

Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee – Climate Change Subgroup

Minutes of the meeting held on 22 October 2019

Present:

Councillor Wright (In the Chair)
Councillors Jeavons, Kilpatrick, Lyons and Shilton Godwin

Councillor Stogia, Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport

Apologies: Councillor Whiston

NESC/CCSG/19/01 Terms of Reference and Work Programme

For the benefit of the public in attendance at the meeting the Chair announced the Terms of Reference of the Subgroup.

Following consideration of the items of business listed on the agenda the Chair stated that she would review the work programme with the intention of arranging themed meetings and that she would also review the frequency of the meetings.

Decision

The Subgroup;

1. Agree the Terms of Reference; and
2. Recommend that the Chair review the Work Programme to structure themed meetings and to also review the frequency of meetings.

NESC/CCSG/19/02 Manchester City Council Climate Change Action Plan Update

The Subgroup considered the report of the Strategic Lead Policy and Partnerships that informed Members that the Council's existing Climate Change Action Plan 2016-20 set out the actions that were required to deliver a 41% reduction in carbon emissions by 2020 from a 2009/10 baseline, noting that the latest data from 2018/19 showed that the Council's direct emissions had reduced by 48.1% from a 2009/10 baseline.

The report noted that in November 2018, the Council's Executive had agreed to the establishment of science-based carbon reduction targets for Manchester which required the city to become net zero carbon by 2038. As such, the Manchester Climate Change Board (MCCB), along with the City Council and several other organisations in the city committed to develop a zero carbon action plan to be approved by the Council in March 2020.

The Council was now working on the production of a new 5 year plan which would replace the existing 2016-2020 plan and would reflect the more ambitious target and recent Climate Emergency Motion. The report provided an update on the process that would be followed to produce a new plan.

The main points and themes within the report included: -

- Providing a background and context;
- The Carbon Reduction Target for the next five years;
- The scope of the plan which encompassed reducing the Council's own direct CO² emissions but also influencing the city's emissions through all available policy levers; and
- The process for developing the plan and key milestones.

The Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport informed the Subgroup that the Council accounted for approximately 2% of the carbon emissions in the city and that these emissions came predominately from buildings, street lighting, the waste fleet and staff journeys, and this is why these activities were being targeted.

The Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport stated that whilst the Council had achieved a 40% reduction in emissions since 2005 the new target would be ambitious and was likely to require a halving of the Council's direct CO² emissions within the next 5 years. She further commented that the Council was working with the Manchester Climate Change Agency and the Tyndall Centre to understand how the airport factored into the carbon budget for the city.

In response to a question from the Chair the Deputy Chief Executive informed Members that the Zero Carbon Coordination Group (ZCCG) comprised of officers, predominantly Director level and was chaired by herself. She described that this group would oversee the development of the next Council Climate Change Action Plan which would be approved by Executive in March 2020. The Group would ensure that zero carbon was fully embedded across the Council's day-to-day operations and decision making process, and that there was sufficient leadership, resource and budget to deliver this agenda across directorates and services. She advised that political oversight was provided by the Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport and information on the agreed actions and work streams of the ZCCG would be circulated to Members following the meeting.

The Chair recommended that Members reviewed the twenty actions within the Action Plan Update 2018-19 that had been provided and ask any relevant questions of officers and the Executive Member. She stated that this discussion would inform the planning of future meetings of the Subgroup. She stated that she would then invite members of the public who were in attendance to contribute to the discussion.

Members commented that a glossary of acronyms should be included in future reports and consideration needed to be given as to how data was reported, including progress against base line figures and against what agreed target progress was reported. Members also requested that information on the RAG rating be also included.

Action Point 1: Deliver the Street Lighting LED replacement programme

To note the update.

Action Point 2: Deliver the Civic Quarter heat network

Members commented that this was a very positive development and this project should be widely promoted as an example of good practice to developers across the city. Officers noted these comments.

Action Point 3 and Action Point 4: MCC Estate Transformation Programme & MCC Estates Rationalisation Plan

Members commented that it was important to acknowledge the impact that the reduction in staff and closure of buildings had in contributing to the reduction in carbon emissions achieved, and enquired what savings had been achieved through proactive actions and interventions. A Member further enquired what assurance was sought that buildings sold on would be used in a responsible way to reduce emissions, noting that this should be a consideration and not just a financial decision when assets were sold. Officers responded by stating that these comments would be taken away from the meeting.

The Chair recommended that a report detailing all of the buildings that the Council owned and information on any efficiency work planned across the estate, including anticipated timescales for completion and anticipated savings be submitted to the Subgroup for consideration at an appropriate time.

Action Point 5: Where financially viable implement suggested actions from Energy Audits and evaluate impact on energy consumption and carbon emissions

The Strategic Lead Policy and Partnerships stated that Estates were reviewing how to achieve savings, including options for installing solar panels and heat pumps.

A Member commented that he had concerns in regard to financial viability, noting that it was important to understand cost, in all senses of the word and any evaluation should be undertaken in the context of the climate emergency. The Deputy Chief Executive commented that financial and carbon budgets were being considered. The Chair noted this comment and stated that it was important that the inclusion of the climate emergency was explicit in the Council's decision making process.

Action Point 6: Deliver carbon savings from the MCC operational estate. Leisure Facilities

Members commented that Leisure Facilities, in particular swimming pools were high consumers of energy, noting that the refurbishment of the Moss Side Leisure Centre had been completed, including works to increase the building's efficiency and reduce carbon emissions, and that other leisure facilities were being considered as part of the Carbon Reduction Programme. The Chair recommended that a report be submitted to a future meeting that provided more information on Leisure Centres, the

benefits achieved at the Moss Side site, including comparative data and how the lessons learnt from that project would be used in future planned work.

Action Point 7: Develop and deliver a MCC Operational Buildings Carbon Reduction Plan

The Chair commented that this issue of buildings would be discussed as part of a future dedicated themed meeting.

Action Point 8: Ways of working

The Deputy Chief Executive stated that whilst staff numbers had reduced it was important to recognise the impact the Our Ways of Working strategy had contributed to reducing carbon emissions. Members requested information on how this activity was measured against a base point and the Chair recommended that a report on buildings and related emissions and the work to mitigate these be considered at an appropriate time.

Action Point 9: Zero Carbon Manchester 2050

Members commented that opportunities for discussions with, and scrutiny of the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research in development of this activity be explored.

The Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport informed Members that the Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee had scrutinised the proposal to adopt a carbon budget that would mean committing the city to a target of becoming zero carbon by 2038 rather the existing 2050 target at their meeting of 7 November 2018. She stated that the Council was working on a plan to reduce emissions by 50% in the next five years. She stated that she welcomed the interest from this Group and reports would continue to be submitted to the Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee.

The Chair commented that the Climate Emergency motion included a requirement to have an open and transparent review to determine the earliest possible target date for Manchester to become zero carbon. In addition, the amendment to the motion required consideration to be given to bringing the present date of 2038 forward to 2030 and for a report to go to the Executive by the end of the year. She said that the Subgroup should invite the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research to a future meeting to discuss how an open and transparent review could be carried out and that she would discuss with the Chair of the Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee when it could consider a report on the 2030 date, given that the Subgroup was unlikely to meet again until the new year.

The Chair further commented that representatives from the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research and the Manchester Climate Change Agency would be invited to attend and contribute to future meetings of the Subgroup.

Officers responded to a Member's question by advising that further information on the URBACT (The Urban Development Network Programme) C-Change project would be circulated to Members following the meeting.

Action Point 10: Reduce citywide carbon emissions by 41% by 2020

Members requested that comparative data against the baseline figure should be provided to each meeting of the Group to assist in the monitoring of progress. The Deputy Chief Executive reported that consideration would be given as to how best provide this information to the Group in a meaningful manner, noting that the data sets that were used to compile this information were released at different times of the year, and that was why this was reported annually rather than quarterly.

Action Point 11: Reduce citywide emissions from domestic buildings

Members commented that the issue of emissions generated from domestic buildings represented a very significant challenge, especially with the age of the housing stock across the city. Members stated that the work to address this needed to be rapidly scaled up.

Members commented that whilst Registered Social Landlords had invested in programmes of improvements and retrofitting, the biggest challenge came from the Private Rented Sector. A Member commented that an assurance should be sought that Registered Social Landlords should use money they received to ensure all of their current housing stock was improved and energy efficient before commencing any new builds.

The Chair commented that an audit of all Registered Social Landlords properties in Manchester should be undertaken to benchmark the current standard of their properties.

The Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport informed the Group that Registered Social Landlords in Manchester had committed to the 2038 target and were working with the Climate Change Partnership to help achieve this target, adding that there were examples of good practice that could be shared across organisations.

The Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport stated that she was working with the Executive Member for Housing to discuss the approach to engage with the Private Rented Sector to drive improvements, commenting that it was understood that this activity could address fuel poverty and improve health outcomes for citizens.

A Member commented that this challenge represented an opportunity to develop and skill up a workforce to deliver the scale of retrofitting works required and opportunities for developing this should be explored with local colleges, universities and training providers. The Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport informed the Subgroup that a report entitled 'The Green Economy – Opportunities and Challenges for Manchester' was scheduled for consideration by the Economy Scrutiny Committee at their November meeting.

The Chair stated that the actions and activities to reduce emissions from all domestic buildings should be reported to each meeting of the Subgroup.

Action Point 12: Reduce citywide emissions from energy: Energy Company

A Member commented that that she was concerned that this Action Point was rated as Amber and that she would raise this in her role as Member of the GMCA Housing, Planning and Environment Scrutiny Committee.

Action Point 13: Reduce citywide emissions from energy: Identify and develop additional heat network clusters in Manchester

Noting the comments received when discussing Action Point 2.

Action Point 14: Deliver the Triangulum smart cities project

Members enquired as to how many non-electric vehicles the Council owned. Members also commented upon the challenge to deliver the necessary infrastructure to support an increased use of electric vehicles.

Members noted that Biffa were currently trialing the use of an electric vehicle, but questioned if existing contracts could legally restrain the wider roll out of electric vehicles. The Chair commented that all existing contracts should be reviewed in light of the Climate Emergency and options for improving them should be considered.

Action Point 15: Work with Transport for Greater Manchester to deliver a range of citywide transport improvements

Members commented that a dedicated meeting would be arranged to consider active travel and citywide transport improvements. The Chair recommended that representatives from Transport for Greater Manchester would be invited to attend and contribute to the meeting.

The Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport informed the Members that she was lobbying for a review of the Greater Manchester Transport Strategy in light of the Climate Emergency, commenting upon the need to decarbonise public transport.

Members supported this and commented that this activity also needed to be linked to the messages and dialogue with citizens regarding the issue of Clean Air Zones.

The Chair recommended to all those present to participate in the Transport for Greater Manchester consultation on proposed bus franchising scheme that was open until 8 January 2020.

Action Point 16: Work with partners to increase access in the city to sustainable food

A Member requested an update on the role and work of the Food Board to be submitted to a future meeting of the Subgroup.

Action Point 17: Sustainable events

Members welcomed the reported developments and the delivery of the Sustainable Events Plan. In response to a question from a Member the Strategic Lead Policy and Partnerships advised that this was in addition to any Social Value requirement.

A Member commented that Neighbourhood Investment Funding should only be used to support events that complied with this standard.

Action Point 18: Green and Blue Infrastructure

The Subgroup were advised that the Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee would be considering the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy at their January 2020 meeting.

Action Point 19: Participate in the Core Cities Adaptation Group to help adapt the city to climate change, including identification and delivery of actions for MCC

The Deputy Chief Executive acknowledged the comment from the Chair who reiterated the importance of this activity.

Action Point 20: Embedding carbon reduction objectives in policy-making

Members commented that this was a very significant piece of work to ensure that the ambitions of the Climate Emergency were delivered. A Member commented that consideration also needed to be given to reviewing all existing Strategic Regeneration Frameworks to ensure they were not contrary to the motion passed by Council.

In regard to a question from the Chair regarding the Local Plan, the Strategic Lead Policy and Partnerships informed the Members that all Local Plans had to be approved by HM Government. He further informed the Members that the Head of Planning, Building Control & Licensing was a member of the Zero Carbon Coordination Group and the Group might wish to consider inviting her to a future meeting to discuss the Local Plan in further detail.

The Subgroup then heard from a number of members of the public who had indicated that they wished to address Members.

Claire Stokes, from Walk Ride GM and Extinction Rebellion said that it was her view that the Council should review all existing policies and decision making procedures to ensure they complied and were consistent with the Climate Emergency. She further called for additional resources to be dedicated to progress this important work, advising that other Local Authorities had arranged for this and an analysis of the cost of not doing this should be undertaken.

The Deputy Chief Executive responded by stating that the Council was preparing for a new budget setting process and that the Climate Emergency Motion would be embedded into the options for discussion. She stated that whilst new and future

plans and policies could reflect the Climate Emergency the challenge came with historical decisions, however lessons could be learnt and inform future approaches. She said that resources were finite however two new posts had been created to support the Strategic Lead Policy and Partnerships.

The Strategic Lead Policy and Partnerships stated that staff, whilst not specifically allocated to this work were very enthusiastic to progress this agenda.

Jake, Extinction Rebellion Manchester stated that it was his opinion that funding for dedicated climate change staff should be made available, commenting upon the amount of money that had been allocated to the Factory Project and the Manchester International Festival each year. He stated that climate change was an emergency in the literal sense and the response to this should be immediate. He further commented that public transport links to the airport needed to be improved and car parks at the site should not be expanded.

The Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport stated that she welcomed the continued challenge from citizens and the passion and commitment demonstrated by local activists should be harnessed to deliver local, ward projects and engagement activities to influence behaviour change. She reported that she did recognise the emergency and she was committed to supporting officers and partners to respond to this. The Chair stated that it was important that climate change and the acknowledgment of this as an emergency should be embedded in all communications using appropriate language.

River, a citizen of Manchester said that it was his opinion that the consultation on the Princess Road and Medlock Street roundabout improvement works had not been adequate and had not made any reference to climate change. He further called for greater regulation of private landlords to ensure that the houses they rented out were passive, a standard for energy efficiency in a building, which reduced the building's ecological footprint. He concluded by stating that Manchester should use Planning legislation that was available to them to ensure that all buildings were required to meet this standard.

Vanessa Hall, a citizen of Manchester stated that planning permission for extensions on domestic properties was detrimental to the environment and planning permission should not be granted unless the whole house was retrofitted to achieve the passive standard. She further called for a political response to planning legislation and more use of devolved powers to drive improvements. She asked if any cost benefit modelling of climate change in Manchester had been undertaken, stating the cost of not delivering improvements would be significant. She also challenged the assumption that economic growth was a positive, adding that the Manchester Strategy needed to be reviewed in light of the Climate Emergency. She suggested that the Subgroup needed to meet more regularly in acknowledgement of the emergency. She further questioned the reported reduction in carbon emissions achieved by the Council, arguing that these were merely the result of a loss of staff and the closure of buildings as a direct result of budget cuts. She also stated that it was her view that the expansion of the airport needed to cease, there should be no extension of car parks at the airport, domestic flights should be stopped from the airport and the Council needed to be clearer in its communications about the

environmental impact of the airport on Manchester. She concluded by stating that a programme of planting more trees needed to be undertaken immediately.

In response to a question from the Chair regarding Carbon Literacy training the Strategic Lead Policy and Partnerships reported that approximately 700 staff had received Carbon Literacy training, including all members of the Senior Management Team and over half of elected members. Training had previously been delivered by Manchester Metropolitan University but now 6 Council staff had been trained to deliver the training and more sessions would be running in autumn and winter. The Chair recommended that a report on the delivery of Carbon Literacy be submitted for consideration at an appropriate time.

The Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport responded by acknowledging the comment made regarding the Princess Road and Medlock Street roundabout consultation exercise, however she commented that delivery of this scheme would improve cycling and walking facilities. She further commented that the review of the Manchester Local Plan would address key challenges of the city including the delivery of efficient homes and the 2038 zero carbon commitment. She said that the challenge remained with the existing housing stock. She further commented that it was acknowledged and work was underway to prioritise and accelerate the review of the decision making process across the Council to ensure the climate emergency was embedded into this process.

The Chair noted the comments made regarding the Airport and suggested that a future meeting of the Subgroup be dedicated to considering the Airport, and representatives from both the Tyndall Centre and the Manchester Climate Change Agency be invited to attend and contribute to the discussion. In response to the issue of trees and biodiversity the Subgroup were informed that the Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee would be receiving the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy, including an update on the implementation of the Manchester Tree Strategy at their January 2020 meeting. A Member commented that Planning consents should be used to ensure developers planted trees to support this ambition.

The Chair asked for an explanation of whether the council can review decisions we have already made as a result of the motion being carried. If it cannot, then the Chair asked for an explanation of the reasons why this cannot be done. The committee asked for reviews of Planning and Highways to be specifically considered and reports back to be made.

Decision

That the Chair review the Work Programme to agree structure themed meetings to address the issues that had been raised during consideration of this item.

NESC/CCSG/19/03

Climate Emergency Declaration Response

The Subgroup considered the report of the Strategic Lead Policy and Partnerships that provided Members with an update on the Council's response to the climate emergency declaration of 10 July 2019.

The main points and themes within the report included: -

- Providing a background, noting that in July 2019 the Council had declared a climate emergency which recognised the need for the city to do more to reduce its carbon emissions and mitigate the negative impacts of climate change;
- Information on the Zero Carbon Coordination Group (ZCCG);
- Information on the draft terms of reference and key priorities of the ZCCG;
- Information on the various workstreams of the ZCCG; and
- Information on progress to date against the specific actions agreed in the climate emergency declaration of 10 July 2019.

The Chair stated that the previous discussion in relation to agenda item NESC/CCSG/19/03 had addressed the questions arising from this report and that progress against these actions would continue to be monitored.

In response to a question from the Chair the Officers report that they were on track to hold events in each ward in line with the timescale stated in the motion

The Chair further requested that a copy of the letter sent by Cllr Paul Andrews to the Greater Manchester Pension Fund regarding the divestment in fossil fuels to be circulated to Members of the Subgroup.

Decision

To note the report.

NESC/CCSG/19/04 Climate Emergency and Community Engagement

Decision

To defer consideration of this report to the next meeting of the Subgroup.