

Environment, Climate Change and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 23 May 2024

Present:

Councillor Shilton Godwin – in the Chair
Councillors Hussain, Ilyas, McCaul, Mumtaz, Razaq and Wiest

Apologies: Councillor Kirwin-McGinley and Wright

Also present:

Councillor Rawlins, Executive Member for Clean Air, Environment and Transport
Councillor Igbon, Executive Member for Vibrant Neighbourhoods
Councillor Ahmed Ali, Deputy Executive Member for Vibrant Neighbourhoods
Samantha Nicholson, Director, Manchester Climate Change Agency
Councillor Richards, Member for Longsight ward

ECCNSC/24/18 Minutes

Decision

To approve the minutes of the Environment, Climate Change and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 7 March 2024 as a correct record.

ECCNSC/24/19 Manchester City Council Climate Change Action Plan Work Programme 2024-25 & Climate Change Action Plan 2025-30 Development

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director (Growth and Development) that provided an update on the work programme for the fifth and final year of the current Manchester City Council Climate Change Action Plan (MCC CCAP) and described plans for the development of the next MCC CCAP for the period 2025-30.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Providing an introduction and background, noting that the five-year MCC CCAP 2020-25 went live following approval at the City Council's Executive Committee in March 2020;
- The City Council had a science-based 'carbon budget' calculated by the Tyndall Centre for Climate Research, noting also that Manchester City Council had in place a science-based target, set by the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research, to be zero carbon by 2038 at the latest, 12 years ahead of UK government requirements, and providing an update on this progress;
- The actions outlined in the CCAP were structured across the following five workstreams:
 1. Buildings and Energy
 2. Transport and Travel
 3. Sustainable Consumption

4. Adaptation and Carbon Sequestration
5. Influencing Behaviour and Catalysing Change

- Consideration of the CCAP Annual Work Programme 2024/25;
- Consideration of the approach to Developing a CCAP for the Period 2025-30;
- Discussion of the CCAP 2025-30 in terms of national, regional and local policy and funding context;
- Engagement activity proposed for the CCAP 2025-30; and
- Describing that during 2024/25, Manchester Climate Change Agency would be developing a new 2025-30 Climate Change Framework for the City. The Framework sets out how the City as a whole can deliver our shared Zero Carbon 2038 objectives.

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

- The need to articulate and understand this plan in the context of other Council strategies, for example the anti-poverty strategy as climate change needed to be considered as a social justice issue;
- Why was traffic signalling excluded from the reported actual emissions graph;
- The need to align this strategy with city wide strategies and the Greater Manchester climate change strategy;
- Recognising the significant challenge to meet emissions targets in future years, especially in the context of the current arrangements of a one year financial settlements for local authorities;
- Was there a difference between the term carbon neutral and zero carbon, noting the terminology used by the GMCA and the Council; and
- The need to communicate progress against the city's carbon budget and all communications regarding climate change needed to be clear and accessible by all residents.

The Strategic Lead, Resources & Programmes informed the Committee that the terminology referred to was interchangeable and added that the GMCA had also adopted a science based carbon budget. He said that traffic signalling emissions were captured and reported in TfGM emissions reporting. He advised that there was no disconnect between the climate change action plans adopted by GMCA, the Council and the Manchester Climate Change Partnership and Agency. He said that the Our Manchester Strategy was the overarching strategy for the City. He added that the Council was beginning the process of creating a brand-new ten-year vision for both the Council and our city. Major public engagement would be taking place throughout 2024 to develop the Our Manchester Strategy 2025–35 and the Scrutiny Committees would be scrutinising this work during the year. He encouraged everyone to contribute to the consultation. He stated that the Council's Climate Change Action Plan informed the Council's priorities and the subsequent decision making and governance. He noted the comment regarding the current funding arrangements and said that despite this the budget reports that were submitted for consideration each year included distinct consideration of delivery of Manchester City Council's Climate Change Action Plan.

The Strategic Director (Growth and Development) made reference to the purpose of the Council's Zero Carbon Coordination Group, an internal group of senior officers that provided oversight of the delivery of this plan and associated work streams.

The Director, Manchester Climate Change Agency stated that the Council was doing well in reducing its own direct emissions. However, the Council was responsible for approximately 2% of the city's emission and the challenge was to focus on city wide emissions. She said that the city had already spent 9.5m tonnes of the 15m tonne carbon budget (with the caveat of the lag in national data reporting). She noted the discussion regarding the impact of the pandemic on emissions, however even with this the carbon budget still remained off target. She also stated that resilience planning was also taken into consideration and that transport emissions fell sharply during the pandemic lockdowns. She said that the continued improvements in active travel and improvements to the public transport network with increased integration would support the reduction of transport related emissions. She said that the continued improvements in active travel and improvements to the public transport network with increased integration would support the reduction of transport related emissions. She commented that the Council had an important role to influence partners to implement change across the city using all available spheres of influence. She said that the Partnership provided a space and opportunity for collaborative partnership working.

The Strategic Lead, Resources & Programmes stated that Council was a member of the UK Cores Cities network, EU Cities and the Manchester Climate Change Partnership and was proactive in sharing learning and engaging in all opportunities to share best practice and learning. He said that Manchester would continue to focus on where it could make the most impact in regard to addressing its own carbon emissions.

The Executive Member for Clean Air, Environment and Transport responded to a Member's question regarding the proposed motion at the March 2024 meeting of Council that had proposed a banning of high carbon advertising across Manchester city council owned advertising units around the city. She said that further consideration of this had been given and officers had been asked to progress this. She said she would update the Member outside of the meeting. She further noted the discussion in relation to communications and messaging and said she was happy to receive any suggestions from Members on how they felt this could be improved.

Decision

To note the report.

ECCNSC/24/20 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.

The Committee noted that it would be discussing the work programme for the forthcoming municipal year in further detail in a private session following the meeting, and that an updated work programme reflecting this discussion would be circulated as normal in the papers for the next meeting.

Decision

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