4.17 **The Warm Homes Manchester programme** receives funding from the Warm Homes Fund, a national £150m fund administered by Affordable Warmth Solutions. This small programme is currently identifying eligible properties to install first time low carbon central heating (air source heat pumps), and where possible loft and cavity wall insulation. The programme will fund upgrades to approximately 50 properties in Manchester in 2023.

4.18 In addition to the above, there are schemes coordinated by external parties which offer **emergency heating and energy efficiency measures** to vulnerable households in distress. We will continue to work with these

organisations and others to ensure that these are made available to Manchester residents. We are also working in collaboration with the Cost of Living Advice Line team to allow referrals to be made and help to be accessed, via the range of opportunities, by those who most need it.

4.19 The number of properties targeted through the above schemes has increased from a few hundred in September 2022 (the date of our last report) to several thousand in February 2023. However, there remains an evident gap in the amount of help (both financial and advice/support) available to vulnerable/low-income households. Further work is required to identify and establish suitable financial products and advisory services. The GMCA Your Home Better service may be a vehicle for this and we will continue working with the GMCA to extend the offer to as many Manchester homeowners as possible.

4.20 **Private Rented Properties**

4.21 The biggest group of properties, 93,400 in total, are owned by private landlords. We do not currently hold information about the landlords, although estimates state that there are likely to be around 10,000 of them across Manchester. This makes it difficult to target the private rented sector for improvements (or enforcements if minimum zero-carbon standards could be put in place).

4.22 A particular issue relating to landlords is that retrofit works are typically paid for by the landlord, whilst the tenant benefits from the warmer, more comfortable home and lower energy bills. This split incentive is being discussed at both local and national levels and we are keen to progress financing options for landlords to help with this. While these are being developed, landlords can access help and support towards the decarbonisation of their properties through the GMCA's Your Home Better Service. Some funding streams, such as ECO4 and HUG2 (for small landlords) also apply. We note that influencing and supporting this sector remains challenging within the current policy constraints.

4.23 We continue to work closely with the Council's Housing Compliance and Enforcement team to ensure that landlords adhere to the national Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES). The team does not currently carry out specific investigations in relation to MEES but embeds these checks in their other processes, for example when assessing for licensing or responding to damp/mould/excess cold issues. In year 2021/2022, the team carried out 371 EPC register checks to ensure compliance with MEES. It should be noted that MEES currently only requires rented properties to be at EPC band E or higher, with exemptions available too, and is, therefore, of limited help towards enforcement of decarbonisation.

4.24 We will continue to identify appropriate channels for communicating with the landlords in the city and are working with the GMCA and others to lobby for tighter minimum energy efficiency standards to be put in place. In the meantime, we will make information and guidance about potential funding sources to increase the energy efficiency of privately rented properties

available to both landlords and tenants through our website and other communications.

5.0 Cross-tenure approaches and area-based schemes

5.1 Leasehold properties within Council-owned estates

5.2 A very specific issue for privately-owned properties is presented by the leasehold flats and maisonettes which have been bought under the Right to Buy scheme within estates managed by the Council (and registered providers). Within the Council-owned estates there are currently just under 500 leasehold properties, the majority of which are low rise flats and likely to still have individual gas boilers similar to other council properties in these buildings. A small number of leasehold properties are also connected to the Council's communal heating systems in high-rise and low-rise blocks.

5.3 Some Government funding (such as SHDF) allows us to make improvements to leaseholder-owned properties as part of wider social housing improvement schemes. These schemes typically require a contribution from the leaseholder, but at much lower rate than the full cost of retrofit works. The Council's position is to recover this cost from the leaseholders. Where possible, a variety of options will be offered, including, for example, a longer repayment period, an equity loan or an offer for the Council to purchase the property and for the leaseholder to remain as a tenant. These options will be determined on a case-by-case basis and communicated to the leaseholders in early stages of the schemes.

5.4 Other Leaseholders

5.5 The Council's general approach to housing regeneration over the years has been to dispose of land on a long leasehold basis to developers. The Council therefore retains the freehold. In some specific circumstances the lease restricts the resident from altering the external appearance of their property. This has been interpreted in some cases by the interim landlord (not the Council) as a restriction on low carbon work such as fitting solar panels.

5.6 Each lease will be specific to each development and the Council will work with the interim landlord and leaseholders to reach an agreed solution.

5.7 Neighbourhood-based Approaches to Retrofit

5.8 It is now recognised that area-based retrofit schemes (also called neighbourhood based retrofit schemes) provide opportunities to regenerate neighbourhoods beyond the zero-carbon agenda, take advantage of economies of scale and develop local skills. The challenge around area-based schemes is typically around funding and enticing the residents to spend significant sums of money to upgrade their homes at time scales which may not fit their other plans, even when these costs may be lower than if they were to undertake the work entirely on their own. We continue to support the work of the Carbon Co-op on their Levenshulme-based neighbourhood scheme

and, as discussed in Section 8.3, have recently secured Innovate UK funding to explore our own neighbourhood-based zero-carbon scheme. These schemes are expected to generate significant amounts of learning around the design of neighbourhood-based interventions, resident engagement, the delivery of social value through creation of local training opportunities and jobs, etc.

6.0 Key Enablers

6.1 Introduction

6.2 Our Retrofit Plan is founded on four key enablers: resident engagement, skills, funding and partnerships. Our recent work to address these is discussed below.

6.3 Resident Engagement

6.4 Effective resident engagement is a key component to both raising awareness of the importance and benefits of retrofit and successfully delivering retrofit schemes. Since September 2022 we have undergone a combination of learning seminars, workshops, and discussions with colleagues from the Neighbourhoods, Work and Skills, Communications, Zero Carbon, Housing Services and other teams in the Council. This has resulted in the development of a Draft Resident Engagement Plan which is grounded in best practice, learned experience, and compassion.

6.5 In order to make engagement comprehensive and inclusive to all, we have used a best practice retrofit customer journey to discuss engagement at each stage of the process. Additionally, we have divided the actions we need to take over the coming years into short-term, medium-term, and long-term. This gives us a clear immediate course of action as well as allowing for flexibility in the future as we learn from experience and improve our methods. Finally, we have identified the relevant stakeholders and categorised them based on their interest and influence levels and have determined the most appropriate format and frequency to communicate with them with regards to effective resident engagement.

6.6 More generally and as part of our engagement strategy we are looking at our website page development, linking into and making use of the developing GMCA website that gives people a central place to get all the information and help available on housing retrofit.

6.7 Skills

6.8 Large scale retrofit will require thousands of new operatives to be trained and upskilled to undertake retrofit work. We continue to work closely with the Work and Skills team in order to address potential challenges and identify opportunities for early interventions. To support retrofit skills in Manchester, the Council's Work and Skills team have embedded retrofit within the Liveable and Zero Carbon priorities in the refreshed [Work and Skills Strategy](#).

- 6.9 An outcome of this priority is the creation of a retrofit working group with Strategic Housing colleagues, GMCA and local training providers to ensure skills provision will be developed to meet the needs of the emerging Manchester retrofit delivery plan in order to maximise opportunities for residents and businesses. Further work will be carried out with the Manchester Housing Providers Partnership (MHPP) to support all housing providers' needs.
- 6.10 Some skills challenges remain within the sector such as:
- Qualification structures are still not agile enough to deal with the pace of change.
 - Traditional construction skills remain a challenge for the sector which is booming. Current Greater Manchester construction pipeline is estimated at £17bn, and in addition to this, HS2 is expected to result in a significant demand for skills from 2025 onwards.
- 6.11 This is alongside an emerging, but still weak, retrofit pipeline. For example, the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund only offers two years of funding with limited line of sight beyond this period. This makes it a challenge for existing construction workers who need to re-skill when they already have full order books. It also puts additional pressure on colleges and training providers to develop and grow training programmes and fill these courses due to the funding regime.
- 6.12 More needs to be done in schools and with businesses to raise awareness and increase communications and work is ongoing with school careers teams to support the delivery of a Green Careers tool kit co-created with Groundwork.

Working with GMCA on Work and Skills

GMCA have commissioned a range of activities to improve the provision of retrofit skills in Greater Manchester. The interventions have been designed to:

- improve the flexibility of training provision
- address any current and anticipated skills shortages through upskilling of existing workers
- attract underrepresented groups into the industry

Existing training provision in Greater Manchester already includes courses in insulation, domestic retrofit, solar panels, heat pump installations and more. These will be supplemented by new courses and 16-week bootcamps. In the academic year 2022/2023 alone, construction and green skills bootcamps are expected to benefit 500 learners.

The latest development is the launch of the [Green Skills Academy](#) in Trafford Park. The Green Skills Academy houses the latest green technology equipment in order for businesses and individuals to gain the knowledge and skills which will place Greater Manchester at the forefront of emerging technologies.

GMCA's partners on the retrofit skills agenda include (but are not limited to):

- Complete Skills Solutions
- Fabric CIC
- Low Carbon Academy
- Manchester College
- North West Skills Academy
- Oldham College

6.13 Funding

6.14 The Council has established a Zero Carbon Finance and Investment Sub-group to investigate funding opportunities for zero-carbon work and to engage with others externally on this agenda. For example, we are engaging with a consultancy (3Ci) on a neighbourhood-based retrofit/financing approach. We are also supporting the work of the GMCA in identifying and developing new funding mechanisms for homeowners, including their recent engagement with the Manchester Credit Union.

6.15 As described, the Government offers some, modest, support towards the decarbonisation of both social and privately-owned homes. However, there is a continuing need to lobby the Government for:

- More funding for all homes
- Longer, more sustainable policies
- Devolved powers to direct funding to those households/neighbourhoods with the potential to create the biggest impact in terms of reduction of (fuel) poverty, improvement of health and wellbeing, reduction of carbon emissions, etc.

6.16 We are also working with various partners to explore new funding and financing mechanisms. From 1st April, the Council will be working on an Innovate UK funded three-month feasibility study to explore further the concept of a Net Zero Neighbourhood. This concept would allow, among other things, the delivery of energy efficiency improvements at a neighbourhood level. We have also submitted a bid to Ofgem's Strategic Innovation Fund as part of a wider consortium and are waiting for the outcome. This funding would allow us to do further work in identifying cost savings in grid infrastructure upgrades and could open up future funding streams for home retrofit.

6.17 Partnerships

6.18 Delivering the city's Retrofit Plan will require collaboration across Council teams as well as many other Manchester-based and national organisations and networks. We cannot achieve our challenging targets working in isolation.

6.19 We have already established retrofit networks and collaborative working practices with many Council teams and are working hard to avoid silos. These include:

- Working with the Neighbourhoods team to identify areas for retrofit schemes and potential communication channels with residents.
 - Ensuring teams answering calls on the Council's Cost of Living Advice Line are familiar with support available for households without heat and in emergency situations and are able to refer residents to the available schemes.
 - Establishing regular communication with the Planning team to identify and address potential planning challenges on ongoing retrofit schemes.
 - Opening up a conversation with the Policy, Partnerships and Research team on the Council's anti-poverty strategy and how home retrofit can support the delivery of this strategy.
 - Contributing to conversations on new build, particularly for social housing, to avoid unnecessary future retrofit costs.
- 6.20 Our relationship with the GMCA has allowed us to integrate the findings of recent large-scale decarbonisation masterplanning work, such as the Local Area Energy Plan and Heat Network Zoning, into our retrofit thinking. In particular, these have informed our identification of opportunity areas for heat networks and allowed us to progress conversations with wider stakeholders. We are in regular communication with the various teams at GMCA, including those delivering Your Home Better and the retrofitGM action plan, as well as the combined authority-led GM Housing Retrofit Group. These partnerships allow us to explore different funding mechanisms and options such as group procurement to alleviate issues with technology supply and ensure help available through the combined authority is communicated effectively to Manchester residents.
- 6.21 Manchester Climate Change Agency published its update to the city's climate change framework in late 2022. This details the level of retrofit activity needed to reach our zero-carbon target. We are working closely with the Climate Change Agency to share knowledge, particularly around new funding mechanisms for retrofit, and to ensure we stay involved in the initiatives that allow us access to different stakeholder networks and state-of-the-art research.
- 6.22 As discussed in Section 4, we have established a new working group with the largest social housing providers in the city to share knowledge and ensure social housing providers have costed plans to zero-carbon. This partnership has already resulted in the successful exercise to baseline emissions from the city's social housing stock. Findings from the working group are communicated to other social housing providers through the existing MHPP forums for their knowledge and input.
- 6.23 We continue to work with the electricity Distribution Network Operator (DNO), Electricity North West, both through the GMCA and directly through the delivery of our own retrofit schemes. This will ensure the electricity infrastructure in the city is able to support the large-scale electrification of heating.

- 6.24 We are establishing links with third sector organisations in the city, including Groundwork Greater Manchester, to ensure we are well connected and able to share knowledge about help available for Manchester residents. More work will be needed to further build this network.
- 6.25 We are nationally recognised for the work we have done to establish and progress a retrofit plan for the city. We actively participate in the UK Green Building Council's Local Authority Retrofit network. This has allowed us to meet other local authorities with similar interests in large-scale retrofit and discuss challenges, for example relating to specific tenures. We continue to support the work of 3Ci to identify and progress different funding opportunities for large scale retrofit. We intend to continue our externally-facing presence to ensure we learn and adapt best practice from elsewhere to our own operations.

7.0 Monitoring and Reporting

- 7.1 In order to monitor our progress against the 2038 zero carbon and various other city targets, we are proposing to set up a progress monitoring framework. This will be established in collaboration with others, in order to ensure availability of data and usefulness of the reporting metrics. Work on this is ongoing, but our draft reporting metrics include for example the following:

Metric	Availability of data	Why proposed	Notes on coverage
EPC movements	Through national database.	Improvements to the overall EPC scores in the city will indicate the level of retrofit work carried out overall.	Back-ward looking. Top-down approach. Covers private home owners, landlords and social housing providers.
Number of low carbon technology installations	Through MCS database.	MCS certify low-carbon products and installations used to produce electricity and heat from renewable sources. This quality mark is currently required for all government-funded installations and indicates the level of activity in the city.	Back-ward looking. Top-down approach. Covers all tenures, but is only a requirement for Government-funded schemes (i.e. won't capture all installations in the city).
Retrofit programme data • Number of homes	Through other social housing providers and GMCA.	Captures data and plans on local retrofit programmes, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SHDF • HUG 	Forward-looking (overall targets re: number of homes, anticipated measures, costs, programme dates)

planned/ completed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures • Costs 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECO • Your Home Better • Warm Homes Manchester 	Back-ward looking (completions, actual cost) Bottom-up approach. Covers programme data only (i.e., not work done by individuals, unless through Your Home Better or similar).
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8.0 Conclusion

8.1 An ambitious work programme is underway now that the Council has its own zero-carbon team within Strategic Housing. Significant progress has been made by the team, working collaboratively with several other internal teams, including Work and Skills, Neighbourhoods, Housing Services, Zero Carbon and Finance as well as externally with a range of partners and stakeholders.

9.0 Equal opportunities

9.1 Retrofitting the city's housing stock will ensure healthier, more comfortable homes for Manchester residents and result in improved health and wellbeing for the city's residents. The consideration of vulnerable and low income households in the development of the plan will be key to ensuring just transition to zero-carbon housing.

10.0 Risk Management

10.1 Key risks for the development and delivery of the Retrofit Plan include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Availability of funding for the Council, RPs, private homeowners and landlords
- Low demand for zero-carbon works by Manchester residents, particularly due to the current energy price crisis
- Lack of skilled, PAS2035 qualified retrofit assessors, coordinators and installers in the local area
- Short supply of required technologies such as air source heat pumps
- Difficulties of engaging with certain stakeholders, such as private landlords
- Access to properties

11.0 Legal Considerations

11.1 Legal aspects to note include the consideration of lease terms and conditions when planning zero-carbon works and the support offered to private homeowners within Council and RP-owned estates.

12.0 Recommendations

- 12.1 The Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider and comment on this report and the Executive is asked to note the report and approve the recommendations.

13.0 References

1. Manchester Climate Change Partnership. Manchester Climate Change Framework (2020-25) – 2022 Update.
2. Savills. Northwards Housing Zero Carbon Study Report. February 2020.
3. Pathways to Healthy NetZero Housing for Greater Manchester. Report produced by Parity Projects, Bays Consulting, ACE Research and Energy Systems Catapult for the GMCA in February 2021.

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**Manchester City Council
Report for Information**

Report to: Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee
– 9 March 2023

Subject: Manchester Green and Blue Strategy and Implementation Plan, including annual update and a report on the Tree Action Plan

Report of: Director of Planning, Building Control and Licensing

Summary

The work on improving our green and blue spaces is an essential component of delivering the vision for Our Manchester. It also contributes to delivering Manchester's Climate Change Action Plan by helping to create a more climate resilient city. This report provides the annual update on the delivery of the Green and Blue Implementation Plan together with information on the delivery of the Tree Action Plan. It looks back at the progress made during 2022/23 and sets out the key priorities for 2023/24. The report also provides information on the Environment Agency with regards to their role concerning pollution and flood risk and information on the Our Rivers Our City Strategy. An update on Victoria North will be brought to Scrutiny later this year.

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:-

1. Consider and comment on the progress that has been made during 2022/23 by both the Council and external stakeholders in achieving the actions in the G&BI Implementation Plan and the Tree Action plan
 2. Consider and comment on the work of the Our Rivers Our Strategy, the role of the Environment Agency in dealing with river pollution and flood risk.
 3. Consider and comment on the priorities for the G&BI and Tree Action Plans set out for the coming year, in the Appendix to this report.
-

Wards Affected: All

Environmental Impact Assessment - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city

Manchester's green infrastructure helps to capture and store carbon. Attractive green routes encourage walking and cycling, reducing reliance on cars with a consequent reduction in carbon emissions. Local green space, both public and private can be used to increase the amount of sustainable, locally grown food.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments
The improvement of our green and blue spaces allows for greater environmental equity for all Manchester's residents. Delivery of the strategy down to neighbourhood level seeks to increase the equitable distribution of the benefits that green and blue infrastructure can bring.

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS/Contribution to the Strategy
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	A high quality environment, including trees and open spaces, increases the attractiveness of Manchester as a place in which to work and invest. Jobs are created in the environmental sector through the need to plant and manage the local green and blue infrastructure resource.
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	Manchester competes on a world stage to attract skilled people. A high quality natural environment makes an important contribution to this.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	An attractive tree filled natural environment should be accessible to all communities within Manchester, offering the potential to gain health benefits through improved air quality and opportunities for relaxation and exercise and learning new skills through volunteering opportunities.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	The city's tree stock plays a valuable role in storing carbon and creating a liveable city. High quality multi-functional open spaces also improve the quality of life.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	Appropriate tree planting along transport routes can help mitigate poor air quality. Appropriately located and designed green infrastructure can also increase the permeability of the city reducing surface water flooding along transport routes.

Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

Financial Consequences – Revenue

None

Financial Consequences – Capital

None

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy, please contact one of the contact officers above.

1. Manchester Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy: report to Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Committee and Executive, July 2015, Manchester City Council
2. Manchester's Great Outdoors: A Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for Manchester: July 2015
3. Manchester's Great Outdoors: A Green and Blue Infrastructure Stakeholder Implementation Plan: July 2015
4. Green and Getting Greener. A three-year review of progress through Manchester's Great Outdoors: A Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for Manchester 2015-18
5. Our Manchester Strategy - Forward to 2025
6. Manchester G&BI Stakeholder Implementation Plan and Tree Action Plan – Report on Progress: to Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee January 2021

7. Manchester G&BI Stakeholder Implementation Plan and Tree Action Plan – Report on Progress: to Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee March 2022
8. Manchester City Council Climate Change Action Plan 2020-25 – Report to NESC and February 2021
9. Our Rivers Our City <https://growgreenproject.eu/rivers-city-strategy-revitalising-manchesters-river-valleys-urban-waters/>

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides the annual review on Manchester's Great Outdoors – A Green & Blue Infrastructure Strategy for Manchester. The strategy forms part of a framework of strategies, policy and action plans for Manchester which support the city's strategic objectives related to environment, climate change, sustainable development and access to green space. Fig 1. below shows how the Strategy is delivered through its accompanying Implementation Plan and supporting Tree Action Plan, both of which play a key role in delivering the Our Manchester vision for a world class city with a high quality environment. Delivery of the Strategy is also supported through actions and investment under the Park Strategy and Biodiversity Strategy (endorsed by Executive in October 2022) and Our Rivers Our City. The G&BI Strategy also contributes to the delivery of Manchester's Climate Change Action Plan, specifically in relation to climate resilience and adaptation, as well as informing the evidence and strategic context for the city's local development framework, including the refresh of the Local Plan



Fig1: This shows the relationship of the Green & Blue Infrastructure Strategy to other Council strategies and action plans as described in paragraph 1.1

- 1.2 The report highlights the key progress that has been made in delivering the G&BI Strategy, both by the Council and with our partners. More detailed progress is set out in Appendix 1 of this report. It also highlights the actions undertaken part of Our Rivers Our City and the involvement of one of our key partners, the Environment Agency, in terms of their role in flood management.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Manchester's Great Outdoors – A Green & Blue Infrastructure Strategy for Manchester, together with its Implementation Plan were prepared and are jointly owned by the Council and Manchester G&BI stakeholder group on behalf of the wider city. Together, they have been recognised as a benchmark

of excellence, winning the 2018 CIEEM Award for best practice in Knowledge Sharing. The full documents can be found using the links provided in the background documents section.

- 2.2 The Strategy is based on a long-term vision that was updated as part of a refresh of the document in 2021. The updated vision is that:

By 2025 climate resilient, well maintained green and blue spaces will be an integral part of all neighbourhoods. The city's communities will be living healthy, fulfilled lives, enjoying access to parks and greenspaces and safe green routes for walking, cycling and exercise throughout the city. Green and blue infrastructure will be supporting Manchester's growth.

- 2.3 The delivery of the vision is centred on four objectives:

1. Improving the quality and function of Green and Blue Infrastructure to maximise the benefits it delivers,
2. Using appropriate Green and Blue Infrastructure as a key component of new developments to help create successful neighbourhoods and support the city's growth,
3. Improving connectivity and accessibility to Green and Blue Infrastructure within the city and beyond,
4. Improving and promoting a wider understanding and awareness of the benefits that Green and Blue Infrastructure provides to residents, the economy and the local environment.

Governance - the G&BI Board

- 2.4 The Implementation Plan continues to be delivered by the Council and its partners. The Executive member for Environment who covers all green issues, including climate change, leads on this agenda. Progress against the Council actions is steered within the council by the G&BI Board, chaired by the Director of Planning, Building Control and Licensing and attended by relevant Heads of Service. This provides an opportunity to focus on the strategy objectives and add value to the way G&BI is delivered across the city. It enables issues that arise to be discussed across services rather than in isolation. Ward members are often best placed to know their local community groups and understand their communities' needs and opportunities and together with council officers they are involved with many of the actions needed to deliver the G&BI Strategy.

Working in Partnership - the G&BI stakeholder Group

- 2.5 Many of the actions within the G&BI Strategy and Implementation Plan are achieved through collaboration with Manchester's partners. A stakeholder group known as the Manchester G&BI Group meets at regular intervals. This group is made up of a range of experienced practitioners and stakeholder organisations, including officers from the Council, Corridor Manchester, Manchester Climate Change Agency, Greater Manchester Combined Authority and Registered Housing Providers, statutory bodies such as the

Environment Agency and Natural England, environmental charities like Groundwork, City of Trees, the National Trust, Wildlife Trust and RSPB, and academics from Manchester's Universities. It provides both a forum for sharing best practice and a catalyst for encouraging new partnerships for delivering action in line with the objectives of the G&BI Strategy.

- 2.6 The Group has met physically three times this year, as well as attending an organised tour of Mayfield. The group has expanded, including environmental organisations Sow the City, the Orchard Project and RHS Bridgewater and commitments have been made by partners to the GI Strategy, new Biodiversity Strategy and our Rivers Our City Strategy.

Knowledge Sharing – MCC GI Group

- 2.7 A new council officer group with a focus on GI and adaptation has been established jointly by Environment, Policy and Resources and Planning Strategy, with officer representatives from across council services. This will provide a useful forum for exchanging ideas, developing collaborative projects and networking.
- 2.8 New climate related roles for key departments, including Planning, Housing, Highways and Education, have also been established. These roles, along with Neighbourhood Climate Change officers, will provide important links and bridges between departmental priorities enabling better mainstreaming of the GI agenda.

3.0 Challenges, Opportunities and Key Issues

- 3.1 This section outlines the challenges, opportunities and key issues that have impacted the delivery of the G&BI Strategy over this last year. It also responds to the specific questions raised by members (Recommendation 2).

Places for Everyone and our Local Plan

- 3.2 Places for Everyone (PfE), the joint plan of nine of the Greater Manchester Districts, (excluding Stockport) is currently going through an Examination in Public. This details the quantum of residential and commercial development that will be expected and sets out strategic level policies including those relating to the environment, such as green infrastructure and biodiversity. Once adopted this will provide a planning policy framework for the city region. Work has also begun on a new Local Plan for Manchester, that will provide greater detail and Manchester specific policy approaches. A report on this was brought to Environment & Climate Change Scrutiny on the 9th February this year. Much of the research work completed as part of our G&BI Strategy, such as Our Rivers Our City, Biodiversity Strategy and Tree Capacity work, will provide evidence for the environmental policies within our Local Plan. Similarly, the planning policy framework created by PfE and Manchester's Local Plan will ensure that we can protect and enhance our G&BI assets, in the context of achieving the housing and employment that our city needs.

Our Rivers Our City

- 3.3 This initiative was funded through the EU GrowGreen project and launched on 7th December 2021. The aim of the Strategy is to re-energise some of the city's most important natural spaces, making them 21st-century assets, drivers for growth, and places where people and nature can thrive. As well as an overarching strategy for the city, individual long-term action plans have been co-developed for the Irk, Medlock and Mersey Valleys. To find out more, all documents can be found via the link here: <https://growgreenproject.eu/rivers-city-strategy-revitalising-manchesters-river-valleys-urban-waters/>. The success of the Strategy depends not only on the council but also on a range of external stakeholders. It has already led to progress outlined in more detail in paragraphs 4.12 and 4.25. Lead officers have been identified to take forward those actions that the Council has responsibility for and to continue to liaise with our partners where an external stakeholder has the primary responsibility.

Climate Change – Flooding

- 3.4 Extreme weather events have continued to provide significant challenges. In January 2022, Manchester recorded its highest river level on the Mersey in South Manchester. The response to flooding events requires a multi-agency approach, dealing with flooding at a strategic level and on a more detailed site by site level. At a strategic level, the **Environment Agency** is responsible for managing the risk of flooding from main rivers, reservoirs, estuaries and the sea in England and Wales.
- 3.5 In Manchester, "main river" designation applies to the Irk, Mersey, Medlock, Irwell and a small part of the Bollin near Manchester Airport, as well as some of their key tributaries e.g. Moston Brook. Other smaller rivers and streams are referred to as "ordinary watercourses", for which lead local flood authorities (LLFAs) such as Manchester City Council, are responsible for managing the risk.
- 3.6 The Environment Agency are the first point of call for environmental issues, flooding, or pollution incidents including:-
- flooding from main river or the sea
 - main rivers blocked by a vehicle or fallen tree causing risk of flooding
 - pollution to water or land
 - collapsed or badly damaged river banks
 - damage or danger to the natural environment
 - people taking water illegally from rivers, streams, canals or underground sources such as wells
 - incidents at Environment Agency-regulated waste sites
 - dead fish or fish gasping for air
 - poaching or illegal fishing
 - unusual changes in river
- 3.7 Nationally, the government has commenced a review of the case for implementing Schedule 3 to the Flood and Water Management Act 2010

concerning Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). This will support the objectives of alleviating pressures on the sewer network and reducing flood risk, as well as improving water quality, amenity, biodiversity, and rainwater harvesting. If implemented, this Schedule would introduce standards for new sustainable drainage systems as well as making connection to public sewers conditional of approval that the drainage system meets the national standards. The outcome of the review is expected shortly.

- 3.8 At a more local level, MCC Highways are developing their own SuDS standard details. The standards include two high-level construction detail drawings accompanied by a maintenance guide for each SuDS design. The two designs are for a rain garden and a SuDS enabled street tree. At present the details have been drafted and the report has been signed off prior to publication on the council website.

Climate Change – Extreme Heat

- 3.9 Last summer, Manchester suffered from a continuous period of excessive heat. The city's highest daily temperature reading of 37.2°C was recorded in August. This had a negative impact on some of our newly established tree planting due to heat stress. They were checked regularly, and the arboricultural team had two contractors and an in-house team watering all the new trees planted by the Council, across the city on a rolling cycle, at least twice a week from May until September. Tree officers are confident many will bounce back but 68 trees are being replaced in the Winter 2022/23 planting season. Further watering regimes will be in place for the coming Summer
- 3.10 At a strategic level, the Government are considering changes to the National Planning Policy Framework, (see Report to Environment & Climate Change 9 Feb 2023). This would encourage further provision of nature-based solutions within new development, to improve resilience to extreme weather events by, for example, contributing towards cooling and shading to counter overheating. This will be given further consideration as our new Local Plan is prepared.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

- 3.11 The Environment Act 2021 introduced a new legal requirement that all new development will need to provide a 10% improvement in biodiversity. This is expected to be in force in November of this year. Regulations are still awaited that will define the size and type of development to which this will apply.
- 3.12 We want BNG to be deliverable and measurable in Manchester, so that the city always benefits positively from any effects on biodiversity. We will look at both on-site and off-site improvements, or a combination of both, when considering development for new housing or employment opportunities. A study is currently being commissioned to consider how BNG should be delivered within Manchester. This will also provide evidence to underpin Local Plan policy.

- 3.13 The new Biodiversity Strategy (endorsed by Executive in October 2022) will assist our understanding of how BNG can be achieved. This will help identify where priority interventions are needed to address both biodiversity enhancement and environmental inequalities.

4.0 G&BI Implementation Plan – highlights by objective

4.1 Objective 1: Improving the quality and functionality of G&BI across the city to maximise the benefits it delivers

Key headlines:

- **Parks**
- **Green Spaces Fund**
- **In our Nature**
- **My Wild City**
- **Biodiversity Strategy**
- **Resilient River Valleys (OROC)**

Parks

- 4.2 Circa £4.6M has been invested across the existing Parks estate, with over 107 capital projects identified and delivered in collaboration with Manchester residents. The Council's partnerships with organisations such as British Cycling have generated additional investment to the value of £0.5M. This has resulted in projects which have widened access and participation, enabled more residents and visitors to get involved and supported the delivery of good quality parks and green spaces for residents in every ward of the City.
- 4.3 The foundations for the investment to continue at pace have been set with strategic support given to the further development of an additional £4M of investment in the pipeline for delivery that is anticipated to generate £2M in match funding from partners.
- 4.4 The opening of Mayfield Park in September 2022, (see paragraph 4.14) demonstrated the City's ambition and commitment to the delivery of world class parks and green spaces for Manchester's residents and visitors.
- 4.5 Over the last year there has also been a clear focus to ensure that Manchester's Parks are vibrant places which reflect their local communities and offer an opportunity to connect with nature, as a result 1,812 events and activities have been delivered, an increase of 16% on the previous year. Participation rates have almost doubled, with an estimated 600k people engaging in an activity in the last year. Of note are the partnerships that have developed with organisations such as Really Wild Forest Schools to provide activity in Parks for over 800 young people. Through the My Wild City Project new action plans for twelve priority wildlife sites have also been developed to help support Parks staff and Friends of Groups to have a better understanding of how to manage their sites for biodiversity.

Parks Climate Change Action Plan

- 4.6 The Council's Zero Carbon ambition continues to influence the focus of the Parks Service and the development of a Parks Climate Change Action Plan is underway. The plan reflects the five workstreams of the Council and coordinates activity to complement the Council's plan, identify further opportunities through the Parks Estate, how the Service operates, and the relationships and interactions with volunteers and visitors.

Green Spaces Fund

- 4.7 The launch of the £2.6m Greater Manchester Green Spaces Fund offers small and large grants to communities for projects that improve or create local green spaces in areas of greatest need. Five of the twenty-one schemes approved across GM (Greater Manchester), were in Manchester. This has amounted to nearly £100K being awarded to support neighbourhood greening in Beswick, Ardwick, Levenshulme and Wythenshawe. The next round of funding closed on 23rd January 2023.

In Our Nature

- 4.8 The In Our Nature project has been awarded £2.5m from The National Lottery Community Fund. This three year project will help Manchester residents deliver over 50 community led projects to reduce carbon emissions and introduce urban greening and nature-based solutions. In Our Nature brings together a delivery partnership made up of Manchester Climate Change Agency, Hubbub, Groundwork Greater Manchester, Amity CIC, The Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research, who will work alongside the City Council. The project team has begun working alongside a far-reaching network of experts, individuals, and grassroots organisations to connect with communities and groups looking to collaborate on projects in 2023.

Biodiversity Strategy

- 4.9 The new Manchester Biodiversity Strategy was well received at Scrutiny Committee on 13 October 2022 with the Strategy endorsed at the City's executive on 19 October 2022. It provides a ten year, comprehensive, multi-agency Action Plan of activity and commitments to support positive citywide biodiversity impact. The Manchester Biodiversity Action Group, including sixteen, actively engaged stakeholder organisations, continue to meet bi-monthly to help co-ordinate delivery of the action plan including collaborating on new investment to deliver benefits for G&BI and residents in Manchester.
- 4.10 As a response to the new Strategy, Manchester declared Kenworthy Woods in Northenden as a new Local Nature Reserve (LNR) in December 2022. A further LNR at Broadhurst Clough, Moston, is being brought to Executive, this spring.

My Wild City

- 4.11 The Wildlife Trust has continued to deliver a range of events and workshops with the public to improve awareness, connection, knowledge, and action taken for nature and the environment in Manchester. Ranging from high profile collaborative events like Manchester Science Festival with the Museum of Science and Industry which saw over 22,000 people engaging in activities, through to species identification walks with residents and Friends of Groups at sites such as Bank Bridge Meadow and Blackley Forest. 35 practical conservation sessions have been delivered at nine wildlife sites, mainly in north Manchester, involving over 35 volunteers from Manchester.

Resilient River Valleys

- 4.12 The Resilient River Valleys project is a strong response to the ambition set out in the **Our Rivers Our City Strategy**. It has been funded by the Government's Green Recovery Challenge Fund and is a partnership project between three environmental charities – Groundwork Greater Manchester, City of Trees and the Mersey Rivers Trust. The project focuses on delivering nature-based solutions for climate mitigation and adaptation, such as leaky dams and tiny forests, in Manchester's river valleys and urban green spaces. The Project has helped create thirty-eight new roles providing training and capacity building for citizens, with twenty-two of these roles being for unemployed young people. Over 200 training courses have been provided, and 5700 people have been engaged in activities and events in areas in Wythenshawe, Burnage, Moston and Collyhurst.
- 4.13 **Objective 2: Using appropriate green and blue infrastructure as a key component of new developments to help create successful neighbourhoods and support the city's growth.** This needs to happen at both the detailed, masterplan and strategic framework level

Key headlines:

- **Mayfield Park**
- **Castleford Viaduct**
- **Glade of Light**
- **Jackson Brickworks**
- **Poland Street**
- **New Arena**

Mayfield Park

- 4.14 Opened on 22nd September 2022, Mayfield is the first new park to be created within Manchester's City Centre in over 100 years. A successful £23 Million project, it was delivered on budget, and on time, despite being delivered during the pandemic. Manchester now has a new four acre park with a restored section of river a two minute walk from Manchester's main train station. Mayfield incorporates sponge city thinking and has landscape, quality, and function at its heart.

Castlefield Viaduct

- 4.15 A twelve month pilot was opened officially in early 2022, by the National Trust (NT), to explore opportunities to use the grade II listed Castlefield viaduct to create a new multi-functional elevated open space in the City Centre. The aim of the National Trust is to bring the viaduct back into use and transform it into a freely accessible green space. Visitor sessions booked up instantly online and as of end of December NT had engaged 15,915 people since May. The pilot will run into Summer 2023.

Glade of Light

- 4.16 The Glade of Light is a memorial commemorating the victims of the 22 May 2017 terrorist attack at Manchester Arena. A living memorial, the Glade of Light is a tranquil garden space for remembrance and reflection. It features a central white marble 'halo', and plants which grow naturally in the UK countryside. 43 new trees have been planted and around the anniversary, every year, the white flowers of a hawthorn tree planted at its centre will bloom. The memorial was officially opened on 10th May 2022.

Former Jackson's Brickworks

- 4.17 A scheme at the former Jackson's Brickworks, Newton Heath, received a minded to approve decision at a meeting of the Planning Committee in October 2022. The proposal for 378 dwellings together with commercial floorspace and a new secondary school, has included significant remediation works due to land contamination. The development includes the planting of 373 trees together with a deep landscaped buffer to an adjoining canal towpath as well as native hedging with native herbaceous planting to water retention swales and rainwater gardens. Public realm will be brought forward through a 1.36ha park together with several smaller pocket parks/play areas. Water run-off and flood mitigation will be dealt with through the provision of swales, rainwater gardens and attenuation basins which also provide habitats as part of biodiversity enhancements.

The Coop Live Arena, Etihad Campus

- 4.18 The new events arena located adjacent to the Etihad Stadium will be completed later this year. Green infrastructure enhancements include a green, living wall, improvements to the public realm around the building with trees, planting and wildflowers to the canal side to improve biodiversity, by creating new habitats and attracting wildlife.

Poland Street, Ancoats

- 4.19 The Mobility Hub is an innovative project helping to deliver the public realm strategy within Ancoats. The hub will provide space for resident and visitor parking in a manner that allows more space for public realm and planting, within the Poland Street area. As part of the project trees will be planted from six different species and positioned to define different spaces so pedestrians

and cyclists can use the area safely whilst creating places for sitting and relaxing. The southern elevation of the Mobility Hub will consist of pre-grown 'green' panels of climbing plants providing a mix of species to increase biodiversity. Construction is due to commence in summer 2023.

4.20 **Objective 3: Improving connectivity and accessibility to Green and Blue Infrastructure within the city and beyond.**

Key headlines:

- **Active Travel Strategy**
- **Bee network**
- **Canals – access corridors**

Active Travel Strategy

- 4.21 Manchester Active Travel Strategy was approved by Executive in February this year. This includes a draft Network Plan designed to connect as many Manchester residents as possible to key destinations, including parks and green spaces. This will form the basis of future funding bids for active travel schemes. Ambition 2 of the Strategy aims to double the number of people who live within a 10-minute walk or cycle from local green spaces. There is a qualitative aspect to this in which we will be aiming to provide the best 'level of service' for walking, wheeling and cycling. Ambition 3 seeks to reflect the diversity of Manchester and address transport inequalities. This will in part be achieved by an audit of all access barriers to our off-road foot and cycle paths and by removing all barriers which prevent access for those using wheelchairs, non-standard cycles and other mobility aids.

Bee Network travel Routes

- 4.22 Almost £30million is committed to Bee Network travel route improvements in Manchester. This network improves accessibility, via active modes of travel to facilities across Manchester including our open spaces. Projects include:
- Chorlton Cycleway - 5km route south from the city centre to Chorlton. Work has almost been completed on this scheme.
 - Northern Quarter Cycleway - This scheme is separated into four areas with Area 1 (Ducie Street/Dale Street) and Area 3 (Thomas Street) principally complete. The design of Area 2 (Stephenson Square) is still being finalised as are the detailed plans for Area 4 (Withy Grove/Shudehill).
 - Northern and Eastern Gateway Connectivity - Phase 1a of this project in relation to Redhill Street has been completed with Phase 1b at Old Mill Street and Pollard Street at the tendering stage with construction work due to commence early 2023. Work on Phase 2 is also progressing.
 - Radial Routes – All the radials are being considered holistically as part of ongoing strategic thinking and the update to the Manchester Local Implementation Plan in 2023. A design for active travel improvements for Oldham Road (out from the centre to Queen's Road) is being reviewed as

part of the radials work to ensure it aligns with the changes to radials over the next few years.

- GM Cycle Hire – A new cycle hire scheme, with the first phase including roll out on Oxford Road in Manchester. The initial phase of the project was rolled out in 2022.

Canals – Access Corridors

- 4.23 The Canal and River Trust have delivered substantial ecological improvements along the Rochdale Canal in the City Centre, again achieving Green Flag Status. The Trust have worked with volunteer groups along both the Ashton and the Rochdale Canal, commissioning a full ecological evaluation along the Rochdale from the City Centre to Miles Platting.
- 4.24 **Objective 4: Improving and promoting a wider understanding and awareness of the benefits that Green and Blue Infrastructure provides to residents, the economy and the local environment.**

Key headlines:

- **Our Rivers Our City (OROC) Strategy**
- **Open Space Study**
- **GrowGreen**
- **Britain in Bloom Awards**
- **Protecting Playgrounds**

Our Rivers Our City

- 4.25 The new strategy for revitalising Manchester’s river valleys, launched in 2021 is already yielding results. It was a catalyst for Groundwork’s successful £1.2million bid for the Resilient River Valleys project (see earlier) and the Love Your River Irk project delivered by Groundwork and Mersey Rivers Trust. The Strategy was a shortlisted finalist in the 2022 Landscape Institute Awards. It was also recognised within the Natural England studies focused on Fallowfield Brook in the Highfield Local Nature Reserve, and the River Medlock. The Environment Agency have commissioned £50K worth of investigation work looking at possibilities for weir removal along the River Irk in Manchester and provided further funding for Mersey Rivers Trust to undertake feasibility studies to naturalise and daylight sections of Baguley Brook. OROC has also provided a baseline assessment of a potential Urban Green Factor based on a ward level analysis across the city, as featured in the report to Environment & Climate Change Scrutiny in February 2023. This will inform the development of policy to improve green infrastructure across the city.

Open Space Study

- 4.26 An audit to understand the distribution of different types of open space across the city has been completed. This will provide evidence to support the preparation of the Local Plan and in development management decisions. The study shows that most parts of the city have reasonable access to open space

although not to all types of open space. The study will help investment decisions broaden the functionality of existing open spaces, increase their accessibility and quality and improve the equitable distribution of all types of open space provision across the city.

Grow Green

- 4.27 The GrowGreen project came to an end, culminating in a final event in Brest, France in November 2022. The five year, EU Horizon 2020 project has been a resounding success, with Manchester orchestrating and leading the entire 11.2 million Euro Project across six EU Countries and Wuhan in China. All partner Cities presented updates at the final event around their demonstrator projects and the development of GI/Nature Based Solution Strategies in their Cities. In Manchester, GrowGreen supported the refresh of the City's latest G&BI Action Plan, funded the Our River Our City study and delivered the £1.2million award winning Sponge Park in West Gorton. Key Learning and outputs demonstrating the successful results of the project will be shared across a range of platforms over the coming months.

Britain in Bloom Awards

- 4.28 Manchester has continued to see a consistently high standard of Britain in Bloom entries across the city. 95% of entrants scored a Level 4 (Silver gilt: Thriving) or higher despite the challenges facing our volunteers including the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the cost of living crisis and extreme weather.
- 4.29 Manchester has one of the highest number of communities engaged with In Bloom across the entire North West. Several new entries have needed little or no encouragement to consider more sustainable, biodiversity considerate approaches to gardening in our changing climate. A greater focus has also been given to reducing waste, recycling and improving our urban and green spaces for wildlife. Whilst celebrating all Bloom groups, a stand out entry has been the Manchester Urban Diggers who scored a 5 (Gold: Outstanding) in their first year in the scheme and received the MCC sponsored Pride of Manchester award.
- 4.30 Looking forward to 2023 we aim to continue to grow by demonstrating that North West in Bloom is a richly diverse and inclusive scheme that can be enjoyed by all and striving to overtime any barriers to this.

Protecting Playgrounds

- 4.31 Children are particularly vulnerable to the effects of air pollution which impacts neurodevelopment and cognitive ability, can trigger asthma and childhood cancer and can lead to chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease later in life.
- 4.32 The Protecting Playgrounds project, funded by the Council and Transport for Greater Manchester, has tested a range of tree species on a number of

primary school sites in Manchester with a different mix, density, height and leaf shape in order to find the most effective nature-based solutions that may be able to help reduce the risk. The report's findings were presented to MCC managers and officers in October 2022 by lead researcher Professor Barbara Maher from Lancaster University. The evidence shows that selective planting of certain 'tredges' (trees maintained as hedges) between roads and playgrounds can significantly reduce traffic-derived air pollution. Environmental Health have produced a checklist to facilitate further tregde planting in appropriate locations. This can inform neighbourhood planning including ward based climate change action plans, subject to further funding being identified.

5.0 Tree Action Plan – Highlights and Update

- 5.1 During 2022/23 a total of 7861 trees were planted, by the council and their partners, including five orchards and 6249 hedge trees. Working with City of Trees, the Council identified over 300 new locations for mature standard trees and again secured significant funding from Forestry Commission's Urban Tree Challenge Fund, with all new planting to be delivered by March 2023. Manchester has added 165 of the trees planted to the commemorative national Queen's Green Canopy project.
- 5.2 The Orchard Project received funding from We Love Manchester, which enabled them to run five orchard care workshops. Volunteers conducted tree health assessments, weeded, and re-mulched the tree bases and took part in a pruning workshop. Orchard Care Events took place at Delamere Park, Parkway Playing Fields, Fallowfield Loop, Platt Lane in Platt Fields Park, and at Kenworthy Woods in December and January. An additional orchard planting took place at the British Muslim Heritage Centre in Whalley Range.

Tree Action MCR

- 5.3 Tree Action MCR is now in its final phase. In total, during phase 1 and 2, 2288 standard trees have been planted as part of the programme across all of the city, with 59 planted in cemeteries, 287 in parks, and 1942 on street scene. In addition to the standard tree plant, planting projects included;
- 8 restocked tree avenues, 3 new avenues created across parks and cemeteries,
 - 14 specimen beacon trees in cemeteries and parks to mark the impact of Covid.
 - 8 new community orchards
 - 7903 hedges planted to create native hedgerow.
- 5.4 A second Urban Tree Challenge match funding grant application has been successful to allow a winter plant in 2022. Phase 3 of Tree Action MCR will therefore add 337 trees to the city scape, along with a programme of 60 trees to be planted within the Northwards estate and replacement planting for dead or damaged trees. A consistent watering regime is also taking place which will continue to ensure that each tree has a full three years of care.

5.5 The focus of tree planting has now shifted. In 2022 Manchester delivered the most comprehensive assessment of the City's tree and woodland resource ever undertaken. City Roots provides an informative look back at the evolution of our treescape over the last 100 years, whilst citywide Capacity Mapping provides a ward based analysis identifying opportunities for improving and enhancing the City's tree scape for generations to come. Work is now needed to use this evidence to engage communities in planting in those areas which have fewer trees. City of Trees have secured funding through Defra's Woodland Accelerator programme and have recruited four new posts to work across GM for two years on helping the Districts to deliver meaningful treescape improvements. This will link into the ward based capacity maps provided.

6.0 Future Priorities

6.1 Work will continue in delivering the four objectives of the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy. Projects will continue to include work undertaken by the council, in collaboration with its many stakeholders and projects that are delivered directly and independently by those stakeholders. The focus over the next year will include:

- Tree Action Plan Refresh – a new action plan will build on extensive research, looking at new challenges and opportunities across the City's treescape. This had been delayed to enable the incorporation of key ambitions set out in the newly completed ward based opportunity mapping. Work will also involve liaising with the Tree Council to ensure that the refreshed Action Plan reflects the newly approved Tree and Woodland Strategy Guidance delivered in January 2023.
- Biodiversity Net Gain - A detailed process analysis of biodiversity net gain options in the City is being commissioned to help maximise opportunities that may arise through development.
- Biodiversity Strategy – Work will begin with Natural England to understand and improve the mix of habitats across the City, and with partners to begin to develop meaningful activity around priority Species Action Plans and the designation of further Local Nature Reserves.
- Our Rivers Our City – Work with partners, such as the Environment agency and United Utilities will continue to realise the Strategy and Action Plan.
- Planning and Development – We will continue to engage with developers and other partners to deliver green and blue infrastructure improvements within major projects including Victoria North and HS2.
- The preparation of a draft Local Plan with strong environmental policies around green and blue infrastructure, biodiversity and open space making full use of the up-to-date evidence produced through the G&BI Strategy.

7.0 Recommendations

7.1 Recommendations appear at the front of the report.

OBJECTIVE 1: IMPROVING THE QUALITY AND FUNCTION OF GI

Headline actions	Existing practical GI commitments	Key project updates	Lead MCC teams	Key partners	Date 2022/3
<p>1 River valleys and canals: we will continue to invest in the river valleys and canals to provide attractive settings for communities, leisure and recreation, health, and biodiversity.</p>	<p>There is an active commitment to managing land across the city's three main river valleys: the Irk, Medlock and Mersey. The Our Rivers Our City strategy adds an additional focus to priorities across these three catchments.</p>	<p>MCC has established an internal OROC delivery group. Resilient River Valleys Programme being delivered. BRIL programme looking at weir removal in the Irk Valley. Opportunities for BNG being considered for Irk Valley Sites.</p>	<p>Parks FRM</p>	<p>Catchment partnerships Environment Agency Canal and River Trust The Natural Course</p>	<p>2022/23</p>
<p>2 Parks: we will enhance existing parks to maximise their potential in making Manchester a world-class city.</p>	<p>There is significant ongoing investment across the city's extensive 160-site portfolio of parks and green spaces, plus the new Park Investment Programme. Consideration of opportunities for appropriate GI (new and retrofit) during negotiations on all relevant planning applications.</p>	<p>Circa £4.6M has been invested across the existing Park's estate, with over 107 capital projects identified.</p>	<p>Parks</p>	<p>Charities Community groups</p>	<p>2022/23</p>

Headline actions	Existing practical GI commitments	Key project updates	Lead MCC teams	Key partners	Date 2022/3
3 Trees and woodlands: we will provide effective and appropriate tree and woodland management and planting.	The city has a Tree and Woodland Action Plan with an aim to improve management and sustainably enhance tree canopy cover over time.	Managing Manchester's Trees commission has been produced including: City Roots – an historical look back at the last 100 years. Tree Capacity Mapping – ward based tree analysis to inform neighbourhood decision making. Over 7500 new trees were planted including 5 new community orchards and over 6000 hedge trees.	Arbor Parks	City of Trees Woodland Trust Wildlife Trust Groundwork Trust The Orchard Project	2022/23
4 Gardens: we will protect, promote, and enhance private gardens to support climate resilience.	The city has extensive garden coverage. The total area of domestic garden green space in Manchester is 12km ² (My Back Yard: MMU 2018).	My Wild City Project continues to promote the value of garden space for wildlife, and MCC continues to work with communities through the RHS in Bloom Programme.	Neighbourhood teams	RHPs RHS Wildlife trusts Groundwork Trust Hubbub	2022/23
5 Other land: we will improve existing and introduce new GI/NBS within large estates and land holdings, e.g. registered housing providers, cemeteries, hospitals, universities, car parks.	Ongoing GI commitments through existing land management contracts of major landowners, e.g. housing providers.	Housing Providers continue to improve open space management across their estates, supported by their own GI networking platform.	Planning Housing Cemeteries	RHPs Southways Lead universities National Trust	2022/23

Headline actions	Existing practical GI commitments	Key project updates	Lead MCC teams	Key partners	Date 2022/3
<p>6 We will develop healthy and climate resilient communities by delivering focused neighbourhood greening projects.</p>	<p>Numerous growing projects are undertaken across the city, with hubs in Hulme, Wythenshawe, and Heaton Park. There are also 41 allotment sites across the city.</p>	<p>The In Our Nature Project was successful in a £2.5 Million bid to deliver community climate change projects across the city over the next three years.</p> <p>5 community projects were successful in bids to the GM Environment Fund.</p> <p>A new charity, Blossom, is building on the legacy of Real Food Wythenshawe to deliver education around growing and food provision.</p>	<p>Neighbourhood teams Parks</p>	<p>MCCA Hubbub Amity Sow the City Blossom</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>2022/23</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p>7 We will protect and enhance the city's key ecological assets, including Sites of Biological Importance (SBI). We will increase the number of SBI in active management to conserve, protect and enhance biodiversity. Local Nature Reserves: Increase the coverage of LNRs in line with national guidance to one hectare of LNR per 1,000 residents.</p>	<p>Manchester has 37 SBIs, with over 60% in active conservation management. Manchester has eight LNRs covering 392 hectares.</p>	<p>65% of SBIs are in Manchester are active conservation management. In 2022 after extensive work by CoT, Blackcarr Woods and Baguley Bottoms was brought into active conservation management.</p> <p>Manchester Declared Kenworthy Woods as its 9th Local Nature Reserve.</p>	<p>Parks EPI</p>	<p>GMEU Wildlife Trusts City of Trees CRT</p>	<p>2022/23</p> <p>Dec 2022</p>

OBJECTIVE 2: USE APPROPRIATE GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE AS A KEY COMPONENT OF NEW DEVELOPMENTS TO HELP CREATE SUCCESSFUL NEIGHBOURHOODS AND SUPPORT THE CITY'S GROWTH

Headline actions	Existing practical GI commitments	Key project updates	Lead MCC teams	Key partners	Date
1 Embed G&BI into key plans and policies.	There is a commitment to: Assisting preparing Places for Everyone (PfE) (GM Joint Development Plan)- Review all related Local Plan Policies Produce a new biodiversity strategy in 2022 Develop a new Tree and Woodland Action Plan in 2023.	PfE is currently going through Examination in Public	EPI	Developers	Ongoing
		A new Biodiversity Strategy was approved.			Nov 2022
2 Embed GI into citywide strategic regeneration and infrastructure schemes.	Key demonstrators will include GrowGreen West Gorton, community parks, and Mayfield.	Mayfield Park opened.	Planning Strategic Development	Developers National Trust	Sept 2022
3 Embed GI in developments of any scale across the city.	Consideration of opportunities for appropriate GI (new and retrofit) during negotiations on all relevant planning applications	Co-op Live Arena, work started on site incorporating a green wall and other GI.	Planning Strategic Development	RHPs Private landowners	2023
		Ancoats Mobility Hub, work started on site incorporating a green wall and other GI.			

Headline actions	Existing practical GI commitments	Key project updates	Lead MCC teams	Key partners	Date
4 Embed GI into city centre development and planning initiatives.	Major GI/NBS improvements through projects listed.	Glade of Light memorial garden opened.	Planning Strategic Development	Developers National Trust	May 2022
		Castlefield Viaduct pilot project opened.			Jul 2022
		Mayfield Park opened.			Sep 20022

OBJECTIVE 3: IMPROVING ACCESS AND CONNECTIVITY FOR PEOPLE AND WILDLIFE

Headline actions	Existing practical GI commitments	Key project updates	Lead MCC teams	Key partners	Date
1 Improving green routes: greening transport routes (e.g. tramlines, footpaths, cycle routes, roads, rail corridors including disused) to encourage walking and cycling, reduce flood risk and provide corridors for wildlife.	Ongoing commitments to manage sustainable transport corridors, such as Oxford Road Corridor, Chorlton Cycleway. Preparation of Manchester Active Travel Strategy	Manchester Active Travel Strategy was approved by Executive in February this year.	Highways Parks EPI	TfGM Wildlife trusts Sustrans CoT Rambler's Association	Feb 2023
		Continued work and awareness raising events to improve cycling and walking routes around the city to access green spaces.			Ongoing
		Almost £30mill committed to Bee Network Travel routes, including Chorlton Cycleway, Northern Quarter Cycleway, Northern & eastern Gateway Connectivity, radial routes and cycle hire.			2022/23

Headline actions	Existing practical GI commitments	Key project updates	Lead MCC teams	Key partners	Date
<p>2 Improving blue routes: river valleys and canals; enhance river valleys and canal tow paths to improve accessibility and use as active travel routes and wildlife corridors.</p>	<p>There is an active commitment to managing and across the city's three main river valleys, the Irk, Medlock and Mersey, which includes improvements to access where appropriate. The Canal and River Trust is actively trying to improve Ashton and Rochdale Canal towpaths and waterways.</p>	<p>Resilient River Valleys access and habitat improvement work undertaken.</p>	<p>Highways Parks EPI</p>	<p>Groundwork River Trust Canal and River Trust TfGM</p>	<p>2023</p>
<p>3 Cross-boundary working to improve access and connectivity.</p>	<p>Manchester is committed to cross-boundary partnership working and is a key partner of both GMCA and TfGM. Key initiatives will include the integration of Manchester City Council projects into the wider Bee Network, and the integration of the Manchester Biodiversity Strategy into the new Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Network.</p>	<p>Natural Course Project continues to assess ecosystem services and functionality across the wider catchment.</p> <p>Work with Highways England on possible BNG opportunities for Irk Valley sites.</p> <p>As part of the LNRS Natural England are supporting development work in the Medlock Valley as well as the Mersey Valley as part of a new Lost Wetlands project in the Bollin Valley and parts of South Manchester.</p>	<p>Highways Parks EPI</p>	<p>Natural England GMCA Wildlife trusts Ramblers TfGM GMEU MCRactive</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

OBJECTIVE 4: INCREASED G&BI UNDERSTANDING AND AWARENESS-RAISING

Headline actions	Existing practical GI commitments	Key project updates	Lead MCC teams	Key partners	Date
1 Monitor existing G&BI within the city.	There is some autonomous monitoring of G&BI within the city through parks, tree management systems etc and independently, i.e. through the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit and universities. Partners are encouraged to capture, share, and monitor GI-related activity.	Integration of IGNITION GI data sets.	City Policy and EPI	GMCA The University of Manchester MMU EA GMEU MNC	Jan 2023
		Natural England are developing a new National Pilot, of which Manchester is a focus on Urban Habitats.			Ongoing
		Canopy Assessment of MCR Tree Cover provided.			2022/23

Headline actions	Existing practical GI commitments	Key project updates	Lead MCC teams	Key partners	Date
<p>2 Develop research into the benefits of G&BI to provide the basis for new policy, projects, programmes, and investment mechanisms.</p>	<p>Key supporting evidence has been commissioned and projects developed, including: Our Rivers, Our City My Wild City Managing Manchester’s Trees My Backyard Garden Survey GHIA (importance of GI to an ageing population) IGNITION project, looking at investment opportunities in GI.</p>	<p>Protecting Playgrounds Report Published.</p> <p>The GrowGreen Project concluded. An online resource and learning platform to share findings is in development.</p> <p>A new Open Space Study for the city has been completed.</p> <p>A new commission around Biodiversity Net Gain is in development.</p> <p>Working with EPI, LWT are delivering a focussed pilot around BNG with two live case studies in order to establish an outline process for BNG consideration.</p>	<p>EPI</p>	<p>The University of Manchester MMU GMCA TEP City of Trees GrowGreen National Trust MNC</p>	<p>Oct 2022</p> <p>Nov 2022</p> <p>2023</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

Headline actions	Existing practical GI commitments	Key project updates	Lead MCC teams	Key partners	Date
<p>3 Raise awareness of the benefits of G&BI through public engagement and involvement, promotion, communication, education, and training.</p>	<p>Manchester has an ongoing commitment to engage and raise awareness of the importance and value G&BI brings to the city through numerous campaigns and projects.</p>	<p>Resilient River Valleys has engaged with nearly 5000 people including nearly 1000 children. 38 new roles have been created, providing training and capacity building for citizens, 22 of these roles being for unemployed young people. Over 200 training courses have been provided.</p>	<p>Comms, supported by EPI, parks, neighbourhoods, policy and partnership s, city centre growth and infrastructure</p>	<p>Wildlife Trust MCCA Hubbub City of Trees RHS Groundwork National Trust Rivers Trust Community groups MNC</p>	<p>2022/23</p>
		<p>City Nature Challenge had 258 recorders providing 2256 observations of 530 Species citywide</p>			<p>April 2022</p>
		<p>Manchester Festival of Nature had 7000 attending, with 19 partner organisations involved through the Manchester Nature Consortium. MFoN had 36,000 impressions via twitter.</p>			<p>June 2022</p>
		<p>1,812 events and activities have been delivered in Parks with an estimated 600,000 attendees.</p>			<p>2022/23</p>

Headline actions	Existing practical GI commitments	Key project updates	Lead MCC teams	Key partners	Date
<p>4 Showcase local best practice and seek recognition for delivered projects.</p>	<p>MGO for Knowledge Exchange Continued development of a portfolio of GI-related case studies (70 at present).</p>	<p>Our Rivers Our City was a nominated finalist in the 2022 Landscape Institute awards.</p> <p>Manchester received 148 Britain in Bloom awards in 2022.</p> <p>Grow Green Project concluded with presentations at the annual assembly in Brest, France.</p> <p>Three CIEEM Award nominations have been submitted, two for Mayfield Park and one for MCC.</p>	<p>Neighbourhoods</p>	<p>CIEEM TEP RHS GrowGreen Studio Egret West Bura Happold Environment Agency</p>	<p>Nov 2022</p> <p>Nov 2022</p> <p>Nov 2022</p> <p>Jan 2023</p>

OBJECTIVE 1: MANAGING SUSTAINABLY

Headline actions	Existing practical commitments	Key project updates	Lead MCC teams	Key partners	Date 2022/3
1. Map and monitor changes in the amount and distribution of trees across the city	Refine datasets of tree and woodland cover	<p>The Managing Manchester's Trees commission was delayed in production but was delivered in February 2023.</p> <p>Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The City Roots report outlining the City's treescape from a historical perspective, looking at changes across a 100-year timeframe. The capacity mapping will be used at ward level to understand better appropriate tree planting opportunities. <p>The report's findings will help shape a new revised Tree and Woodland Action Plan in 2023/4.</p>	Planning	City of Trees TEP	Feb 2023

Headline actions	Existing practical commitments	Key project updates	Lead MCC teams	Key partners	Date 2022/3
2. Develop a fuller understanding of the City's tree resource	Deliver annual highway tree inspection programme	Ongoing	Planning Arbor	CoT Universities	
	Investigate online mapping tool of planned tree works in the city	Ongoing – Tree data integrated into MCR GI browser delivered in 2022.			June 2022
	Encourage network of data gathering and information sharing e.g. university access to canopy data for research	CoT have been working with consultants TEP sharing data in order to develop the Managing Manchester's Trees analysis.			2022/23
	Investigate opportunities for valuing Manchester tree stock including: The development of an ecosystem services valuation of treescape	IGNITION evidence base was delivered, providing values to a range of nature based solutions including trees. CoT and GM partners delivered i-Trees eco assessment of tree cover across GM with Manchester's tree stock having an estimated value of £3mill/annum.			2022 2022

Headline actions	Existing practical commitments	Key project updates	Lead MCC teams	Key partners	Date 2022/3
3. Ensure continued and sustainable management of all trees and woodland and best practice approaches employed	Develop, agree and embed principles of tree management in Manchester	Ongoing. The tree management principles continue to be used effectively by MCC tree officers.	Arbor Parks	City of Trees Wildlife Trust Groundwork Trust	Ongoing
	Develop tree and woodland management plans for MCC parks and greenspaces, which include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No waste timber going to landfill • Consideration of sustainable uses of woodland by-products 	Ongoing – COT were successful in bidding for new officer support to help provide site specific tree management guidance for Las. 4 new staff started on a three-year project from January 2023.		The Orchard Project	Jan 2023
	Develop tree focussed opportunity mapping for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parks and open spaces • City centre • Neighbourhoods 	The Managing Manchester's Trees report provides ward-based tree capacity charts, with options for tree canopy improvement. The capacity maps have been provided to all MCC Neighbourhood teams.			Feb 2023
	Encourage the development of tree and woodland management plans by all landowners and managers of trees in Manchester	MCC are working with HS2 on integrated tree and woodland management plans where appropriate for spaces that will be affected by the development.			Ongoing
	Develop tree management good practice case studies as part of Manchester G&BI Group	The Our Rivers Our City Strategy was a nominated finalist in the 2022 Landscape institute			2022/23

Headline actions	Existing practical commitments	Key project updates	Lead MCC teams	Key partners	Date 2022/3
		Awards. Mayfield Park has been nominated for a 2023 CIEEM Award.			
4. Ensure green and blue infrastructure (including trees and tree management) are considered as part of major new developments and retrofits, policy, and strategy reviews where appropriate.	Major development projects to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport infrastructure changes e.g. Bee Network • Mayfield • Medieval Quarter • St Johns • Kampus • Victoria North 	Ongoing. New trees featured prominently in major developments opened this year, including the Glade of Light Memorial, Lincoln Square and Mayfield Park.	Planning	RHPs CoT Wildlife Trust	Ongoing
	Local Plan Review	The Local Plan review will reflect green infrastructure themes and priorities.			Ongoing
		A new commission looking at Biodiversity Net Gain Opportunities will lead to a pipeline of tree and woodland related opportunities citywide.			Feb 2023

Headline actions	Existing practical commitments	Key project updates	Lead MCC teams	Key partners	Date 2022/3
5. Develop climate resilient approaches to tree and woodland management	Encourage use of trees within broader climate resilient adaptive plans e.g. Sustainable Urban Drainage projects, public realm improvements	Ongoing. In 2021 Manchester produced a new Our Rivers Our City Strategy which highlighted the concept of sponge city thinking and greater permeability. New SUDs guidance for the city is in development by MCC Highways.	Arbor Highways	RHPs Southways Universities National Trust	Ongoing
	Develop Ash Dieback Strategy in partnership with Natural Capital Group	Ongoing. National Forestry Commission monitoring underway.			Ongoing
	Encourage diversity of tree stock e.g. appropriately diverse species and age ranges to help increase resilience to pests and disease	Ongoing. Tree Action Manchester planting encourages diverse climate resilient tree planting in this the third phase of the programme.			Ongoing

Headline actions	Existing practical commitments	Key project updates	Lead MCC teams	Key partners	Date 2022/3
6. Develop partnership projects that sensitively improve the functionality of the treescape	Develop appropriate projects to deliver the City of Trees vision in Manchester including:	Forest Schools mapping work being undertaken and continuing, with successful new events being delivered through the parks service.	Parks	LWT CoT Groundwork The Orchard Project	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forest Schools 	New action plans have been developed for 12 priority wildlife sites in Manchester to help support Parks staff.			2022/23
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SBI Management Planning and Action 	Orchard events were held in Ladybarn Park, Platt Fields and Philips Park.			2022
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Orchard planting and management 	5 new community driven orchards were delivered in 2022/3: British Muslim Heritage Centre Whalley Range Crowcroft Park Longsight Chorlton Park East Manchester Academy MCFC Academy Orchard.			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Queens Green Canopy Planting 	165 trees were registered			2022/23

Headline actions	Existing practical commitments	Key project updates	Lead MCC teams	Key partners	Date 2022/3

OBJECTIVE 2: PLANTING APROPRIATELY

Headline actions	Existing practical commitments	Key project updates	Lead MCC teams	Key partners	Date
1. Ensure continued healthy and diverse tree canopy cover across the city	Sustain tree and woodland canopy cover of 20% average to 2025	2022/3 7861 - trees were planted including 5 orchards and 6249 hedge trees	Arbor Parks Nhoods	CoT The Orchard Project	2022/23
	Deliver suitable and sustainable tree planting projects which support biodiversity, in line with the G&BI Strategy, tree audit baseline, park strategy and neighbourhood place plans, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One for one tree replacement for highways trees • Delivery of tree replacement policies across city • 150 Highways Tree planted annually (combination of new and replacement) • 1000 hedgerow trees planted annually • 1500 trees planted annually Develop Beacon/Heritage Trees Mapping project	2021/2022 - 8309 trees were planted including 6 orchards and 2620 Hedge trees			Ongoing
		2020/21 - 4286 trees were planted including five orchards and 2036 hedge trees			
		2019/20 - 9817 trees planted including 6812 hedge trees			
		2018/19 - 2994 trees planted including 3 orchards and 582 hedge trees			
		2017/18 - 4933 trees planted including 4 orchards and 1585 hedge trees			
	2016/17 - 2961 trees planted, including 6 orchards and 832 hedge trees				

Headline actions	Existing practical commitments	Key project updates	Lead MCC teams	Key partners	Date
2. Ensure continued healthy and diverse tree canopy cover across the city	Planting of at least 4 new community orchards annually	5 new orchards were planted in 2022/3.	Arbor Parks Nhoods	RHPs CoT The Orchard Project	2022/23
	Mapping of community orchard locations	8 new orchards were planted in 2021/22.			Ongoing
	Encourage cropping, harvesting, distribution and usage of food provided	Ongoing collaboration with OP. Ongoing. Community events delivered in the new community orchards.			Ongoing

Headline actions	Existing practical commitments	Key project updates	Lead MCC teams	Key partners	Date
3. Investigate mechanisms for funding new tree planting, management, and maintenance	Support the delivery of the City of Trees Vision for Greater Manchester by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active involvement in the GM Forest Partnership (GMFP) • Working collaboratively to develop sustainable tree planting and management project ideas through, for example: • MCC Parks and greenspaces opportunity mapping programme and tree sponsorship opportunities • Investigating commercial opportunities for trees and woodlands • Neighbourhood tree planting opportunities 	<p>Working with CoT, the City Council identified over 300 new locations for standard trees in 2022/3 and secured funding from Forestry Commissions Urban Tree Challenge Fund to be delivered by March 2023.</p> <p>£40,000 Invested into conservation activity at Highfield Local Nature Reserve.</p> <p>The Managing Manchester's Trees Report will look to provide guidance as to how better tree and woodland management could be delivered.</p> <p>The opportunity Mapping work has been circulated to all neighbourhood teams.</p>	Arbor Parks EPI	CoT NE	Ongoing

Headline actions	Existing practical commitments	Key project updates	Lead MCC teams	Key partners	Date
4. Develop a climate resilient approach to tree planting	Utilise a mixture of native and non-native planting projects to ensure resilience against pests and diseases	Ongoing. Tree Action Manchester planting encourages diverse climate resilient tree planting. In this the third phase of the programme, nearly 400, new mature trees have been planted across the city.	Arbor Parks	RHPs National Trust	Ongoing
	Reduce risk of tree pests and disease by ensuring all new trees planted are from registered and approved sources	Ongoing – as above.			Jul 2022
	Promote SuDS friendly demonstrators e.g. GrowGreen, West Gorton	New exemplar demonstrators delivered Mayfield Park and Castlefield Viaduct.			2022/23

OBJECTIVE 3: PROTECTING STRONGLY

Headline actions	Existing practical commitments	Key project updates	Lead MCC teams	Key partners	Date
1. Investigate effective tree replacement and compensation measures	Develop and agree appropriate compensation measure for tree loss and replacement in Manchester	Ongoing. Cavat tree value assessment being used by MCC planners alongside the Manchester's Residential Quality Guide which includes minimum 2:1 tree replacement	Planning Arbor	CoT	Ongoing
2. Ensure trees of high value are designated as Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)	Continue to designate new TPOs as appropriate	Ongoing	Planning Arbor	CoT	Ongoing
	Enforce as appropriate against unauthorised works to trees protected by tree preservation orders or within conservation areas	224 applications for work were considered and notifications for works to protected trees across Manchester in 2022. Working in partnership with the City Arborist MCC have either agreed to appropriate tree works in line with BS 3998 Tree Work, negotiated revised works or refused permission on those applications which were considered to be harmful to the trees in question.			
	Promotion of the Tree Preservation Order process via neighbourhood teams	Ongoing			

Headline actions	Existing practical commitments	Key project updates	Lead MCC teams	Key partners	Date
3. Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs): increase the number of SBIs in active management to conserve, protect and enhance biodiversity	<p>Increase the number of sites of biological importance (SBIs) in active conservation management by 1-4% annually, working with landowners and land managers</p> <p>Provide statistical report to Defra annually</p>	<p>2022/3 65% of sites in active conservation mgt. Active CoT work at Blackcarr Wood and Baguley Bottoms.</p> <p>2021/22 62.16% of sites in active conservation management.</p> <p>2020/21 62.16% of sites in active conservation management.</p> <p>2019/20 62.16% of sites in active conservation management. Bank Bridge meadow lost.</p> <p>2018/19: 63.15% of SBIs in active conservation management – Rosehill Wood Management Plan in place.</p> <p>2017/18: 60.53% of SBIs in active conservation management – Gibb Wood work undertaken.</p> <p>2016/17: 57.89% of SBIs in active conservation management. Active work with UoM volunteers on Painswick Park Meadow and Castle Hill SBIs.</p>	<p>Planning Parks</p>	<p>GMEU NE</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

Headline actions	Existing practical commitments	Key project updates	Lead MCC teams	Key partners	Date
4. Use planning conditions to ensure high standard of tree works, protection and management	Tree officers to provide guidance and advice through the planning process to ensure compliance of tree works against: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BS 5837 (the British Standard for Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction) • BS 3998 (the British Standard for Tree Work) 	Ongoing through work of tree officers. Significant new developments featuring trees prominently include: Mayfield Park Glade of Light Lincoln Square Factory	Planning	CoT	Ongoing

OBJECTIVE 4: INVOLVING CREATIVELY

Headline actions	Existing practical commitments	Key project updates	Lead MCC teams	Key partners	Date
1. Further develop research into the benefits of trees	Ongoing programme of collaborative GI research including trees, to measure the impact of GI across the range of social, economic and environmental benefits set out in the Strategy. To include:	Ongoing.	Planning	GMCA The University of Manchester MMU EA GMEU CoT	Ongoing
	Protecting Playgrounds	Completed. Final Report Published			Oct 2022
	Update GI Evidence base with tree and woodland related research	Tree capacity Mapping Published			Feb 2023
2. Encourage and record the delivery of community led and focussed tree projects	Projects to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wythenshawe Woodlands Orchard Project 	New funding through Green Recovery Challenge secured to extend Wythenshawe Woodlands project. New Community Orchards to be delivered including training and events (as above)	Nhoods	The University of Manchester MMU GMCA Groundwork CoT National Trust MNC The Orchard Project	2022/23

Headline actions	Existing practical commitments	Key project updates	Lead MCC teams	Key partners	Date
3. Raise the awareness of the benefits of trees	Establish social media platforms for ongoing promotion of tree related information	City Nature Challenge had 258 recorders providing 2256 observations of 530 Species citywide	Comms, supported by Planning, Parks, Nhoods, Policy & Partnership CCGI	Wildlife Trust MCCA Hubbub CoT RHS	Apr 2022
		Manchester Festival of Nature (MFoN) had 7000 attending, with 19 partner organisations involved through the Manchester Nature Consortium. MFoN had 36,000 impressions via twitter.		Groundwork National Trust Rivers Trusts Community groups MNC	Jun 2022
	Ward councillors and local communities to include tree activity in ward plans as appropriate	New Ward based Climate Change Action Plans being delivered New Ward Tree Capacity Maps Provided			Ongoing

Headline actions	Existing practical commitments	Key project updates	Lead MCC teams	Key partners	Date
<p>4. Provide opportunities for community engagement, involvement and activity</p>	<p>Support for and delivery of tree related activity, training and capacity building- Related volunteer opportunities to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Friends of” group events and activities • Development of CoT Citizen Forester Volunteer Scheme • River Valley Initiative volunteer and engagement opportunities 	<p>My Wild City Project ongoing, Manchester Festival of Nature delivered in 2022 by the Manchester Nature Consortium</p> <p>Wythenshawe Waste Warriors supported CoT in activity in Wythenshawe Woodlands.</p> <p>Resilient River Valleys project building capacity and creating jobs across Manchester river valleys.</p>	<p>Nhoods Parks</p>	<p>Wildlife Trust MCCA Hubbub CoT RHS Groundwork National Trust Rivers Trusts Community groups MNC</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

Headline actions	Existing practical commitments	Key project updates	Lead MCC teams	Key partners	Date
5. Showcase local best practice and seek recognition for delivered projects	Apply for national awards wherever appropriate e.g. Britain in Bloom RHS Awards for community greening projects	<p>148 In Bloom Awards citywide in 2022</p> <p>154 In Bloom Awards citywide in 2021</p> <p>152 In Bloom Awards citywide in 2019</p> <p>154 In Bloom Awards citywide in 2018</p> <p>166 In Bloom Awards citywide in 2017</p> <p>126 In Bloom Awards citywide in 2016</p> <p>New Local Nature Reserve declared at Kenworthy Woods Northenden</p>	Nhoods	<p>CIEEM</p> <p>RHS</p> <p>Landscape institute</p> <p>CoT</p> <p>National Trust</p> <p>Groundwork Trust</p> <p>Wildlife Trust</p> <p>Rivers Trust</p> <p>MNC</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Dec 2022</p>
6. Raise the profile of Manchester as an attractive place to live, work and visit with access to high quality GI within and beyond Manchester	Use of the city's trees and woodlands to attract visitors and create new recreation opportunities.	<p>Continued success of Heaton Park Tree Top Trek Opened in 2017.Reopened in 2021 after Covid.</p> <p>New Mountain Bike Trail opened at Wythenshawe Park in 2022</p> <p>Promote the City's existing parks and green spaces to maximise their usage by local communities, workers and visitors</p>	Parks	MNC	Ongoing
		City Nature Challenge 2022 – 258 Observers recorded 530 species with 2,256 observations			

Abbreviations

City of Trees	CoT
Community groups	CGs
Environment Agency	EA
Forestry Commission	FC
Greater Manchester Ecology Unit	GMEU
Groundwork	GW
The Wildlife Trust For Lancashire, Manchester and North Merseyside	LWT
Manchester – Green and Blue Infrastructure Stakeholder Group	MCR GI Group
Manchester Climate Change Agency	MCCA
Manchester City Council	MCC
Manchester Garden City	MGC
Manchester Metropolitan University	MMU
Manchester Museum	MM
Natural England	NE
The Orchard Project	OP
Real Food Wythenshawe	RFW
Registered Providers (Formerly Registered Housing Providers)	RHPs
River Valley Initiatives:	RVI
Irk Valley Project	
Medlock Valley Project	
Moston Brook Partnership	
Mersey Valley Project	
Transport for Greater Manchester	TfGM
Tree and Design Action Group	TDAG
University of Manchester	UoM
University of Salford	UoS
The Woodland Trust	WT

**Manchester City Council
Report for Information**

Report to: Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee – 9 March 2023

Subject: Parks and Open Spaces – Parks Climate Change Action Plan

Report of: Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods)

Summary

This report provides an overview of Manchester’s Parks Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP). The report sets out the background to the development of the plan, how the plan aligns to the wider ambition of the Council and an overview of the action plan.

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to consider and make comments on the contents of the report.

Wards Affected: All

Environmental Impact Assessment - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city

Parks by their nature contribute to the mitigation of carbon across the city and this is a key strand of the Parks Strategy. The development of the Parks Climate Change Action Plan has further connected the opportunities and challenges in meeting the zero-carbon target for the city into the corporate plan, ensuring that opportunities to make progress are maximised and challenges can be considered by a wider audience.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments

The Parks Climate Change Action Plan recognises the need for just and equal delivery of the climate action plan across the city, focusing on areas such as community engagement, sustainable travel for staff and visitors and adaptation of the landscape for carbon storage and sequestration. The specific actions to be undertaken in delivering the plan will be assessed to ensure that they have a positive impact on providing an inclusive and equitable service that is accessible to all residents and visitors.

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS/Contribution to the Strategy
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	Parks are partnering in new and fruitful ways with organisations and communities to increase opportunities for personal development through volunteering, work experience, employment and training.
A highly skilled city: world class and home-grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	Parks offer a unique opportunity to engage in formal educational activity in the natural environment. Opportunities to build life skills such as communication and teamwork are offered through a wide range of volunteering activities.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	Parks are at the heart of our communities, offering opportunities for community cohesion through volunteering, events and activities in a setting that is open and accessible to all.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	Parks are an essential part of our neighbourhoods and enhance positive outcomes for residents and businesses. The delivery of a vibrant programme of events and activities is increasing the number of visitors from outside of the City. Whilst parks naturally contribute to the low carbon city agenda, new ways of using and activating the estate in a way that can actively contribute to lowering or offsetting carbon emissions are being explored.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	Parks connect our City in many different ways, physically they are expanding to offer enhanced green corridors for people and wildlife and socially by sustaining opportunities for shared experiences and common interests.

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact one of the contact officers above.

- Manchester City Council Climate Change Action Plan 2020-25
- Manchester City Council Climate Emergency Declaration July 2019
- Manchester Climate Change Framework 2020-25 Updated 2022

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an update on progress within the Parks service in relation to climate change and the zero-carbon agenda. A key focus within the report is to update Members on the development of a Parks Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP), which is the first iteration of a CCAP concentrated on one council service. Having a service specific CCAP enables the team to identify actions that it can deliver across all five of the Council's CCAP workstreams, helping the overall delivery of the MCC CCAP. It also helps to embed zero carbon approaches into 'business as usual' within the service.
- 1.2 Parks are also uniquely placed to deliver positive and visible contributions to the Council's Zero Carbon target due to the high number of resident and visitor interactions and opportunities to deliver services in a more productive manner for zero carbon and climate change across the estate.

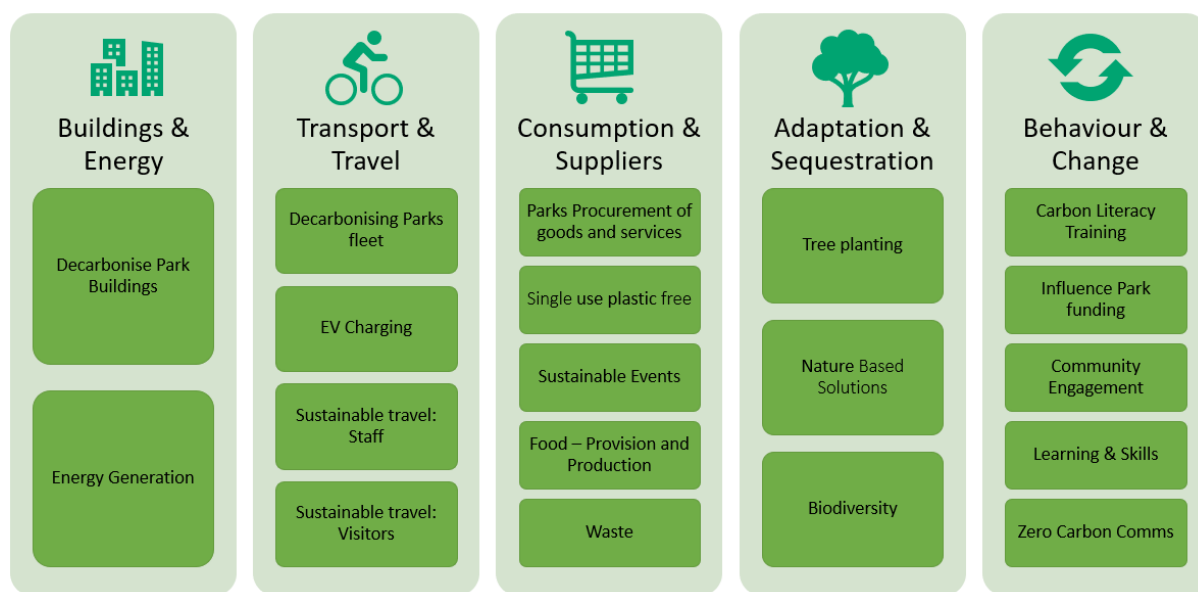
2.0 Background

- 2.1 A 'deep dive' session focused on parks and their potential to deliver across all five workstreams of the Council's Climate Change Action Plan took place at the Zero Carbon Coordination Group in May 2022. The opportunities to build on positive work that was already underway in the service was highlighted and commitment received across all workstreams to work in partnership with the service to understand the current position and the potential to generate a greater impact and increased positive outcomes at pace.
- 2.2 In September 2022 the main CCAP was refreshed with the inclusion of a new action at 4.3:
- Deliver - Producing and delivering a Parks specific Climate Change Action Plan.
 - To achieve - increased understanding of carbon emissions relating to Parks and identification of potential carbon reduction options.
- 2.3 The Zero Carbon Team have assisted in the production of a Parks CCAP to achieve:
- Increased understanding of carbon emissions relating to Parks.
 - Identification of potential carbon reduction options.
 - Wider environmental benefits such as increased biodiversity.
- 2.4 The purpose of the plan is to serve as a tool for the Parks teams to align their priorities with the main CCAP and to utilise the associated delivery workstreams for the main CCAP to prioritise and align workstream actions connected to Parks by:
- Defining realistic outcomes.
 - Determining measurable KPIs and data sources.
 - Monitoring their progress and setting targets.
 - Coordinating and focusing resources.

2.5 In many cases there is positive action already taking place and the Parks CCAP simply provides a mechanism to monitor positive progress and highlight blockages in order to overcome these. The ambition of the CCAP is to fully embed climate change thinking into the Parks service so that it becomes embedded and a subconscious consideration in every action and decision-making.

3.0 CCAP Overview

3.1 The Parks CCAP identifies the actions across all five workstreams of the Council’s CCAP, illustrated in the table below:



3.2 The actions in each workstream are detailed below.

3.2.1 Buildings and energy

Main CCAP Ref	Park CCAP Ref	Actions
1.1	1.1	Decarbonise Park Buildings - Apply the Estates Carbon Reduction Programme to Parks buildings by:
		Take learnings from Estates Buildings assessment for Parks Buildings to identify what measures can be applied to reduce emissions from buildings in Parks.
		Collaborate with the Zero Carbon arm of the Corporate Estates team to put in place a Parks estates carbon reduction plan.
1.3	1.2	Energy Generation - Generate renewable energy in Parks by:
		Identify all potential park sites for energy generation, taking into account previous feasibility work carried out and identifying further scoping work needed.

3.2.2 Travel and transport

Main CCAP Ref	Park CCAP Ref	Actions
2.2	2.1	<u>Decarbonising Parks fleet</u> - A rolling replacement of Parks fleet to electric vans, bikes and e-Cargo bikes and the appropriate charging infrastructure by:
		Support deploying and monitoring of cycles (e-Cargo and other) into parks operational fleet.
		Investigate and propose viable options for acquiring EV or sustainable fuel source for concession vehicles i.e., ice cream vans.
2.7	2.2	<u>EV Charging</u> - Support the EV Charging Infrastructure Strategy, with Park installation opportunities for Parks Fleet and visitor usage.
		Explore Commercial opportunities such as – EV charging in Parks' car parks.
2.3	2.3	<u>Sustainable travel: Staff</u> - Implement and embed the Staff Travel Policy across the Parks teams by:
		Develop engagement and promote incentives for Parks staff (e.g. sessions or workshops) on Sustainable Business travel and Active Travel planning.
2.9	2.4	<u>Sustainable travel: Visitors</u> - Develop and deliver communications on sustainable and active travel and promote incentives for Visitors to commute more sustainably to Parks e.g. for events.

3.2.3 Consumption, Emissions and Suppliers

Main CCAP Ref	Park CCAP Ref	Actions
3.1	3.1	<u>Parks Procurement of goods and services</u> - Apply Climate Change social value scoring in line with Council's procurement process to:
3.1		Use the monitoring framework (currently in development) to measure and track the emissions from goods and services procured to establish a baseline to enable a CO2 savings target to be set for future years.
		Ensure new contracts procured by Park's team include 10% environmental weighting.
3.2	3.2	<u>SUPS</u> - Reduce Single Use Plastics (SUPs) across Parks by:
3.2 & 3.6		Eradicating avoidable SUPs from across the Parks estates (i.e. cafes) by embedding and enforcing requirements to be SUP free within <u>Park trader</u> licences.
3.2		Eradicating avoidable SUPs from across Park events.
3.2		Eradicating avoidable SUPs and other packaging purchased by Parks team.
3.3	3.3	<u>Sustainable Events</u> - Deliver... Sustainable Park events and support the delivery of sustainable events held within Parks.
		Adopt the Sustainable Events Guides for all MCC events.
		Ensure all MCC funded events meet the principles of a sustainable event, aligned to the Sustainable Events Guides or other.

		Ensure all events taking place on MCC owned land meet the principles of a sustainable event, aligned to the Sustainable Events Guides or other.
		Research and assess viable opportunities to reduce carbon emissions from events held on MCC land.
3.7	3.4	Food – Provision and Production - Work towards all food in parks being procured sustainably across parks by:
		Provision: Ensure Park Cafe and vendors adopt the Council's sustainable food policy aligned with the Manchester Food Board climate change priorities
		Production: Link Allotments, growing groups, community orchards to the Sustainable Food board Climate Change priorities.
3.4	3.5	Waste - Research and assess viable opportunities within Grounds Maintenance to reduce carbon emissions by:
		Reviewing litter bin provision within parks (capital investment programme).
		Review waste generated in parks and existing recycling / disposal routes. Consider in context of waste hierarchy, changes in national waste legislation and working towards becoming a circular economy (in collaboration with Waste & Recycling Team who can support services).
		Deliver behaviour change campaigns to raise awareness of the impact of littering in parks.
		Deliver national campaigns in Parks inc. GB Spring Clean and Love Parks. Improve comms to visitors on what happens to waste.

3.2.4 Climate adaptation, carbon storage & sequestration

Main CCAP Ref	Park CCAP Ref	Actions
4.1	4.1	Tree planting - Increase the quantity of trees and hedgerows within parks by:
		Contribute to the delivery of the Manchester Tree Action Plan by investigating opportunities for planting in parks and providing tree planting sites including community orchards.
4.6		Work with City of Trees to see if the allocated tree planting sites within Parks are eligible for Trees for Climate funding.
4.2	4.2	NBS - Increase the amount of Nature Based Solutions across the parks:
		Explore funding opportunities for further NBS within Manchester's Parks including resource and their maintenance.
		Promote and support the Citywide implementation of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) through identifying opportunities within Parks.
4.5	4.3	Biodiversity - Deliver... Improve biodiversity across the Parks by:
4.5		Support the Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, linked to the Local Plan and Biodiversity Net Gain offer for the City.
4.5		Building on the differential mowing schedule across MCC Parks to increase biodiversity and support pollinators.
		Reduce the use of glyphosate in parks.

3.2.5 Influencing behaviour change & being a catalyst for change

Main CCAP Ref	Park CCAP Ref	Actions
5.1	5.1	<u>Carbon Literacy Training</u> - Ensure all Parks staff are carbon literate and understand how to embed carbon reduction measures and climate action into their working lives.
		Ensure a minimum of 50% Parks staff are Carbon Literacy certified as part of the wider MCC CLT Gold commitment.
5.1		Bespoke training: Explore how Parks staff can embed the learnings from CLT into their work roles.
5.2	5.2	<u>Influence Park funding</u> - Embed Zero Carbon within Parks decision making to:
		Ensure revenue generated from Parks is being invested effectively in line with the zero carbon agenda.
		Ensure all Parks grant programmes positively address climate change.
5.3	5.3	<u>Community Engagement</u> - Support delivery of citywide climate change community engagement approaches, working with internal stakeholders such as Neighbourhoods Officers, Keep Manchester Tidy and Climate Change Delivery Officers to:
		Identify opportunities in Parks to engage with residents and community groups in alignment with climate action in ward plans and the MCCA <u>In Our Nature</u> programme.
5.7	5.4	<u>Learning & Skills</u> - Encourage schools, other education settings to use parks for Climate Change educational sessions by:
		Continuing to engage and deliver climate change activities with young people through the Youth Council and schools. Explore how Parks can support Manchester's Eco Schools.
		Develop Community Learning environments- e.g. Forest Schools/Rain Gardens/Wildflower meadows.
5.4	5.5	<u>Zero Carbon Communications</u> -Support and contribute to the delivery of the citywide Zero Carbon Communications Strategy by:
		Work with Parks team to generate Parks related content for zero carbon & climate change messages.
		Embed zero carbon and climate change messages into all Parks related communications campaigns.

4.0 Building on Strengths

4.1 The CCAP recognises that climate change is embedded within some aspects of the Parks Service and that this provides a positive position to launch from.

4.2 Buildings and energy

- Options for decarbonisation are embedded in capital development, recent examples include the installation of photovoltaic panels in the development

of the accessible changing facilities at Wythenshawe Park and replacement lighting on the athletics track converted to LED's.

4.3 Transport and travel

- The fleet utilised to deliver the service is adapting with electric vehicles, e-cargo bikes and bikes successfully utilised as alternatives to internal combustion engine vehicles.
- Publicly accessible EV charging is in place at Heaton Park.
- Supporting active travel for staff and visitors through the removal of barriers and the improvement and creation of safe routes, recent examples include the removal of barriers at Chorlton Water Park and the installation of the family trail at Wythenshawe Park.

4.4 Consumption, Emissions and Suppliers

- Procurement of goods and services – ensuring 10% environmental weighting is included into contracts.
- Park Café's are using degradable products such as food containers and packaging, cups, drink stirrers and cutlery in place of single use plastics. One operator has adopted cardboard packaging for water in place of plastic bottles and all operators will provide access to drinking water to refill bottles.
- Restrictions on the use of SUP's have been included within vendor licenses, this was first trialled with ice cream providers and remains under close scrutiny.
- Feasibility work is underway to reduce the use of generated power at events in favour of linking into the grid. Good progress has also been made with event organisers to source alternatives to commonly used single use plastics such as barrier tape in favour of more sustainable products.
- Review of bonfire and firework events in parks, resulting in a decision to not reinstate events post pandemic for 2022.
- A programme to replace bins that have reached the end of their life with larger capacity bins (where appropriate) is in place, thus supporting a reduction in the number of bin collections. All recyclable waste collected from Parks is separated at the plant and recycled, the remaining general waste is incinerated at a waste to energy plant.

4.5 Climate adaptation, carbon storage & sequestration

- 385 new trees and 1,287 new hedging trees have been planted in Parks since 2020.
- Reduced mowing operations in River Valley and Urban Countryside sites with support from stakeholders to enhance biodiversity.
- No general glyphosate based treatments have been used to manage weeds in Parks since 2019. The treatment of Japanese Knotweed and occasionally Giant Hogweed are the only works using glyphosate based products, this is a limited programme as most outbreaks have been eradicated through a citywide treatment programme.

- Allotment societies have removed the sale of glyphosate based products from site shops. Many ploholders have moved away from the use of chemicals for the control of weeds, insects and diseases.

4.6 Influencing behaviour change & being a catalyst for change

- A bespoke approach to the delivery of Carbon Literacy Training has been developed, this has supported the Team to learn together and work through material that supports the application of themes in their daily activity.
- Sharing and amplification of good practise and the achievements of staff, volunteers and partners through social media and specialist communications.
- Developing and delivering partnership events and activities to support active travel, reducing littering, connection with nature and green learning environments such as forest schools.

5.0 Conclusion and next steps

5.1 The Parks CCAP is in the final phase of development ahead of the target to go live with delivery on 1st April 2023. This phase has focused on finalising the ambition with the workstream leads from the main CCAP and identifying key performance indicators and measures that will allow progress to be tracked.

5.2 The delivery phase of the action plan will require a focus on:

- Continuing to identify good practise that is already in place and finding ways to replicate and embed so it becomes 'business as usual'.
- Learning from the experience of other industry professionals associated with landscape management, heritage and conservation and visitor / stakeholder engagement.
- Ensuring that where changes in the delivery of services are made that these are communicated in full, including what the changes will look like, how staff, volunteers and partners can get involved and above all the benefit of why a change has been made.

5.3 The governance structure for the delivery of the plan links the lead for the workstream in the main CCAP to a lead officer in the Parks Team. Overall responsibility for the delivery of the Plan is aligned to the Parks Lead.

5.4 The immediate next steps will concentrate on settling the reporting mechanism for the plan and sharing the ambition ready for launch. It is anticipated that progress against the action plan will be updated quarterly with an annual report tabled at the Zero Carbon Coordination Group.

**Manchester City Council
Report for Information**

Report to: Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee – 9 March 2023

Subject: Bereavement Services – Approach to Environmental Sustainability

Report of: Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods)

Summary

This report provides an update on progress on the management of the delivery of cemetery and crematorium services, describing how the activities contribute to carbon reduction, biodiversity, and sustainability.

Recommendations

The Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee is recommended to consider and make comments on the content of the report.

Wards Affected: All

<p>Environmental Impact Assessment - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city</p>
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<p>The Manchester Climate Change Framework 2020-25 is the city's high-level strategy for tackling climate change. It sets out how Manchester will 'play its full part in limiting the impacts of climate change', a commitment in the Our Manchester Strategy 2016-25. The Framework's key aims are to be: 'cleaner, litter-free city, which recycles more' and '...play its full part in limiting the impacts of climate change and create a healthy, green, socially just city where everyone can thrive.'</p>
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Financial Consequences – No consequences arising from this report.

Financial Consequences – No consequences arising from this report.

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact one of the contact officers above.

Green Flag Plans:

[Philips Park Cem 2020-25 plan Dec2021.pdf](#)
[Blackley Cem 2021-26 plan Dec2021.pdf](#)
[Gorton 2019-2024 plan v1.0 Dec2022 .pdf](#)
[Southern plan 2021-26 Dec2021.pdf](#)

Biodiversity Reports:

[Biodiversity Update Blackley Update 2017.pdf](#)
[Biodiversity update Gorton Update 2017.pdf](#)
[Biodiversity Update . Philips Park 2017.pdf](#)
[Biodiversity Southern Cemetery Update 2017.pdf](#)

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the management of the cemetery and crematorium services describing how the services activities contribute to carbon reduction, biodiversity, and sustainability.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The Bereavement Services portfolio includes five cemeteries and one crematorium including Blackley, Gorton, Philips Park, Southern and Manchester General cemeteries along with Blackley Crematorium. It should be noted that Manchester Crematorium, located adjacent to Southern cemetery, is a privately owned crematorium and not within the portfolio.
- 2.2 Each year approximately 2,800 funeral services take place comprising of 1,600 burials and 1,200 cremations. In addition to this a number of smaller services take place in relation to the strewing of cremated remains and the installation of memorial tributes and features. It is estimated that cemeteries attract in the region of 500,000 visitors each year.
- 2.3 The overall cemetery infrastructure consists of 105 hectares which is predominantly green space within the City's neighbourhoods. There are in excess of 160,000 graves and over 480,000 burials have taken place since the first cemetery opened in 1837. There is 52km of roads & pathways, in addition to 18 buildings of which 11 are Grade II listed.
- 2.4 The cemetery infrastructure is a valuable green asset, containing in excess of 4,700 trees, woodland area and a range of gardens and features. Over recent years the service promotes these open spaces as local green assets for communities, whilst still retaining respect and dignity for funeral corteges and visitors to graves and memorials.
- 2.5 The crematorium in Blackley, which has three chapels and is a Grade II listed building opened in 1959. Since opening over 78,000 cremations have taken place, with a broad range of memorial features and gardens within the cemetery grounds. Although the 20-year-old cremators complied with current emissions legislation and have operated with Mercury Abatement Filtration Plant since 2009, they had exceeded their anticipate lifespan, were vulnerable to potential faults and have recently been replaced with new ones featuring the latest technology to minimise emissions and improve efficiency and reliability.
- 2.6 The cemetery and crematorium operation sites are managed by the Infrastructure team and the Customer Care team.
- 2.7 The Infrastructure team consists of 1 Operational Manager, 4 Assistant Managers and 28 generic operational staff, split across the North and South of the city. The infrastructure team are responsible for the burials and cremations, grave digging, grounds maintenance, horticulture, general maintenance, family engagement, partnership working with funeral directors,

as well as community engagement. To further support the service and to ensure continuity a new Grade 7 post has been created as part of the succession planning programme.

- 2.8 Bespoke training is available to officers. Three officers have completed or are part way through the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management Diploma and another 2 officers are currently working towards their L3 work based diploma in horticulture via an apprenticeship scheme.
- 2.9 The Customer Care team consists of 1 Operational Manager, 1 Assistant Manager, 7.5 Customer Care Officers. The team work across Blackley and Southern cemetery offices. The team deal directly with bereaved families, funeral directors, grave owners, and extended families of the deceased as well as visitors to the cemeteries.
- 2.10 Officers are trained to deal with burial and cremation booking and all associated documentation and legal processes, including legal grave ownership transfers, grave and memorial sales, complaints and maintaining legal and financial records. Like the Infrastructure team, 2 of the Customer Care team are studying for the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management Diploma.
- 2.11 Bereavement Services is also supported by the Cemeteries Friends Groups, who are instrumental in the work required to gain and attain Green Flag and Britain in Bloom status, as well as delivering projects that improve the various sites.
- 2.12 Bereavement Services also engage with Community Payback who under supervision support the service to deliver projects such as painting, litter picking and some grounds maintenance.

3.0 Strategy and approach

- 3.1 Bereavement Services are committed to supporting the climate change agenda and protecting/enhancing biodiversity within its service portfolio. This is not only driven by the internal service plan but also by attaining national, external accreditations such as Green Flag Awards, Britain/Northwest in Bloom, Cemetery of the Year, Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE) and Institute of Cemetery & Crematoria Management (ICCM). Current attainments include:

Blackley:

- Green Flag
- Northwest in Bloom – Level 5 Gold Outstanding
- ICCM Charter for the Bereaved Gold Standard Award

Gorton:

- Green Flag

- Northwest in Bloom – Level 4 Silver Thriving (this is a first-year application)

Philips Park:

- Green Flag
- Northwest in Bloom – Level 5 Gold Outstanding (this is a first-year application)
- ICCM Cemetery of the Year 2012 & 2022

Southern:

- Green Flag
- Northwest in Bloom – Level 4 Silver Thriving (this is a first-year application)

- 3.2 Each cemetery has a Friends Group who play a role in the management and maintenance of the cemeteries, bringing with them priorities led by local communities.
- 3.3 Blackley, Southern, Gorton and Philips Park cemeteries have all retained Green Flag Awards for several years. Although Manchester General is a 'closed' cemetery, work is underway with the Philips Park Friends Group to apply for a Green Flag Award in December 2023.
- 3.4 There are key criteria to gaining and retaining these awards with annual audits and inspections done by independent assessors. Criteria includes environmental management, biodiversity, and sustainability. More information can be found in the links to the Green Flag Plans for each cemetery.
- 3.5 The cremators at Blackley, which had been in operation for 25 years, have recently been replaced. An important element of this project was to maximise the latest technology available on the market to improve efficiency and minimise emissions from the cremation process, whilst at the same time future proofing the service by leaving options available to complement the cremators with potential greener options that may be available for installation in the future.

4.0 Cremator Replacement Project

- 4.1 In June 2022 Bereavement Services, supported by Capital Programmes and Procurement successfully completed the replacement of the three, end-of-life gas-fired cremators with two modern gas-fired cremators and abatement systems.
- 4.2 The cremators and associated equipment were supplied and installed by Facultatieve Technologies UK (FT).
- 4.3 Emissions were an important consideration, from an ecological perspective and in-line with the Council's declared emissions reduction targets.

- 4.4 Notwithstanding the newer technologies, the modern, well controlled gas-fired cremators installed, with abatement technology to reduce emissions, are far more efficient than the old-style cremators and provide significant reductions in associated carbon emissions. Based on the current number of cremations per year, historical energy usage figures and manufacturers data, it is estimated that a carbon emission saving of around 30 to 50% is likely,
- 4.5 It should be noted that emissions associated with the cremator electricity consumption (though only a small percentage of the total) will diminish as the electricity grid becomes more de-carbonised.
- 4.6 It is estimated CO₂ emission saving is 60 to 100 tonnes per year and over a 20-year lifetime 1,200 to 2,000 tonnes.
- 4.7 Current mercury emission reduction legislation requires a minimum of 50% of cremations to be abated through filtration plant. The new cremators, however, now provide 100% abatement, to future proof against further, stricter UK Government requirements and to minimise pollution in accordance with the Council's aims.
- 4.8 Previously due to performance issues with the old cremators, abatements had to be purchased, through the burden sharing scheme, to achieve the 50% legislative target. As the new cremators provide 100% abatement anything above 50% can be 'sold' providing an additional source of income generated by eco efficiency. Income received from abatements will be ring-fenced to support further carbon reduction initiatives in the cemeteries.
- 4.9 Whilst Nitrogen Oxide (NO_x) emission reduction is not a statutory requirement in the UK, the service opted to install NO_x (NO₂) abatement plant as part of the replacement project. NO_x gases are products of combustion which are pollutants known to affect health and the environment. Based on the current numbers of cremations per year it is estimated that around 700kg of NO_x emissions will be saved per annum (around 14 tonnes over a 20-year lifespan). Currently there is no legislation in relation to NO_x emissions, however, this is due to change soon, meaning the cremators have future proofed the service ahead of these changes.
- 4.10 Lower carbon alternatives to gas-fired cremators have very recently started to become available in the UK bereavement market. This includes alkaline hydrolysis (water) cremators and electric (combustion) cremators. Both these options are in the early stages of development and as such were not feasible for Blackley, due to timescale pressures to replace the old cremators and the relative newness in the UK market. In the case of alkaline hydrolysis, there is still a lack of water authority discharge approvals and general acceptance of this method.
- 4.11 It may be feasible to add a new, lower carbon cremator in the future to further reduce emissions from the crematorium, but this would be subject to an appropriate product becoming available on the market.

- 4.12 Excess energy generated during the cremation process is captured and utilised to reduce the overall energy usage throughout the cremation buildings. With the current cost of living and fuel poverty this is one method of reusing energy.

5.0 Carbon reduction initiatives within the cemeteries

- 5.1 In addition to the work undertaken at the crematorium the service has introduced a number of initiatives to reduce its carbon footprint over recent years. This includes:
- Electric vehicles – 1 buggy/coffin carrier, 2 x fully battery-operated vehicles
 - Electric bicycles - 2 cycles to enable operational staff to move around the cemeteries. These bicycles are available for staff to travel to and from work
 - Electric plant – 4 x ornamental mowers, battery strimmer's, battery hedge cutters
 - LED lighting in both memorial chapels at Blackley and Southern, with a further review being undertaken in the crematorium
- 5.2 There are also plans, currently in the development stage, to make improvements to the offices at Blackley. As well as providing a more customer focused office space these improvements will significantly improve the carbon efficiency of the building.
- 5.3 With over 4,700 trees across the various sites there is a significant absorption of CO₂. A typical tree can absorb around 21 kilograms of CO₂ per year. Over a lifetime of 100 years, one tree could absorb as much as 2.1 metric tonnes of CO₂, ensuring our cemeteries support the Council's carbon reduction aims.

6.0 Biodiversity and sustainability initiatives within the cemeteries

- 6.1 Several years ago, the service commissioned the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit to produce biodiversity plans for each of the cemeteries. These reports were reviewed and updated in 2021 and have been instrumental in the increased planting of trees, introduction of wildflower meadows, planting of hedgerows, placing of bird boxes and other wildlife boxes. Updates on the recommended actions are detailed in the Green Flag Plans.
- 6.2 In 2010 the Meadow Burial area was opened in Southern Cemetery and the Woodland Burial area was opened in Blackley Cemetery. The Meadow offers an environmentally friendly alternative to traditional burials, in a secluded area, in a peaceful place within the cemetery. The area is managed to encourage native wildlife, plants, and wildflowers. The Meadows is surrounded by trees and shrubbery, with minimal maintenance, allowing the area to grow naturally.
- 6.3 The Woodland Burial area is managed in the same way as the Meadow area, and includes several birdboxes, built with children from the local community. Memorials and headstones are not permitted on the graves but are marked with small, discreet numbered stones, embedded in the ground to enable identification.

- 6.4 Recycled materials from grounds maintenance activities are used where possible for making pathways and bedding plants are grown in peat free materials.
- 6.5 During 2020-21 the Council planted a significant number of trees across the city as part of its Carbon reduction strategy. Over 50 of these trees were planted in the cemeteries. This included a Beacon Oak in each cemetery, planted in a prime location and dedicated to the people of Manchester, those who worked, volunteered, and died during the Covid Pandemic. Each tree has a bespoke stone identifying its location.
- 6.6 As described earlier in the report the cemetery infrastructure covers a total area of 105 hectares. A significant challenge is finding the correct balance between the expectation of the bereaved when attending funeral services and visiting graves, remembrance gardens and other memorial features against the need to protect and enhance biodiversity, reduce herbicide usage, and create more natural areas with reduced maintenance.
- 6.7 The introduction of differential mowing, where mowing is concentrated on some areas with the surrounding area being allowed to grow naturally, has resulted in an increase in wildflowers and a reduction in maintenance, resources, and fuel pollution.
- 6.8 The service is continually looking for ways to reduce the use of herbicides, which are only used within the cemeteries for control of vegetation around memorial headstones and in selected areas. Waste materials such as chipped bark and leaf mulch is used as a suppressant around memorial stones to reduce the extent and volume of herbicide treatments.
- 6.9 Each year a weed programme is carried out throughout the spring and summer months, to control weed growth and to create well maintained, attractive environments. This programme also contributes to preventing surface damage and trip hazards within the hard surfaced areas, reducing the risk of expensive litigation claims.
- 6.10 Reducing environmental impact is a high priority for the Council and the city. Bereavement Services have adapted a weed management approach to reduce negative effect on the environment and improve the natural biodiversity in the cemeteries, whilst maintaining cemetery grounds to an acceptable standard for the bereaved and visitors.
- 6.11 Glyphosate is used as part of the weed treatment programme but is kept to a minimum and is mainly used around headstones and public areas. The use of all herbicides is kept to a minimum with alternative methods used where possible. A previous exercise, where no herbicides were used resulted in a significant number of complaints from grave owners. Benchmarking with other LA's has established that others use the same methods, on the basis that there is not currently a viable alternative.

- 6.12 Manchester's approach to reducing the use of Glyphosate, across all operational services, including Bereavement Services, was recognised by the Pesticide Action Network (PAN) as being an example for other Council's to follow.

7.0 Community Involvement

- 7.1 All the cemeteries have Friends Groups, which consist of representatives from the local community, local councillors, local agencies, and representatives from Bereavement Services. The groups have been instrumental in identifying, developing, and implementing improvement projects, including the creation of wildflower gardens, bulb planting, creation of new garden areas, volunteer clean up days and nature trails. Friends of Southern Cemetery have planted a poppy field in the cemetery to remember the fallen – this blooms each year.
- 7.2 Bereavement Services staff play an active role with the Friends Groups, often in their own time. Activities include maintenance of benches, improving, maintaining, and creating new spaces as well as attending meetings where decisions on new projects are collectively made. This has promoted ownership, mutual respect, and pride within the service.
- 7.3 'Children Grieve Too' brings activities into the cemeteries for bereaved children. The projects have been driven by the Friends Groups and as well as providing a physical space for children and their families it also offers support and signposting to specialised bereavement services. Nature trails have been introduced, including the 'Teddy Paws Trail' in Philips Park, with hidden animal carvings and themed rubbing posts, giving young people the opportunity to learn about biodiversity and connecting with nature. More recently the Manchester Little Library was introduced alongside the 'Children Grieve Too' project, see images in appendix 1.
- 7.4 Every November each of the cemeteries hold a Remembrance Service. Working with the Friends Groups they bring together stakeholders and local communities to remember those who have fallen. The Armed Forces, Police, Firefighters, NHS and members from the local community attend, along with officers from Bereavement Services.
- 7.5 Gorton Cemetery welcomes local school children who are supported to identify war graves, learning about the fallen and placing poppies on the graves as a mark of respect. These include children from Sacred Heart RC Primary and Wright Robinson College. In excess of 1,000 people attended services across four of the cemeteries – see images in appendix 1.

8.0 Waste and Recycling

- 8.1 The service actively uses ways to recycle. In 2023/24 there will be a full review of waste and recycling, including plastic waste used on floral tributes and flowers. It is proposed to undertake an awareness raising campaign to discourage the use of plastic wrapping and encourage the use of more eco-friendly products.

8.2 The service has a very close working relationship with Funeral Directors and meet on a regular basis. In 2023/24 further work will be undertaken with Funeral Directors to promote the use of biodegradable funerals and cremations.

9.0 Next steps

9.1 Review approach to managing waste and recycling, by reviewing current provision and measuring the level of recycling the service undertakes each year. Work closely with Keep Manchester Tidy colleagues to identify projects and volunteering opportunities.

9.2 Reduce the use of herbicides by increasing differential mowing and the use of alternative methods of weed control.

9.3 Increase the bio-diversity methods across the cemeteries by increasing the wildflower area, continued planting and diversifying hedgerows to include more species such as hawthorn, holly, blackthorn, which will assist in the acoustic dampening and air quality filters. Continue planting new trees/replacing damaged ones.

9.4 Continue to regularly review plant and machinery and replace with electric alternatives where feasible.

9.5 Support the various Friends Groups to sustain, grow and develop. Encourage new people to join the groups.

9.6 Support the existing Friends Groups at Philips Park to deliver the project at Manchester General Cemetery to gain Green Flag status.

9.7 Review the developments in the cremation industry to consider alternative methods such as alkaline hydrolysis and electric cremators. Liaise with other local authorities and peer groups to review other methods.

9.8 Seek to measure the carbon baseline for the service and set future reduction targets relative to the Council's overall targets.

10.0 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Project examples

Appendix 1

Wildflowers at Southern Cemetery



Children Grieve Too



Manchester Little Library



Nature Trail



Gorton Remembrance Service



Manchester City Council Report for Information

Report to: Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee - 9 March 2023

Subject: Zero Carbon Culture

Report of: Strategic Lead, Resources & Programmes

Summary

This report provides an overview of the progress that the Council's Culture Team has made in responding to the climate emergency, and how the team is working in partnership with the cultural sector to support Manchester's progress towards its 2038 zero carbon target. Manchester's cultural sector has been recognised nationally and internationally as a pioneer in working to address the climate emergency. The Council has worked in partnership with the cultural sector as well as exploring ways to further influence and facilitate change, in particular through funding arrangements. The Culture Team is continuing to develop this approach and to embed zero carbon in all areas of work.

Recommendations

The Committee is invited to consider and comment on the information in the report.

Wards Affected: All

Environmental Impact Assessment - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city

This report outlines how cultural organisations are working both individually and collectively to respond to the climate emergency and the city's zero carbon target. It identifies the ways in which the Council's Culture Team is working with the cultural sector to further facilitate and inspire action, using levers such as funding agreements to embed a zero carbon approach. The report highlights future workstreams including the development of further measures to assess future progress.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments

Supporting cultural activities and a cultural sector that benefits all the city's residents is key to the council's Culture Team service plan, with a stated priority to "Widen participation and access to culture for all Manchester residents with focus on people and places with greatest need." The Council works with cultural partners to understand the challenges and create better equity of opportunity with individuals and groups to increase access to culture and creativity. This includes informing and engaging partners in the city's strategy development, sharing data and consultation to encourage evidence-based approaches and facilitating connections with partners

from other sectors to support delivery and impact, as well as opportunities to share good practice within the sector.

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS/Contribution to the Strategy
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	The city's cultural offer is an intrinsic part of the economic and social life of Manchester and is interconnected with the hospitality sector, night-time and visitor economies. Manchester is the only UK City to feature in Lonely Planet's Best in Travel 2023 list of top 30 global cities and in which Manchester's dynamic arts scene is highlighted. The cultural sector was under significant pressure with COVID-19 restrictions and a Manchester Culture Recovery Plan alongside numerous sector-led projects have contributed to the city's recovery and return to a vibrant and diverse cultural offer.
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	The cultural and creative industries sector employs a wide variety of staff, freelancers, and creative practitioners. The strength of Manchester's highly skilled talent pool is a key feature in the city's attractiveness for inward investors. The sector generates a wide range of projects and programmes that nurture the talent and skills of the city's residents, provide pathways into the sector and support access to employment.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	The cultural sector delivers entry-level jobs and levels up educational achievement for residents. It also provides a range of targeted opportunities for training, volunteering and learning to support inclusive growth. The cultural sector also delivers bespoke and targeted programmes for the benefit of some of the city's vulnerable residents, using the power of arts, culture and heritage to connect, engage and support health, wellbeing and life chances.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	Manchester has a world-leading cultural offer for residents and visitors to access. It adds to the vibrancy of the city centre, providing key visitor attractions which engage local people and connect to the city's schools and education offer. It brings neighbourhoods together in mutual understanding and proudly showcases the diversity in our communities. Cultural organisations have showed individual and collective leadership in response to the climate crisis and the Culture Team continues to work with the sector to further develop climate action.

A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	Culture plays a vital role in making Manchester a city with an international profile, supporting our visitor economy. In response to the pandemic, the cultural sector has moved significant elements of delivery to a digital format, increasing opportunities for people both within and outside Manchester to engage in creative content and activities.
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Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

Financial Consequences – Revenue

It is not expected that there will be any financial consequences to the Revenue budget that should arise from the content of this report.

Financial Consequences – Capital

It is not expected that there will be any financial consequences to the Capital budget that should arise from the content of this report.

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact one of the contact officers above.

Manchester City Council Climate Change Action Plan 2020-25
 Manchester City Council Climate Emergency Declaration July 2019
 Manchester Climate Change Framework 2020-25 Updated 2022
 Report to the Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee: “Culture Annual Report”, 7 February 2023

1.0 Purpose of the report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the work of the Council's Culture Team in response to the climate emergency, and how the team is working in partnership with the cultural sector to support Manchester's progress towards its 2038 zero carbon objective.
- 1.2 Manchester's cultural sector has been recognised nationally and internationally as a pioneer in work to address the climate emergency. The Council has worked in partnership with the cultural sector as well as exploring ways to further influence and facilitate change, in particular through funding arrangements. The Culture Team is continuing to develop this approach and to embed zero carbon in all areas of work.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 In 2009 the Council launched the city's first plan for collective climate action, called Manchester: A Certain Future, and have continued to lead this agenda by working in partnership with our major organisations and through the establishment of the Manchester Climate Change Agency (MCCA) in 2015 and Manchester Climate Change Partnership (MCCP) in 2018. MCCP and MCCA are responsible for driving actions outside of the Council. The cultural sector (through the umbrella body of Manchester Arts Sustainability Team) have been one of the 10 partners in the MCCP from its inception.
- 2.2 In 2019 the Council declared a climate emergency. This announcement was made to accelerate action with new targets set for the city to reach net zero by 2038 and reduce 50% of direct emissions by 2025.
- 2.3 The Council is currently on track to achieve its target to reduce its own CO2 emissions by 50% by 2025, as part of the city's journey to zero carbon by 2038. However, the wider city is not on track to achieve its targets making the Council's role to support and influence the city's residents and organisations more important than ever.

3.0 Manchester's cultural sector and zero carbon: individual organisations

- 3.1 Manchester's cultural sector has shown leadership in responding to the climate crisis for many years. This can be seen both in the work of individual organisations and in collective action. The catalyst for change in the culture sector has been the ever-growing threat of the climate emergency, and the understanding that without action and a unified response, there will irreversible damage done to the planet and our communities.
- 3.2 Much of city's cultural activity takes place in Manchester's cultural venues – and as custodians of these buildings the cultural sector has worked to explore adaptation and to reduce emissions. In some cases these are Council-owned buildings where the Council's Estates team is working alongside a cultural tenant to make improvements – such as the recent £1.9million project to upgrade air handling, heating and cooling systems at the National Football

Museum which will make energy usage more efficient; and the recent upgrade to the roof structure at Z-arts prior to the installation of solar panels.

Case study: HOME

Since its establishment in 2015, HOME has been an exemplar for how a theatre and arts venue can operate sustainably. This stems from highly engaged leadership that embedded zero carbon policy and practice early on, with a commitment to reducing direct carbon emissions by 50% by 2025 in line with the City's ambition.

A standout achievement for HOME has been getting 100% of its staff to be accredited as carbon literate, the first arts venue in the world to do so. This has empowered the workforce by providing skills and knowledge to communicate climate awareness and drive change. HOME is one of three organisations worldwide to be accredited with the top status of a Platinum Carbon Literate Organisation.

HOME has also worked hard to green the supply chain. One way it has done this is in the café bar and restaurant, by offering seasonal produce from regional suppliers. The café has adopted a Zero-to-Landfill policy with all in-house waste composted, recycled or turned into biofuel.

HOME has also embedded a wide range of other initiatives throughout its operations, from a Sustainable Travel Policy through to establishing beekeeping on the roof.

Further information can be found on the [HOME sustainability page](#).

- 3.3 Whilst the total emissions which arts and culture are responsible for are much lower than some other sectors, the cultural sector is uniquely placed to respond to the climate crisis and to inspire, engage and influence individual people to take action. The Council's annual Cultural Impact Survey shows that pre-pandemic in 2019/20, Manchester's cultural organisations reached audiences of over 5.4million as well as 740,000 participants. The wider footfall of visits to cultural venues was over 7.9million. Therefore as well as exploring ways to run venues and activity with a reduced carbon impact and encourage sustainable travel, cultural organisations can use artistic content and creative approaches to engage audiences and participants on topics around climate change, climate action and climate justice.

Case study: The Hallé Orchestra - Goddess Gaia

During lockdown, when the Hallé's education programme had to virtually stop, the department looked at how to use the time in a creative way to produce digital resources for schools. One of those projects - Goddess Gaia explores the beauty and fragility of the natural world. The Hallé recognised that addressing climate change, saving the planet and looking after the environment was becoming an important topic in schools and felt that the organisation could make a positive contribution with music.

The project brought together composers, writers and animators to create videos centred around an animated character called Goddess Gaia, who is travelling around the world learning about the impacts of climate change. The videos have musical accompaniment composed for Flute, Cello, and Harp, and they are accompanied by guides for joining in through singing and playing percussion. There is also an extensive teachers' pack dealing with all the issues and containing a variety of connected schemes of work, which has since been shared across all ECO schools (a programme through which schools can become accredited for the work they do to engage young people on the environment and climate change).

Goddess Gaia is active in 150 schools nationwide, most of which are in Greater Manchester. Further information can be found on the [Halle Goddess Gaia page](#).

- 3.4 Many of the city's cultural organisations have provided accredited carbon literacy training for the employees. Manchester's Cultural Impact Survey for 2020/21 showed that a total of 427 employees across 28 cultural organisations have received training in Carbon Literacy from an accredited trainer, representing 35% increase in the number of organisations with trained employees when compared with 2019/20.
- 3.5 Manchester's cultural organisations also work closely with volunteers – in 2019/20 a total of just under 4,000 volunteers was reported across the organisations responding to the survey, with a total of 186,000 hours volunteered during the year. Ensuring that volunteers have a good understanding of the climate crisis and the city's zero carbon ambition is therefore particularly important for the cultural sector. Many organisations are now taking forward carbon literacy training for their volunteers.

Case study: Manchester Histories

In June 2022, Manchester Histories delivered a five-day festival exploring the history of climate change. The Manchester Histories team is very small and volunteers play a major role in delivering events. As the focus of this particular festival was on climate change, it was essential that volunteers were aware of carbon impacts on our planet. Therefore, each volunteer had the opportunity to participate in Carbon Literacy Training. This was delivered in partnership with GMAST (Greater Manchester Arts Sustainability Team), on a train-the-trainer basis. The festival's Community Engagement Manager delivered the training and can now continue to deliver the training for future events, providing a longer-term impact for future volunteers beyond the festival year.

The training was shown to give volunteers more confidence in having informed conversations with members of the public on issues surrounding climate during the festival. Volunteers were able to learn new things about the history of climate change, and they also had the chance to meet new people and engage with different organisations and communities to encourage others to be more aware of the climate crisis.

Further information is available on the [Manchester Histories Festival 2022 page](#).

4.0 Manchester's cultural sector and zero carbon: collective action

- 4.1 The cultural sector has come together to engage in collective action on climate change in a number of ways.
- 4.2 Nationally this has included "Culture Declares" – a declaration of the climate emergency by the sector which was signed by Manchester institutions such as HOME, Manchester Art Gallery, Manchester Museum and Manchester Histories. There are also a wide range of national initiatives providing support and guidance to the sector on how to respond to the climate crisis with a carbon reduction plan – these include Julie's Bicycle (a leading not-for-profit organisation in supporting cultural organisations to take climate action), the Theatre Green Book, Vision 2025, Greener Festival and Greener Arena.

Greater Manchester Arts Sustainability Team (GMAST)

- 4.3 In Manchester the cultural sector came together on the climate crisis as early as 2011, with the establishment of Manchester Arts Sustainability Team (MAST) across the cultural and creative sectors. MAST began by bringing together some of Manchester's cultural leaders and called for them to address the environmental performance of the cultural and creative industries, in line with the city's strategic ambitions.
- 4.4 The network meets quarterly to share experience and learning and develop ideas for collaboration and capacity building. Importantly it has also been represented on the Manchester Climate Change partnership since it was established in 2018.

- 4.5 MAST introduced member contributions to help fund small projects and by working with sector sustainability experts, Julie's Bicycle, it began annual reporting. This enabled the group to track progress against its 7% annual reduction target. A core group of 13 organisations demonstrated a reduction of 16% in energy emissions between 2012/13 and 2015/16, saving 1,400 tonnes of CO₂e. Julie's Bicycle has continued to work closely with MAST and the city to create a sustainable arts model that is leading the way both nationally and internationally.
- 4.6 The network has recently expanded to cover a Greater Manchester footprint with over 50 members, rebranding as GMAST, and over time the network has inspired other similar groups to be set up in other cities – including Liverpool and Leeds. GMAST also played a key role in the Manchester City Council led C-Change project (see 5.2 below).
- 4.7 GMAST reports to Manchester's Cultural Leader's Group, which is chaired by the city's Director of Culture. The Cultural Leaders Group brings together 40 leading cultural organisations in the city to discuss their individual and collective approaches to delivering the culture in Manchester. Many of the members also work together directly as part of GMAST. With the support of leadership from Esme Ward, Director of Manchester Museum, the Cultural Leaders Group co-hosted a Culture Climate Summit in January 2023 with GMAST.

5.0 The Council's Culture Team and zero carbon: role and achievements

- 5.1 The Council's Culture Team has a strong ethos of partnership working with the cultural sector, and for many years has worked alongside cultural partners on climate action. However, the declaration of a Climate Emergency by the Council in 2019 brought a new level of urgency to this work, and initiated a more proactive approach to supporting, facilitating and influencing the sector in this field. Some of the key achievements in the last few years are highlighted below.

EU URBACT C-Change project

- 5.2 The C-Change project was a collaboration led by Manchester City Council, with GMAST, the Manchester Climate Change Agency and Julie's Bicycle along with five other European cities – Águeda (Portugal), Gelsenkirchen (Germany), Mantova (Italy), Šibenik (Croatia) and Wrocław (Poland). GMAST was endorsed by URBACT as a "Good Practice Model" and the project worked to explore the model with other cities and to further build capacity in Manchester. This allowed the transfer of learning across Europe, elevating Manchester's status as a leader in cultural climate action and bringing in additional funding for the city.
- 5.3 The C-Change project brought forward work in a number of areas which will have a lasting legacy for Manchester's cultural sector and its efforts to achieve zero carbon:

- C-Change provided funding for Julie’s Bicycle to codesign zero carbon guidance for Council-funded organisations. This guidance was then finalised by the Council’s culture team and rolled out across funded organisations. Cultural organisations receiving Council core funding are now required to submit a plan that meets these requirements and to report annually on progress. A [Zero Carbon Culture Guide](#) was also created which provides a template for a carbon reduction plan and signposts key resources and support. (See Section 5.5 – 5.6 for further detail).
- C-Change provided funding for the creation of a Reusable Cups Guide (to reduce Single Use Plastics) for event organisers working with the Council’s Events Team, which now sits alongside the Council’s Sustainable Events guides.
- C-Change funded the development, digitisation and delivery of carbon literacy training for the sector with GMAST for staff at cultural organisations. The course is suitable for anyone within the sector including artists, technical engineers and venue staff with an emphasis on CEOs and culture leaders engage who can influence change. C-Change also funded the development of a training pilot for volunteers at cultural events.
- C-Change led to the creation of the Guide to Taking Action online training tool with GMAST. This provides deeper theoretical training around climate change and its impact on the cultural sector in Manchester. It is a free online training programme that is available for anyone to complete from the [GMAST website link](#).
- Through C-Change the Council’s Culture and Events Teams have both developed close working relationships with Julie’s Bicycle, which provides an opportunity for developing future work with this nationally leading organisation in cultural climate work.
- Further training was provided for GMAST members to encourage the use of carbon calculators such as the Julie’s Bicycle Creative Green Tool, to better understand their impact and develop zero carbon action plans.

Cultural funding agreements

- 5.4 The Council’s 2020-25 Climate Change Action Plan included a specific action on funding arrangements with cultural organisations. Within Workstream 5: Influencing behaviour and being a catalyst for change, there was an action which committed the Council to “build addressing climate change into the grants to Voluntary and Community Sector organisations and cultural organisations”.
- 5.5 To take this forward, the Culture Team worked with Julie’s Bicycle as part of the C-Change project to run a codesign process with cultural organisations. Working together these partners developed guidance on the requirements a funded organisation must meet. The guidance was finalised in early 2022 and highlights the key features of a zero carbon approach which are:

- Commitment – a public commitment to the city’s 2038 ambition and with senior leadership and ownership of the targets
- Understanding – an understanding of the organisation’s impact through a carbon footprint
- Skills – roll out of carbon literacy training for staff and other key partners
- Action – a carbon reduction action plan for the organisation
- Engagement – artistic and creative engagement with audiences and participants on climate change

The guidance differs slightly depending on the level of funding received. It was rolled out to cultural organisations in 2022 so that all cultural organisations in receipt of core funding from the Council must put a Zero Carbon Plan together which responds to the guidance, and report on progress annually. In the case of larger cultural investments, Key Performance Indicators within funding agreements track and monitor achievements and performance on zero carbon.

- 5.6 In addition to this guidance, Julie’s Bicycle put together a [Zero Carbon Culture Guide](#) for Manchester’s cultural sector. This provides a template for a carbon reduction plans and signposts key resources and support. It is a helpful resource for funded organisations but is available on the Council’s website as a resource for all cultural organisations in the city.
- 5.7 In Spring 2022 the Culture Team started a co-design process for the new round of Cultural Partnership Grants. This programme launched for applications in September 2022 and the funding will run from April 2023 to March 2026. Zero carbon emerged as a strong theme from early in the codesign process, showing the commitment of the sector in tackling climate change. It was endorsed by a subsequent sector consultation, and was one of the four priorities which applicant organisations had to respond to. It involved demonstrating an understanding of the organisation’s climate impact and wider influencing role, a commitment to addressing climate change at leadership and decision-making levels in line with Manchester targets, and significant progress in developing or implementing an action plan. Applications have been scored and assessed and those funded in the new portfolio notified of the funding decision subject to a due diligence process. The programme of funded organisations will be announced in early March 2023.
- 5.8 The Culture Team’s approach to funding requirements is complemented by those of Arts Council England’s core investment programme. Arts Council requires all National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs) to demonstrate that they meet the Investment Principle of Environmental Responsibility. Arts Council requires NPOs to use the Julie’s Bicycle Creative Green Tool to report and measure emissions.

Manchester Culture Awards

- 5.9 The Manchester Culture Awards are an annual celebration to recognise the very best of culture, creativity and the arts in the city - from the grassroots to

the international. Since its conception in 2018, the awards have spotlighted sustainability with a “Promotion of Environmental Sustainability” award.

- 5.10 In 2022 the award for ‘Promotion of Environmental Sustainability’ was won by Roots and Branches – an ambitious project supporting museums to play a role in addressing the climate crisis and social inequality.

Case study: Roots and Branches

Roots and Branches is a collaboration between the Carbon Literacy Project, Museum Development England and Manchester Museum, supported using public funding by the National Lottery through Arts Council England. It aims to train and certify 1,500 people from 300 museums as carbon literate over the next two years and give an opportunity for museums to converse, experiment and test new ideas for a more sustainable future. The “Roots” of the project are hosted at Manchester Museum, where a co-working hub for cultural environmental action will be created. The “Branches” will create an active environmentally aware and responsible sector. The Carbon Literacy for Museums Toolkit has been co-created with the museums sector and is available both online for to face to face delivery. Through this project, Manchester provides a focus for climate across museums nationwide.

- 5.11 Organisers of the Culture Awards worked to further improve the sustainability standards of the event this year. It was a conscious decision to have a digital-only programme rather than a printed programme for each guest. Travel data has also been gathered which will be utilised for future events to influence decisions on event location and to understand whether shuttle buses for guests would be viable to limit single car use.

Training and development

- 5.12 Over the last year the Culture Team has worked jointly with the Council’s Events Team on training and development for staff. Julie’s Bicycle have provided training sessions and coaching time as the teams begin to embed new zero carbon requirements within funding agreements.
- 5.13 The Culture Team has also developed a Climate Change Action Plan to take learning from the past year into a set of future actions for the team itself. The plan is structured around actions that the team can take in day-to-day work to reduce carbon emissions as well as the ways in which the team can continue to engage and inspire the cultural sector to take action.

6.0 The Council’s Culture Team and zero carbon: next steps

- 6.1 The Council’s Culture Team has made good progress in embedding zero carbon as a core priority and rolling out guidance for funded organisations. The Culture Team’s Climate Change Action Plan will be the tool that ensures climate action is implemented across the breadth of the team’s work programmes going forward.

6.2 Some of the key priorities for the next year will include;

- Building on collaboration with Julie's Bicycle, GMAST and the Council's Events Team, ensuring that working in partnership with and learning from the sector remains at the heart of the Culture Team's approach.
- Establishing a mechanism for collecting carbon emissions data for all of the Council's funded organisations, so that this can be reported on annually by 2023. This will include support for funded organisations to understand how to calculate their emissions.
- Providing support to the new portfolio of Cultural Partnership Grant recipients and exploring ways to bring additional capacity to these smaller organisations.

7.0 Recommendations

7.1 The Committee is invited to consider and comment on the information in the report.

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**Manchester City Council
Report for Information**

Report to: Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee – 9 March 2023

Subject: Embedding a Zero-Carbon Workforce Culture

Report of: The Assistant Chief Executive

Summary

This report provides information on the progress being made towards embedding a zero-carbon culture within the Council (as part of the Carbon Literacy journey).

Recommendations

To consider and comment on the information in the report and endorse the approach we are taking.

Wards Affected: All

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	This report is activity directly related to the successful delivery of a liveable and low carbon city through ensuring the City Council workforce and elected members are Carbon Literate and are able to create positive action in support of the Zero Carbon ambition.
A highly skilled city: world class and home-grown talent sustaining the city’s economic success	
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy, please contact one of the contact officers above.

Our Manchester Strategy – Forward to 2025

Manchester City Council Climate Change Action Plan 2020-2025

Manchester City Council - Climate Change Action Plan - Work Plan 2022-23

1.0 Background

- 1.1 In 2020 the City Council committed to ensuring that its workforce would be equipped with the skills and knowledge required to support the city's ambition 'to be Zero Carbon by 2038'.
- 1.2 In February 2022, the City Council was the first local authority to achieve Silver accreditation from the Carbon Literacy Project in recognition that 15% of the current workforce is Carbon Literate. As of the date of this report the City Council is still only one of three Local Authorities to be Silver Accredited alongside Dacorum Borough Council and North Somerset Council.
- 1.3 The following report set out progress that has been made in embedding Zero Carbon into the workforce, with a focus on the Carbon Literacy training and recent activity to upscale the training into service delivery.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 The '*Manchester City Council - Climate Change Action Plan - Work Plan 2022-23*' sets out activity to be progressed to support the delivery of the '*Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) 2020-25*'.
- 2.2 Embedding Zero Carbon in the workforce forms part of **Workstream 5: Catalysing Change and Behaviour Change** of which the following activity relates directly to the purpose of this report.
 - Deliver Carbon Literacy training to 35% of staff and all members, to work towards achieving Gold Carbon Literacy Accreditation by March 2025 (which is 50% of the workforce, circa 3,500 staff)
 - Develop and implement a monitoring and evaluation framework for the Carbon Literacy training
 - Work with schools and education settings across the city to support them to develop and deliver actions to reduce their carbon emissions

3.0 Our Manchester, Our Corporate Plan and Service Plans – the way we do things, not a thing that we do

- 3.1 In 2020 the Our Manchester Strategy was reset placing a more explicit focus on Zero Carbon at the heart of the strategy which subsequently became a priority within the City Council's Corporate Plan.
- 3.2 As a direct result of this, every year services within the council are expected to set out how they will embed Zero Carbon into Service delivery as part of their Service Plans.
- 3.3 This approach provides a thread from the strategy to each member of the workforce in relation to how everyone will contribute to achieving zero carbon status.

3.4 Carbon Literacy Training is provided as the foundation offer for all staff, ensuring they have the understanding required to take positive action. According to the Carbon Literacy Project it is estimated that attendees on average will reduce their carbon footprint by 5-15%. This sits alongside broader engagement activity throughout the employee journey from hire-to-retire, that is helping to build a Zero-Carbon culture.

4.0 Progress Update - An update on key progress is aligned to the actions set out in point 2.2 above.

4.1 **ACTION:** Deliver Carbon Literacy training to 35% of staff and all members, to work towards achieving Gold Carbon Literacy Accreditation by March 2025, which is 50% of the workforce, circa 3,500 staff:

4.1.1 Carbon Literacy Training was developed with The Carbon Literacy Project and was launched in 2019. The aim of the training is to ensure that staff have the skills and knowledge to understand Zero Carbon, the implications of climate change and the need to reduce our carbon output is the foundation of embedding Zero Carbon. In order to complete the training, participants must complete 1-days worth of accredited learning which is provided by one of our trainers and following a review of training evidence, is certified by The Carbon Literacy Project.

4.1.2 Having achieved Silver Accredited Status in 2022, the next target is to achieve Gold Accredited status by 2025 whereby 50% of our employees will be accredited as Carbon Literate. Currently 26% of the workforce are Carbon Literate accredited. By reviewing the Carbon Literacy Training Tracker, we can report that we are on target to achieve the 50% workforce target by 2025.

4.1.3 At the time of this report 2,201 people have been trained, which includes 93 elected members. 1,877 are certified as Carbon Literate with a further 324 awaiting certification from The Carbon Literacy Project. Workforce planning assumptions are that the council will achieve Gold accreditation by 2025.

4.1.4 133 members of the Council's Senior Leadership Group (SLG) have completed the training, and the remaining 5 will have attended by the end of March 2023. Please note, we aim that new starters are trained within their first 3 months.

4.1.5 We recognise that the capacity to attend training differs per service, therefore we are working towards setting realistic and achievable Carbon Literacy targets for 2023/34 service plans. Below is a Directorate breakdown of Carbon Literacy figures:

Directorate	Headcount certified	% of service certified
Adults' Services	82	5.5%
Chief Executives	231	40%
Childrens' Services	61	4.0%

Corporate Services	692	49%
Growth and Development	95	23%
Neighbourhoods	397	22%
Public Health	19*	37%
Elected Members	80	83%
MCC Associates	97	N/A
Total	1754	

* Please note that this service has a head count of less than 100

Since the release of the directorate breakdown from our intelligence team, a further 123 certificates have been issued by the Carbon Literacy Project bringing the total to 1,877.

- 4.1.6 In January 2023, 172 people attended Carbon Literacy training, 55 of those were new starters to the organisation, having been registered for the training through the successful new starter induction process.
- 4.1.7 In February 2023, 152 members of Manchester City Council attended Carbon Literacy training, 86 of those were new starters to the organisation.
- 4.1.8 From December 2021 to November 2022, the average attendance rate for Carbon Literacy training per month was 75. Since implementing changes to how the training is delivered, the average attendance has doubled per month. This further evidences the positive impact that changes to training delivery have had on participant attendance, which includes the return of a 1 day a week face to face delivery offer in the newly established & dedicated Training Hub provision on Level 3 of the Town Hall Extension.
- 4.1.9 It should be noted that the criteria for accreditation is based on current workforce numbers and therefore any turnover will have an impact on the overall completion rates. This has been accounted for in forecasting of completion targets.
- 4.1.10 Following the near completion of all SLG members having completed their Carbon Literacy Training, a new targeted training approach has been set for all G10+ members of the organisation to receive training. It is crucial that a top-down approach is embedded to ensure that Senior Leaders lead, endorse and support the de-carbonisation of our ways of working and service delivery.
- 4.1.11 Across the years of Carbon Literacy training delivery, Manchester City Council have supported other organisations in their Carbon Literate journey, these include training delegates from; Salford Council, Wigan Council, Liverpool Council, NHS trusts, and plans are in place to allow representatives from TFGM to observe our training offer. Supporting fellow public sector and partner organisations is not only a requirement of the Carbon Literacy Project Gold Accreditation status but is also an opportunity for Manchester to act on its values of being proud of what we do, work together and “own it”.

4.1.12 There are several changes that have been made recently to improve the training experience:

- The Carbon Literacy Project have provided a refresh of the training content that includes up to date statistics, policies and good news stories both at a global and local level.
- Following an internal review and assessment of customer feedback The Carbon Literacy Project completion of the training form has been integrated into the training schedule so that participants are able to complete their personal and team pledges whilst in the presence of the trainer to allow for any questions and support to be provided.
- The evaluation/pledge form has been transferred over from a word document to Microsoft Forms. The wording has been made more accessible and prompts have been provided for questions to stimulate better responses. This is an action taken based on feedback from participants who reported difficulty in completing the form on word and difficulty understanding the questions.
- A comprehensive Training Partner Programme has been launched within the HROD&T service. Volunteer trainers are invited to become a training partner for the Learning and Development team whereby becoming a Carbon Literacy trainer falls into the scope of this opportunity. Within the training partner programme, volunteer trainers are supported to deliver the training content through shadowing and coaching, they are encouraged to attend Presentation Skills and Facilitator training and finally they are able to complete the Carbon Literacy Facilitator accreditation – a formal certification provided by The Carbon Literacy Project acknowledging their trainer skills and experience. A formal agreement from the volunteer's line management is required to allow the trainer to deliver a minimum of one training session per month. Currently eight Trainers are part of the Carbon Literacy trainer cohort from various services across the council.
- In March, we are proud to announce that four of these trainers will undertake their Carbon Literacy Facilitator accreditation and will be formally recognised as experienced Carbon Literacy training partners.
- The current Carbon Literacy Lead trainer is taking steps to complete their next Carbon Literacy assessment which will qualify them as a Carbon Literacy Consultant. We will be the first Local Authority to have the highest-level accredited trainer.

4.1.13 Updates to the Zero Carbon Service Plan has seen an uptake in requests to the Zero Carbon Workforce Development Manager for Carbon Literacy service statistics. Following the release of this data, discussions are under way with service leads to forward plan and coordinate Carbon Literacy Training development days. This will see an increase in certification and more services developing and implementing more sustainable ways of working.

- 4.1.14 The Council is working with other partners, including through Manchester Climate Change Partnership, to encourage carbon literacy approaches to be adopted across the city. For example, this has included engaging schools and universities as set out below. Further work has been undertaken to tailor the content and format of carbon literacy training to these audiences in order to maximise engagement and impact. The carbon literacy approaches should lead to tangible and practical changes in behaviours within work and personal life that contribute to the overall reductions in the city's emissions.
- 4.2 **ACTION:** Develop and implement a monitoring and evaluation framework for the Carbon Literacy training
- 4.2.1 As stated in greater detail in a previous scrutiny report (November 2022), the monitoring of Carbon Literacy training data continues to be reported through the internal Booking App, the Carbon Literacy Training Tracker, and the quarterly dashboard. The improvement of our reporting systems enables a clearer identification of services training statistics which will influence and feed into the organisations Service Plan Carbon Literacy training targets.
- 4.2.2 Evaluation of the participants knowledge and understanding is captured through the evidence form which is assessed by the Carbon Literacy Project. Forms that do not meet the required standard are returned to be recompleted before being returned for re-assessment.
- 4.2.3 Further to this, an evaluation framework is being developed to understand the impact of the training. Consideration is being given to how we can measure carbon reduction across the workforce as a result of the training.
- 4.2.4 The Carbon Literacy Project are developing a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework which Manchester City Council can adopt or adapt into their own evaluation reporting.
- 4.3 **ACTION:** Work with schools and education settings across the city to support them to develop and deliver actions to reduce their carbon emissions.
- 4.3.1 The Zero Carbon Workforce Development Manager has procured the two-hour Carbon Literacy training content that has been created by GMCA. This hybrid online or face to face content will be delivered to schools Carbon Champions via the Schools Network Green Summit. Schools Business Managers across Manchester will be offered the opportunity to receive Zero Carbon Commissioning training as part of a wider workforce development offer. The training will be accessible either face to face or virtually.
- 4.3.2 Schools will monitor their carbon literacy targets within their climate change actions plans this will be monitored and evaluated with the support of MCC officers.
- 4.3.3 On 27th January 2023, Manchester Adult Education Service delivered a Development Day to its tutors that had a thematic focus around Sustainability and Environment. The development day saw 71 tutors receive part 1 of their

Carbon Literacy Training with Part 2 sessions delivered throughout February. The training was delivered by peers – 11 of which were already Carbon Literate Certified. MAES' ambition to be a fully Carbon Literate service has been a welcome aspiration and an exemplary case study of best practice. The service continues to embed sustainability and environmentally focused courses for adult learners and will see the introduction of community carbon literacy courses offered in the near future.

5.0 Summary

5.1 The delivery of Carbon Literacy Training continues to make progress and is on target to reach Gold Accreditation Status by 2025.

5.2 Senior Leaders in the Council will continue to be a priority group, with steps to ensure that new senior starters (alongside all new starters) complete the training within 13 weeks of their start/move date.

5.3 A programme of activity to embed a zero-carbon culture that compliments the Carbon Literacy Training has started. This includes:

- Embedding carbon literacy messages throughout the employee journey
- Aligning Zero Carbon with current priorities such as cost-of-living and supporting staff to be able to make sustainable choices that can also save money.
- Ensuring that staff know what they need to do, how to apply the knowledge to affect positive change in their personal life choices and can access the support to make changes in the workplace and/or the services they deliver.
- Ensuring that policies being refreshed or new in development are in support of achieving Zero Carbon, and in doing so are making it easier for staff to be able to play their part.
- Providing specialist and technical training to support significant change in service delivery.

6.0 Recommendations

6.1 Members are asked to consider and comment on this report.

**Manchester City Council
Report for Information**

Report to: Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee – 9 March 2023

Subject: Overview Report

Report of: Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit

Summary

This report provides the following information:

- Recommendations Monitor
- A summary of key decisions relating to the Committee's remit
- Items for Information
- Work Programme

Recommendation

The Committee is invited to discuss the information provided and agree any changes to the work programme that are necessary.

Wards Affected: All

Contact Officers:

Name: Lee Walker

Position: Governance and Scrutiny Support Officer

Telephone: 0161 234 3376

Email: lee.walker@manchester.gov.uk

Background documents (available for public inspection): None

1. Monitoring Previous Recommendations

This section of the report lists recommendations made by the Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee. Where applicable, responses to each will indicate whether the recommendation will be implemented, and if it will be, how this will be done.

Date	Item	Recommendation	Response	Contact Officer
22 July 2021	ECCSC/21/11 Climate Change Action Plan Quarterly Progress Report: Q1 April - June 2021	That every school on a main arterial route with high volumes of traffic have a tree planting plan included as part of the tree strategy to promote clean air.	A response to this recommendation has been requested and will be reported back once received.	Julie Roscoe Director of Planning, Building Control and Licensing

2. Key Decisions

The Council is required to publish details of key decisions that will be taken at least 28 days before the decision is due to be taken. Details of key decisions that are due to be taken are published on a monthly basis in the Register of Key Decisions.

A key decision, as defined in the Council's Constitution is an executive decision, which is likely:

- To result in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates, or
- To be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the area of the city.

The Council Constitution defines 'significant' as being expenditure or savings (including the loss of income or capital receipts) in excess of £500k, providing that is not more than 10% of the gross operating expenditure for any budget heading in the in the Council's Revenue Budget Book, and subject to other defined exceptions.

An extract of the most recent Register of Key Decisions, published on **27 February 2023**, containing details of the decisions under the Committee's remit is included overleaf. This is to keep members informed of what decisions are being taken and to agree, whether to include in the work programme of the Committee.

There are no Key Decisions currently listed within the remit of this Committee.

**Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee
Work Programme – March 2023**

Thursday 9 March 2023, 10 am (Report deadline Tuesday 28 February 2023)

Item	Purpose	Lead Executive Member	Lead Officer	Comments
Manchester Green and Blue Strategy and Implementation Plan, including annual update and a report on the Tree Action Plan	<p>To receive the annual update on the delivery of the Green and Blue Implementation Plan together with information on the delivery of the Tree Action Plan.</p> <p>The Committee have requested that this item includes discussion on flood risk management with reference to the Victoria North Development; the role of partners such as the Environment Agency and their response to incident of spillages and pollution in rivers and information on the Our Rivers, Our City Strategy.</p>	Cllr Rawlins	Julie Roscoe	
Zero Carbon Culture Guides	To receive information on the work being delivered in relation to engaging Culture organisations with their zero carbon journeys.	Cllr Rawlins / Cllr Rahman	Sarah Elderkin Louise Lanigan	Invitation to Councillor Hitchen, Chair of the Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee
Housing Retrofit	<p>To receive a progress report on emerging proposals and provide an opportunity for members to contribute to and influence this policy.</p> <p>This will also include an update on green skills development work. The Committee have also requested information on what support the Council can</p>	Cllr White / Cllr Hacking	Becca Heron / Martin Oldfield / David Ashmore	Update report to that considered at the 8 September 2022 meeting. Invitation to be sent to Cllr Johns.

	offer to leasehold owner-occupiers and tenants who maybe experiencing resistance from the property owner regarding installing energy efficiency improvements to the property.			
Parks and Open Spaces	To receive a report that provides information on the approach to open spaces to promote biodiversity and reduce carbon emissions. Members have requested that this includes consideration on the use of pesticides, including its use in allotments, woodland space and the interface between grounds maintenance and street cleansing services.	Cllr Igbon	Kylie Ward	
Crematoria and Cemeteries	To receive a report that describes the carbon impact of cremation, including information on the activities to promote biodiversity in cemeteries.	Cllr Igbon	Heather Coates Diane Murphy	
Carbon Literacy Training - Update	To receive an update report on the delivery of Carbon Literacy Training.	Cllr Rawlins	Suzanne Grimshaw	
Overview Report	This is a monthly report, which includes the recommendations monitor, relevant key decisions, the Committee's work programme and any items for information.	-	Scrutiny Support Officer	

Items to be scheduled

Item	Purpose	Lead Executive Member	Lead Officer	Comments
Carbon Reduction Procurement Progress Report	To receive an update report on the steps that have been taken within the council's procurements to support carbon reduction	Cllr Rawlins	Mark Leaver Peter Schofield	Update to the report considered 23 June 2022.
Local Area Energy Plan – Progress Update	To receive an update report to the report considered at the meeting of 8 December 2022. The Committee have requested that this report include, but not restricted to 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.	Cllr Rawlins	Rebecca Heron	To be scheduled for the new municipal year.