

## **Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 23 June 2020**

**This Scrutiny meeting was conducted via Zoom, in accordance with the provisions of the The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.**

**Present:**

Councillor Russell (Chair) – in the Chair  
Councillors Andrews, Clay, Davies, Lanchbury, B Priest, Rowles, A Simcock, Stanton, Wheeler and Wright

**Also present:**

Councillor Leese, Leader

**Apologies:**

Councillors Ahmed Ali and Moore

### **RGSC/20/25 Minutes**

**Decision**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 3 March 2020 as a correct record.

### **RGSC/20/26 Update on activity under COVID 19**

The Committee considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer, which set out a summary of the current situation in the city in relation to COVID-19 and an update on the work progressing in Manchester in relation to areas within the remit of the committee.

The main points and themes within the report included: -

- Detailing the Public Health response, both at a Manchester and Greater Manchester level;
- Describing the financial implications and funding arrangements for the Council and the implications of this;
- Recovery planning, including a reset of the Our Manchester Strategy and workforce considerations; and
- An update on the impact of the pandemic to the following areas of service delivery – ICT, Customer Service Organisation, Shared Service Centre, Revenues and Benefits, Discretionary Spend including Welfare Provision Scheme, Audit and Risk Management, Capital Programmes and Commissioning and Procurement

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

- How did the anticipated budget gap of £157 million in 2021/22 compare to the historic cuts in budget the Council faced across 2011-2013;
- What areas did the commercial loss of £77million represent;
- There was a need to recognise the positive steps the Council had taken to help support those who were homeless during the crisis;
- Was there any further information on the lobbying of Government to relax the requirement for the Council to produce an in year balanced budget and Medium Term Financial Plan given the significant budgetary challenges the Council now faced;
- What role would Scrutiny have in the four workstreams that were being progressed in order for the City and the Council to prepare effectively for the recovery;
- In relation to remote working, how many staff had been working from home and was there any potential future savings that could be derived from this way of working going forward;
- What was the cost to the Council for the continued use of agency staff and what were they being employed to do;
- Was the Council ensuring that for those staff working from home they had been provided with all the necessary and appropriate equipment;
- Concern was raised in relation to the proposed cut in 15 FTE posts in ICT given the additional demand being placed in this service for supporting a workforce working remotely;
- What would be the management and governance arrangements for dealing with the impact of COVID-19 on the BAME communities and what was the plan for progressing the outcomes of the Race Review report and how would scrutiny be involved in this;
- How would the Our Manchester Forum reflect the range of views of Manchester residents as part of the Our Manchester Strategy reset;
- An assurance was sought that the Council had appropriate ICT security in place given that a larger percentage of its workforce were now working remotely;
- Concern was raised about the current inability for residents to contact the Revenue and Benefits service by telephone;
- Assurance was sought that the Council was still managing to process the exemptions for larger families outside of the standard DWP process;
- Further information was requested on the take up of COVID-19 Business Rates Reliefs and Grants and COVID-19 Discretionary Grant Scheme to small businesses; and
- Was there any ability to recover the cost incurred in providing the additional grant scheme to support families with free school meals up until the point that the government agreed a voucher scheme for both term time and the school holidays, including the summer holidays.

The Leader commented that £157million represented between a 20-25% cut to the Council's net budget and if this was to happen it would be difficult to envisage how the Council could fulfil its statutory obligations. It was clarified that due to the prudence of the budgetary decisions taken so far, the Council would be able to manage the projected short fall for this financial year but it would be the 2021/22 financial year where the real difficult challenges existed. It was also explained that

the biggest difference between this projected shortfall and the budgetary cuts that had to be made between 2011-2013 was the additional responsibilities the Council now had. It was also reported that the largest element of loss of commercial income was from the Manchester Airport Group dividend, and whilst this loss would not be felt in the current financial year, it would have a significant impact on the next two to three years and place budgetary pressures on the Council for up to the next five years

The Committee was advised that whilst the Council had been able to support a high number of homeless and rough sleepers during the crisis, there still remained a number of significant challenges in supporting homeless and rough sleepers, which the Leader outlined. He also advised that the Council was still awaiting an additional financial package of support from the Government to assist in continuing to provide support beyond the end of June and without this funding, the Council would be facing an imminent funding crisis to tackle rough sleeping and homelessness.

The Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer advised that Core Cities and Greater Manchester local authorities were pushing government for recognition of the additional costs in tackling COVID-19 beyond the current financial year. As well as this the Council was also seeking flexibility on its collection fund to enable this to be undertaken over more than one financial year and finally the Council was looking for further support in light of the loss of income. It was commented that an agreement had been reached with the Minister for Housing, Communities and Local Government that any local authority would have a conversation first prior to issuing a Section 114 Notice and it was important to look at how the Council balance its budget over the current financial year and how it could be achieved over the next five year time frame.

The Committee was advised that all Scrutiny Committees would be cited on the progress being made under each work stream which related to the remits of each Scrutiny Committee.

In terms of remote working, it was reported that 2,700 members of staff had returned to work, undertaking their normal duties. For those staff that were working from home, planned investment in ICT had had to be brought forward to enable some staff to work appropriately. In the longer term, it was envisaged that savings could be made from changes in patterns to how staff worked. Further analysis of this would be required before any formal plans could be developed and put in place. In terms of agency staff, it was explained that the majority of these were in council front line roles where demand was increasing, such as social care. The Director of HROD advised that one of the challenges around the provision of equipment was the provision of suitable chairs for staff working from home. It was reported that a priority list had been devised of staff who had special needs or required specific equipment to undertake their roles at home and it would be these members of staff who would be prioritised to receive the necessary equipment first. The Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer added that since lockdown commenced, the Council had issued 650 laptops, 620 additional mobile phones and 100 tablet devices to assist staff in working from home. It was also clarified that the reduction in FTE posts in ICT would not be permanent reduction but rather these posts would be frozen until October 2020 and then reviewed in the second half of the financial year.

The Leader commented that the Council had significant information on the differential impacts of COVID-19 on different communities. Public Health England was undertaking more detailed work on the impact of COVID-19 on BAME communities to fully understand why people from these communities were at more risk of COVID-19. At a local level, this was being led by Directors of Public Health, working together across Greater Manchester, reporting into the Community Cell set up by NHS England. It was reported that the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods had been requested to circulate the Action Plan arising from the outcomes of the Race Review report to all Members to keep them up to date on what steps were to be taken.

The Chair advised that it would be pertinent that scrutiny of the Action Plan would be an area that either this Committee or the HR Scrutiny Sub Group would place on its work programme for this Municipal Year.

The Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer advised that she would provide a detailed update to Committee members on the proposed reset of the Our Manchester Strategy and how the Our Manchester Forum would play a part in this. In relation to ICT security, it was reported that there had been a 400% increase in cybercrime since the start of COVID-19. As a result the Council had strengthened its cyber security team to ensure all appropriate arrangements were in place.

The Director of Customer Services and Transactions advised that the majority of calls made to the Revenue and Benefits team by residents only came about following contact being initially made by the Council to residents in relation to Council tax re-setting payment plans and payment holidays etc. Consequently a decision had been taken to stop this recovery process until July at the earliest after the Council Tax credits had been allocated to accounts. This would see approximately 36,000 residents receive £150 into their accounts and for some of the most vulnerable residents, this would cover the cost of their Council Tax for this year. It was also confirmed that the Council was still managing to process the exemptions for larger families outside of the standard DWP process.

It was explained a large effort was being made to contact businesses that had yet to make a claim under the COVID-19 Business Rates Reliefs and Grants and a lot of work had been undertaken in correcting liability details retrospectively. It was reported that the Council was still dealing with approximately 40 cases a day. In terms of the COVID-19 Discretionary Grant Scheme to small businesses, it was reported that the low take up of this was possibly due to the application process and the need to prove two elements of conditionality – loss of significant income and high rates/rental costs. It was reported that Manchester had had 1,259 cases which was higher than other core cities.

Furthermore it was reported that the Council had paid out approximately £250,000 on the provision of free school meals and this money was recoverable from schools who would receive government funding for this. This money would be placed in the Council's Hardship fund to help support other discretionary support schemes.

## **Decision**

The Committee notes the report.

### **RGSC/20/27 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.

### **Decision**

The Committee notes the report.



## **Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 21 July 2020**

#### **Present:**

Councillor Russell (Chair) – in the Chair  
Councillors Andrews, Clay, Davies, Lanchbury, Moore, B Priest, Rowles, A Simcock, Stanton, Wheeler and Wright

#### **Also present:**

Councillor Leese, Leader

**Apologies:** Councillor Ahmed Ali

#### **RGSC/20/28 Minutes**

#### **Decision**

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 June were approved as a correct record

#### **RGSC/20/29 Update on COVID-19 activity**

Further to Minute RGSC/20/26 (Update on activity under COVID 19), the Committee considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer, which provided a further update of the current situation in the city in relation to COVID-19 and an update on the work progressing in Manchester in relation to areas within the remit of the Committee.

The main points and themes within the report included: -

- An update on the phased physical return to work of Council staff and what future ways of working would potentially look like;
- Details of the progress and re-scoping of the Our Transformation strategy to ensure it supported the delivery of wider future Council objectives;
- The programme of work underway within ICT to support the new ways of working including infrastructure and capacity, end user device and telephony; and
- An updated position of the impact of COVID-19 on the Council's finances and budget.

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

- In terms of Our Ways of Working, how far along was the Council in determining numbers of staff who would continue working from home;
- Was the roll out of new ICT equipment and the move to Microsoft 365 still going ahead as planned and within the planned timeframe;

- It was asked whether there was any clarity on the methodology used for the second tranche of government funding;
- Further information was requested on the anticipated funding that the Council was hoping to receive to deliver the “shovel ready” schemes within the recovery plan of the Capital Programme;
- What projection did the Council have as to the percentage of pre-COVID19 Business Rates collection it was hoping to achieve;
- Members welcomed the trial by Money Advice Pension Service on the availability of independent debt advice and commented that they would like to support the publicising of this;
- Was there information that could be shared with Members on a breakdown of the nature of businesses that had received Business Rate support and where these businesses were located in the city;
- Was there any information on the take up of additional grants for Nurseries;
- Was there any estimate on the proportion of businesses that had still not applied for Business Rates support;
- Were any assessments being undertaken on the number of people over the next two years that would have difficulty paying their Council Tax and what impact this would have on Council finances;
- It was suggested that information on Council Tax support and debt advice was also shared with organisations such as the Citizen’s Advice Bureau to ensure consistent advice was given; and
- Had any communications in community languages been undertaken in regards to Council Tax support.

The Leader advised that the recent staff survey picked up on the fact that the majority of staff who were currently working from home were happy to continue to do so for the time being, but it had been identified that staff’s health and wellbeing had been impacted upon since working from home. It was anticipated that going forward there would be flexible working arrangements for staff to enable them to work part of the week at home and part of the week physically in work. In terms of the move to Microsoft 365, the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer commented that the move was still going ahead and was currently being tested within ICT before being rolled out to other service areas.

The Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer explained that the methodology being used for the second tranche of funding was on a per capita basis. For the recently received third tranche the method used to determine the level of additional government funding took into account population, deprivation and some elements of the foundation formula. Government had shared the full formula with the Council and it had been reassuring to see that deprivation was a driver of spend.

The Leader commented that £52 million of funding had been received for a number of Combined Authority schemes, two of which were located in Manchester, which totalled £31 million.

The Deputy City Treasurer advised that the Council was currently forecasting that Business Rates collections were approximately 19% down on pre-COVID19 figures although due to deferrals early in the year it was difficult to draw any conclusion from this and this position was improving each month. For the overall financial year the

Council was forecasting a 10% reduction in the collection of Business Rates which equated to around £23.6million. She also advised that a breakdown of the nature of the businesses that have been supported with their Business Rates on a constituency level could be provided to Members.

The Director of Customer Services and Transactions advised that in terms of Nurseries, the Council was able to pay full relief to non-Manchester nurseries or where the Council didn't pay their business rates, which equated to approx. 91 nurseries and equated to just over £1million. There was also another group of nurseries that had a rateable value below £15,000 that were able to claim a grant of £10,000 and then for those nurseries that didn't qualify for this grant, 10 nurseries were able to claim £5,000 through the discretionary scheme.

The Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer commented that the Council had been working hard to get in touch with all businesses to make them aware of the Business Rate grant support available to them and advised that payment rates were at approximately 90%.

In terms of Council Tax and Council Tax support it was reported that the Council was looking at these arrangements, which included the smoothing of the Council Tax deficit over three years and some form of risk share on the collection fund position, but was awaiting the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review before any final decisions could be made. It was acknowledged that there would be an increase in the demand for Council Tax support in future years due to the impact of COVID19. Furthermore, the Deputy City Treasurer highlighted that the Council was currently anticipating a 6% shortfall in Council Tax collection. This, plus the full year effect of the Council Tax Support Scheme and increases in bad debt provision was resulting in the Council looking at a potential shortfall of £20million in Council Tax collection.

## **Decisions**

The Committee:-

- (1) Notes the update.
- (2) Requests that a breakdown of the nature of the businesses that have been supported with their Business Rates on a constituency level be provided to Members.

## **RGSC/20/30 Global Monitoring report**

The Committee considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer which outlined the projected outturn position for 2020/21, based on spend and income as at the end of May 2020 and future projections.

The main points and themes within the report included:-

- An overview of COVID-19 financial implications, which included a forecasted outturn position of £5.476m deficit which was anticipated to be balanced by government funding;
- Details of additional Central Government funding for COVID-19 response;

- An overview of the overall forecast financial position 2020/21;
- Measures that would be taken to balance the budget in 2020/21; and
- Proposals for the use of budgets to be allocated, grants in addition to those already planned, proposed virements, increases to Directorate budgets and the use of reserves in addition to that already planned, which all required Executive approval.

The report and proposals contained within would also be considered by the Executive at its meeting on 29 July 2020.

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

- Was the £4.837million allocated to rolling out of a local Test and Trace programme sufficient
- Would local authority staff be included in the recent announcement by government of public sector worker pay rises and if so would this be built into the Council's projected budget;
- It was suggested that the Council pro-actively communicate with Manchester residents on the true impact of COVID19 on the Council's future financial arrangements;
- What, if any, assurance was being given by the Government that they would be reimbursing the Council for the costs it had incurred in tackling the impact of COVID19;
- Was there any indication that there would be financial support from Government from the loss of revenue income from Manchester Airport;
- It was concerning that the deficit of approximately £19 million within the HRA would result in the level of reserves being exhausted over the course of the next three years;
- Why was there such a significant underspend in terms of the Children's budget for No Recourse for Public Funds (NPRF), how many children in the city were within families with no recourse to public funds, was it considered generally appropriate to treat this underspend as a saving given the doubt recently cast over the legality of the NPRF scheme, and had any equality impact assessments been undertaken in using this underspend as a potential saving;
- Concern was expressed that savings were being proposed around unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and clarification was sought as to how these savings were being proposed; and
- Were any additional resources going to be provided to support the Section 21 Team when the suspension of evictions ended on 23 August 2020.

The Leader advised that the £4.837million was allocated for the tracing element of the project as the funding for the testing element was separate from this amount. He added that this money was adequate in so much as it covered cost until the end of the year, but further funding would be required to continue beyond the end of the year. In terms of the recent government announcement of pay rises to public sector workers, he advised that it would not include local government workers, but what was not clear was whether the pay rises would be fully funded by the Government, as in previous occasions it had not been and had been left to local authorities to make up the difference.

The Committee was advised that there was no assurance coming from Government that they would reimburse the total expenditure the Council had made in tackling the impact of COVID19 and that their position on funding to local authorities from the start of the outbreak had changed from supporting no matter what to sharing the burden of cost.

The Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer reported that the Government had not to date provided any financial support to the Council for the loss of revenue income from Manchester Airport. The Leader added that the Council would continue to lobby the government on this issue as the real financial impact of this loss would not be felt until the 2021/22 financial year.

The Deputy City Treasurer commented that the forecasted £18.961million deficit on the HRA was not attributed to the impact of COVID19, and was in relation to planned investment in capital works in the HRA which would be funded through reserves. The COVID19 impact on the HRA was closer to approximately £2million.

The Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer agreed to provide a response to the questions posed around No Recourse to Public Funds following the meeting. The Leader added that the Council, through the LGA, regularly lobbied government about the inadequacy of the amount received to support adults with NPRF.

The Deputy City Treasurer advised that the underspends around unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children would be achieved through additional grant funding from Government. This would now cover some of the additional costs in this area that the Council had been expecting to have to fund at the time the budget was set.

The Leader commented that he received a weekly report from the Council's Homelessness team which was reporting an increase in referrals from families and individuals, but the reason for this was not due to evictions. Government had announced national funding to tackle homelessness but it was not clear how the Council could access this at present.

## **Decisions**

The Committee:-

- (1) Notes the report
- (2) Places on record its dissatisfaction with Government for its failure to recognise all key workers in its announcement of public sector pay rises, including local authority staff, who have been and continue to work tirelessly throughout the COVID19 pandemic
- (3) Requests that the Committee is provided with a briefing note on the questions asked around No Recourse to Public Funds.

## **RGSC/20/31 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.

## **Decision**

The Committee notes the report.

## **Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 1 September 2020**

**This Scrutiny meeting was conducted via Zoom, in accordance with the provisions of the The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.**

**Present:**

Councillor Russell (Chair) – in the Chair  
Councillors Ahmed Ali, Andrews, Clay, Davies, Lanchbury, Moore, B Priest, Rowles, A Simcock, Wheeler and Wright

**Also present:**

Councillor Akbar, Executive Member for Neighbourhoods  
Councillor Bridges, Executive Member for Children and Schools  
Councillor Leese, Leader

**Apologies:** Councillor Stanton

### **RGSC/20/32 Minutes**

#### **Decision**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 21 July 2020 as a correct record.

### **RGSC/20/33 Independent Race Review update**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of HR and OD, which provided an update on the Council's response to issues relating to race equality, and in particular to the review carried out last year of race relations and discrimination within the City Council. The report included an update on the work being carried out by a working group established to progress the recommendations, and of consultation with Trades Unions.

The key point and themes in the report included:-

- The review had found that, there were issues that needed to be addressed by the Council in order to ensure fairness and equity for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff in the workforce;
- Whilst wanting to make swift progress on the issues identified, it was also identified that the Council lacked a strategic and coherent approach to workforce equalities generally.
- A commitment had been made to produce a Workforce Equalities Strategy for the Council for consideration at the meeting of the Executive in November 2020;
- An overview of the key drivers in taking the recommendations of the Race Review forward;

- The established working group consisted of over 40 employees from across the organisation who were dedicating 1 day per week over a 12 week period to ensure there was adequate resource to give focus to this work and to ensure real impact could be achieved in this initial 3 month period;
- The working group was balanced in terms of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff and those staff who had responsibility for creating the systems, policies and culture which enabled progress to be made.
- The 27 recommendations from the original race review have been grouped into 5 broad themes –
  - Monitoring
  - Developing Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff
  - Engagement and communications
  - HR policies
  - Leadership
- The parallel role Trade Unions would play in supporting the work of the Working Group; and.
- An overview of key progress to date

Officers from the working group also attended the meeting to update the Committee on the areas of work which they were leading on.

What followed was a lengthy discussion by the Committee on the content of the report and the updates provided by Officers from the Working Group.

Some of the key points that arose from the Committees discussions were:-

- How had the membership of the working group been determined; was the ethnicity breakdown of the whole group known or being monitored and if not why not; and where Elected Members part of the group and again, if not why not;
- What steps were taken to ensure staff of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds had the opportunities to be part of the working group;
- Disappointment was expressed that Cllr Ahmed Ali had not been invited to meetings of the working group, given he was the lead Member for Race Equality within the Labour Group;
- Questions were asked as to whether any Black councillors had been invited to take part;
- Had Trade Union representatives been invited to take part in the working group;
- It was important that the working group included “critical voices” from all levels of the organisation, not just senior officers;
- It was questioned as to how ‘Agile’ was selected as the methodology to progress the work of the working group;
- Clarity was sought as to what would happen once the working group concluded;
- It was requested that all equality leads were provided with quarterly intelligence in order to make appropriate observations;
- Would race awareness training also be offered to Elected Members as well as Officers;
- It was suggested that intersectionality needed to be embedded in all Council policies and procedures;

- Why had a range of equality groups have been re-established
- Were figures kept on the number of staff referred for compulsory equality training;
- Clarity was sought on the governance arrangements of the working group for delivering in the recommendations of the review
- It was hoped that Officers on the working group felt that Elected Members were taking the issue of tackling race inequalities within the Council seriously;
- It was hoped that staff were not made to feel that they were compelled to tell their manager about any protected characteristic they may align themselves to;
- Elected Members needed to ensure that their contribution to addressing race inequalities resulted in actual actions and material difference; and
- whilst acknowledging that the Race Review focussed on the Council and its staff, it was suggested that the next stage should also include a focus on how the council engaged and listened to Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents across the city to address inequalities and put in place non-discriminatory policies;

The Director of HR&OD explained that the makeup of the working group had not been formally monitored but the breakdown of ethnicity was approximately a 50/50 split between white and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic officers. It was explained that that the membership of the group had come from various sources, including publicising in the staff broadcast, staff putting themselves forward and getting permission from their managers and in some cases people had been identified by SMT. It had been considered not appropriate to ask people to complete a monitoring form if they had been approved by their manager to be part of the working group, with no one being excluded because of their ethnicity.

It was explained that as it was an officer working group, no Elected Members had formally been appointed, however, the Executive Members for Neighbourhoods and Children and Schools had attended meetings of the group. The Executive Member for Neighbourhoods advised that Cllr Ahmed Ali would be invited to future meeting of the working group. He added that whilst the important role Elected Members needed to play in holding officers and Executive Members to account in addressing the issues identified by the review was acknowledged, it was reminded that as the issues were staff issues, it was appropriate that the action plan needed to be dictated and set by staff themselves. The City Solicitor added that as it was a staff working group and due to the intensive frequency of meetings, it was felt that the inclusion of Elected Members in the working group would alter how officers wanted the group to work.

The Director of HR&OD advised there was a standing invitation to Trade Union representative to join the working group, however they felt they wanted a parallel consultation process which had commenced by looking at the over representation of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff subject to disciplinary proceedings, which was acknowledged as an issue this Committee had raised concerns about previously. An overview of the work being undertaken by Officers with the Casework team in addressing this issue was also given. In light of this, the Chair suggested that the Committee received a further update on the length of suspensions and misconduct process.

The Director of HR&OD advised that she had chosen the 'Agile' methodology based on previous experience. She commented that this type of methodology was good at producing outcomes and it was also felt that it would be a good developmental exercise for staff in the working group and really allowed the voice of others to come through as part of the work. She supported the point raised around intersectionality and advised that if the Committee felt race awareness training would be beneficial to Elected Members this could be arranged. The Leader commented that the equality groups had previously been disbanded at a time between 2010 and 2015 when the Council was facing unprecedented levels of cuts to its services and staff due to lack of funding from government which had also resulted in a link of these groups to an SMT lead.

The Director of HR&OD confirmed that she was the lead officer for the working group and detailed the reporting arrangements to SMT and the Lead Executive Members. All of the work would be captured in a report to Executive in November forming part of a wider workforce equalities strategy. It was also reported that the senior project manager in HR (Lorna Williams) had been recruited to take forward this work over the next 12 months to ensure it was sustained.

The Director of HR&OD acknowledged the point around how the council engaged and listened to Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents across the city but reminded Members that this work was around the equality of the workforce and having a workforce equality strategy and the interaction with residents was probably an area that the Equalities and Communities Scrutiny Committee would pick up.

## **Decisions**

The Committee:-

- (1) Requests that all Elected Members be provided with the opportunity to undertake race equality training
- (2) Notes that the Chair will consult with Officers as to how Scrutiny can most successfully continue to support and scrutinise the work undertaken by the Working Group and progress in this area;
- (3) Requests a further report on the length of staff suspensions and the council's misconduct process is added to the Committee's Work Programme.
- (4) Thanks all the Officers for their contribution to this item.

## **RGSC/20/34 HROD Update**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of HR&OD, which provided an overview of the support to staff during the Council's response to the COVID19 pandemic and an update of the work to develop management standards as part of the Our Ways of Working programme.

The key points and themes in the report included:-

- An update on ICT support to enable staff to work from home;
- Communications and engagement with staff;
- Health and Wellbeing support

- The current position of numbers of staff working on site and the work going into prepare for more staff to return;
- An update on those staff classed as vulnerable or shielding;
- Future ways of working based on a maximum 30% of the workforce in the building at any one time; and
- The steps being taken to strengthen accountability

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

- Concern was expressed that the 62 staff who were classed as shielding and unable to work from home were being managed under the Council's management of attendance policy;
- Was the ambition to have all staff returning to work by October too ambitious given that most staff felt comfortable working from home;
- Why were staff who were not comfortable working from home, especially BAME and disabled staff, still awaiting receipt of appropriate equipment to enable them to work from home more comfortably;
- How many Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff were in the 373 within the 'vulnerable' or 'living with someone that is shielding' categories; and
- Were the any common/predominant issues being raised through the Employee Assistance Programme.

The Deputy Director of HR&OD advised that the 62 staff referred to in the report were not able to work from home due to the nature of their jobs. It was clarified that at present anyone who had been classed as shielding and unable to work from home were not being managed by attendance and all were going through individual risk assessments to look at their specific circumstances, which would include a referral to Occupational Health. The ambition to return all staff to work would be on a much reduced basis (approx. 30%) and would equate to staff having access to work on site approximately one or two days a week. The Committee was also advised that all staff working from home had been provided with the necessary technology to enable them to work (laptop, mobile phone etc), and the provision of equipment for those who had specific medical, such as chairs, was being facilitated.

The Deputy Director of HR&OD agreed to provide a breakdown of the 373 staff that fell within the 'vulnerable' or 'living with someone that is shielding' categories and advised that the Council was informed of themes by the EAP providers but not specific details. This alongside feedback from managers and support groups helped identify predominant areas of concern felt by staff which HR were then able to look at and put plans in place to address.

## **Decisions**

The Committee:-

- (1) Notes the report.
- (2) Places on record its thanks to all staff within HR during the pandemic.
- (3) Request that the Deputy Director of HR&OD circulates the information on the ethnicity breakdown of the 373 staff that fell within the 'vulnerable' or 'living with someone that is shielding' categories to all Committee Members.

### **RGSC/20/35 Our Manchester Strategy re-set**

#### **Decision**

The Committee agrees to defer this item to its next meeting on 6 October 2020

### **RGSC/20/36 Overview Report**

The Committee considered a 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.

#### **Decisions**

The Committee:-

- (1) Notes the report;
- (2) Agrees the Work Programme as submitted

## Health Scrutiny Committee

### Minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2020

**This Scrutiny meeting was conducted via Zoom, in accordance with the provisions of the The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.**

**Present:**

Councillor Farrell – in the Chair  
Councillors Clay, Curley, Holt, Newman, O'Neil, Riasat and Wills

**Apologies:** Councillor Mary Monaghan

**Also present:**

Councillor Craig, Executive Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing  
Nick Gomm, Director of Corporate Affairs, Manchester Health and Care Commissioning  
Claire Yarwood, Chief Finance Officer MHCC  
Dr Mainisha Kumar, Medical Director MHCC

**HSC/20/20                      Minutes**

**Decision**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 3 March 2020 as a correct record.

**HSC/20/21                      COVID-19 update**

The Committee considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer that provided a brief summary of the current situation in the city in relation to COVID-19 and an update on the work progressing in Manchester in relation to areas within the remit of this committee.

The main points and themes within the report included: -

- Detailing the Public Health response, both at a Manchester and Greater Manchester level;
- Describing the financial implications and funding arrangements for the City Council and the implications of this;
- Recovery planning, including a reset of the Our Manchester Strategy and workforce considerations; and
- An update on Adult Social Care.

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

- Welcoming the regular updates Members had received outside of the formal scrutiny meeting structure;

- Noting the significant impact COVID-19 had on the Council's budget, in addition to a decade of austerity;
- Staff should be supported and encouraged to continue working from home as this would support social distancing and reduce exposure to COVID-19;
- The reduction in funding for Adult Social Care was significantly higher in those areas with high levels of deprivation;
- The financial support for Local Authorities recently announced by Government was not weighted to support those areas with high levels of deprivation;
- Lobbying of Government needed to continue to ensure appropriate funding was awarded to Local Authorities; and
- Concern that the budget savings identified included an option not to recruit vacant reablement posts.

Further to the information provided in the published report, the Director of Public Health informed Members that the updated mortality figures (up to 12 June 2020) for Manchester were 383, with 76 of these within a Care Home setting.

The Executive Director of Adult Social Services addressed the Committee and acknowledged the comment regarding staff safety by stating the Council remained committed to safe working practices. She further commented that with regard to budget savings, the report described proposals only and work was still ongoing to understand the budgetary implications.

The Executive Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing stated that announcements regarding future funding were still awaited from Government, however initial indications were that they would not compensate for loss of income incurred by Local Authorities during this period. She described that the Council continued to plan and work towards delivering a balanced budget.

## **Decision**

To note the report.

## **HSC/20/22            COVID-19 Care Homes Update**

The Committee considered a report of the Director and Deputy Director Adult Social Services that provided information and data on the measures introduced to support and maintain care home provision in Manchester during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Officers referred to the main points and themes within the report which included: -

- Describing the landscape of Care Homes across Manchester;
- The strategy adopted in response to the pandemic to support this sector to ensure that Manchester residents were supported;
- Describing the work undertaken with partners to deliver this, building on established strong relationships to deliver a co-ordinated system wide response, both at a local level and across Greater Manchester;
- Information on the work of the Community Infection Control Team;

- Describing a range of initiatives enacted to support this sector, including the operation of the Mutual Aid Hub to oversee personal protective equipment (PPE) provision and the adaptation of Moston Grange Care Home;
- Information on testing arrangements for Care Homes;
- Detail on the financial measures to support providers;
- Data on the outbreaks, infections and deaths (involving COVID-19 in care homes; and
- Next steps and planning ahead.

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

- What was the approach taken to those Care Homes who had not applied for testing;
- Noting the benefits realised of the integration of Health and Social Care to respond quickly and effectively to the pandemic, with particular reference to the ability to test patients prior to discharge from hospital into a care setting;
- Analysis was required to understand excess deaths in the region;
- Was the Care Home sector financially resilient enough to withstand the pandemic and what support was being offered;
- What impact had improved air quality experienced during the pandemic period had on mortality figures;
- What financial support was offered to those residents in Care Homes who were self-funding; and
- What was the rationale for the block booking of beds in Care Homes.

The Director of Public Health said that the introduction and control of testing at a local level would provide greater management and oversight of this activity across a range of settings and he advised that follow up work was ongoing with those settings that had not applied for testing. The Executive Director of Adult Social Services added that a pilot scheme was being delivered across Greater Manchester that would deliver testing in supported accommodation settings.

In regard to the comments surrounding analysis and understating of the mortality rates, the Director of Public Health informed the Members that a recent report published by the Office of National Statistics had presented a number of explanations, however work would be undertaken at a local level to understand the Manchester context. He described that issues such as air quality would inform this analysis and information on the outcomes of this would be reported to the Committee at an appropriate time.

The Executive Director of Adult Social Services stated that a report on the support offered to Care Home providers could be provided for consideration by the Committee at a future meeting. In regard to self-funding residents she reported that individuals could request an assessment for financial support.

The Deputy Director of Adult Social Services stated that conversations were being undertaken with Care Homes to understand the landscape and the challenges they were experiencing, commenting that vacancy rates could significantly impact upon them. He said that this regular dialogue with the sector enabled appropriate support options to be considered. He advised that this activity was continually being

monitored and reviewed. With regard to block booking beds he stated that this had been done to protect capacity so that vulnerable people were supported.

The Executive Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing supported the comment from the Chair regarding the benefits realised by the integration of Health and Social Care to plan and respond quickly and effectively to the pandemic. She added that the Neighbourhood Teams had proven to be very important in supporting residents throughout this period and that the Valuing Older People Board were involved with the discussions regarding the wider health and wellbeing of our older residents.

## **Decision**

To note the report.

### **HSC/20/23                      COVID-19 Manchester Test and Trace**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Public Health that provided detailed information on the national, Greater Manchester and Manchester approach to Test and Trace and the development of the Manchester COVID-19 Management Plan, referred to in the overarching COVID-19 Update Report. The Manchester Test and Trace Team went “live” on Monday 8 June 2020 and the Director of Public Health was the Senior Responsible Officer for the development of the COVID-19 Management Plan.

Officers referred to the main points and themes within the report which included: -

- Providing a summary of the national NHS Test and Trace service launched by the UK Government on 28th May 2020;
- Describing the approach to test and trace in Greater Manchester and Manchester Test, Trace, Contain and Enable (TTCE), noting that the GM TTCE approach would involve the creation of 10 bespoke Local Outbreak Control Plans;
- The Manchester Public Health Team were currently collating the production of the Manchester Local Outbreak Control Plan (COVID-19 Management Plan) across a range of settings;
- Locality roles and responsibilities and GM Roles and Responsibilities and identified priorities; and
- Noting that the Director of Public Health at the City Council would lead the development of the Manchester COVID-19 Management Plan with local partners.

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

- Recent reports in the media suggested that meat and food processing plants were susceptible to outbreaks of COVID-19 and what was being done to monitor these locally;
- Following the announcement that lockdown rules were to be relaxed what were the concerns regarding further outbreaks and how would this be managed;
- What reassurance could be offered to residents concerned about leaving their contact details with premises; and

- What guidance and support was being offered to the many different businesses across the city.

The Consultant in Public Health addressed the comments regarding meat and food processing plants by reporting that colleagues from Environmental Health were supporting this activity and all such sites had been identified and a Greater Manchester plan was developed to manage and support such sites. In regard to any concerns residents may have when requested to leaving personal contact details with premises, such as pubs or restaurants it was important to emphasise that this information would only ever be used to contact them to alert them in the event of another patron who then subsequently reported symptoms. She stated that it was then vital if contacted to follow the advice and guidance given to prevent a further outbreak.

The Director of Public Health stated that whilst he acknowledged the messages and instructions from Government were changing it was important that the advice and messages given to the public were clear to minimise the risk of further infections. He said that this information would continue to be reviewed following any Government announcements.

The Director of Public Health reiterated the statement regarding personal information only ever being used for tracing purposes and that if contact was required, a telephone call would be made rather than relying on the use of an app. With regard to guidance and advice to business he stated that colleagues within Environmental Health would assist with this as they had established relationships with businesses across the city.

## **Decision**

To note the report.

## **HSC/20/24            COVID-19 NHS Overview**

The Committee considered a report of Manchester Health and Care Commissioning that provided an overview of how the NHS has responded to, and is recovering from, the impact of Covid19.

Dr Kumar referred to the main points and themes within the report which included: -

- Providing a description of both national and regional requirements;
- An update on Local Arrangements noting that in Manchester, and across Greater Manchester, Community Cells had been established. These worked with Hospital Cells and linked in with the wider response and recovery work being led by local authorities;
- Current financial arrangements;
- An update on Health service provision during the pandemic;
- Monitoring the impact of COVID-19; and
- Understanding the impact of COVID-19 on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities.

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

- Acknowledging that COVID-19 impacted BAME communities and commenting that recognition needed to be given to the impact on specific religious communities due to their ethnic heritage;
- Consideration needed to be given to density within households and the rates of COVID-19;
- Supporting the 'Welcome Back Manchester' campaign and who was this being used to encourage people to access health services;
- What measures were in place to follow up patients who missed a routine hospital appointment, especially vulnerable residents.

Dr Kumar responded to the discussion by informing the Committee that COVID-19 was a new disease and the understanding of this was evolving. She described that it was now understood to be a vascular rather than a respiratory condition. She stated that work continued to develop an understanding of this disease, especially in relation to its impact and prevalence across BAME and particular religious communities and citizens, and this understanding would then inform the response and guidance. She stated that this work was continuing at pace, with the involvement of all partners and acknowledged the importance of this understanding in the context of an imminent relaxation of the lockdown rules and the potential for a second wave of infections

Dr Kumar stated that currently the NHS was operating at a Level 4 COVID -19 warning (a COVID-19 epidemic was in general circulation; transmission was high or rising exponentially), with Primary Care operating on a telephone consultations and triage model. She stated that those patients who were due regular health checks were being contacted and 'Safe and Well' checks were also being undertaken with vulnerable patients by telephone. She further informed the Committee that if a patient was to miss an appointment with a hospital, the GP Practice would be notified and follow up calls would be made, and if necessary the patient would be triaged again and re-prioritised as appropriate. She further gave an assurance that if a patient failed to attend a hospital appointment they would not be removed from the waiting list and every attempt would be made to contact the patient.

The Director of Corporate Affairs, MHCC informed the Members that Health and Social Care messages would be included in the 'Welcome Back Manchester' campaign and this would be informed by both national and local guidance and priorities.

The Executive Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing acknowledged comments from Members regarding the wider detriments on health outcomes and the links between deprivation and health. She stated that the Committee had considered the 'The Marmot Review – 10 Years On' at their meeting of 3 March 2020 and the activities described during that discussion would continue.

In concluding the themed meeting the Chair, on behalf of the Committee expressed his gratitude and appreciation to all staff, across all organisations for their dedication and professionalism in responding quickly and effectively to the pandemic.

**Decision**

To note the report.

**HSC/20/25            Overview Report**

A 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.

**Decision**

To note the report.



## Health Scrutiny Committee

### Minutes of the meeting held on 21 July 2020

**This Scrutiny meeting was conducted via Zoom, in accordance with the provisions of The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.**

**Present:**

Councillor Farrell – in the Chair  
Councillors N. Ali, Clay, Curley, Holt, Newman, Riasat and Wills

**Apologies:** Councillor Mary Monaghan

**Also present:**

Councillor Craig, Executive Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing  
Nick Gomm, Director of Corporate Affairs, Manchester Health and Care Commissioning  
Peter Blythin, Group Executive Director of Workforce and Corporate Business, Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust  
Ed Dyson, Executive Director of Strategy, Manchester Health and Care Commissioning  
Stephen Gardner, Programme Director, Single Hospital Service, Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust  
Michelle Humphreys, Director of Strategic Projects, Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust  
Sharmila Kar, Director of Workforce & Organisation Development, Manchester Health and Care Commissioning

**HSC/20/26                      Minutes**

**Decision**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2020 as a correct record.

**HSC/20/27                      COVID-19 update**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adult Social Care and the Director of Public Health that provided a brief summary of the current situation in the city in relation to COVID-19 and an update on the work progressing in Manchester in relation to areas within the remit of this committee.

The main points and themes within the report included: -

- An update on the current Public Health response;
- Information relating to the current Adult Social Care response; and
- Planning ahead for the recovery.

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

- Noting the high number of patient discharges from Wythenshawe hospital;
- How would an outbreak of COVID-19 be managed in a care home;
- Following the relaxing of lockdown rules and the increase in the number of people travelling into the city centre from neighbouring authorities for work, was there any concern if this would impact on the number of COVID-19 cases; and
- Requesting a briefing note on the reported safe and well calls, delivered by in house provider services to support citizens.

The Director of Public Health provided the Committee with an update on the figures provided within the report by stating that currently there were 3041 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Manchester, which represented 553 per 100,000 of the population, and the number of recorded deaths was 413, with no further deaths recorded in care home settings. He added that data on the number of deaths were reported based on Office for National Statistics figures.

The Director of Public Health stated that as the lockdown was eased there was a need to shift the focus of local COVID-19 monitoring systems towards the early identification of any emerging 'second wave' of coronavirus in Manchester. He stated that all data sets available would be closely monitored and reviewed to manage such an event occurring. He referred to the local powers to manage such events and teams were working with local businesses to support them comply with the national COVID-19 guidance and advice. He stated that whilst the compliance teams would take action if necessary against a business to protect the public, however the approach currently was one of engagement and encouragement.

With reference to managing an outbreak of COVID-19 in a care home setting, the Director of Public Health stated that any such occurrence would be managed appropriately and sensitively. He stated that the current situation was significantly more stable than it had been and systems were established to ensure appropriate notifications were received and outbreak control meetings were regularly held to monitor and review the situation.

The Director of Adult Social Care addressed the comments made regarding patient discharge by saying that this was only ever done if the patient was medically fit to do so and managed using an appropriate care pathway. She further agreed to circulate a briefing note to all Members on safe and well calls as requested.

## **Decision**

To note the report.

## **HSC/20/28                      Local Prevention and Response (Outbreak) Plan**

The Committee considered a report and presentation of the Director of Public Health that detailed the Manchester COVID-19 Local Prevention and Response Plan that had been published on the Council's website and had been endorsed by the Health and Wellbeing Board.

Members were advised that the plan was structured in line with national guidance and all other nine Local Authority areas in Greater Manchester had developed their own plans and had also contributed to the establishment of the Greater Manchester Integrated Contact Tracing Hub.

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

- Requesting the latest data on the R number for the North West;
- Was there any improvement in the quality of data provided to identify and manage any emerging trends were they to occur;
- Noting the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on BAME citizens and areas of socio-economic deprivation;
- Noting the prevalence of BAME citizens in certain occupations, with specific reference to taxi drivers and the risk of infection this presented to them;
- An assurance should be sought that any supplier the Council held contracts with were supplying appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) equipment for their staff and ensuring their working environments were COVID safe and compliant;
- Whilst recognising the initial requirement to accommodate individuals experiencing street homelessness to protect them during the pandemic, it was important to acknowledge and support the hidden homeless;
- Consideration needed to be given to including the specific needs of the older LGBT community within the plan;
- Noting that for certain residents with health conditions it was difficult to adhere to COVID-19 guidance, such as observing social distancing rules;
- What support was available to children who were asylum seekers; and
- Despite the relaxation of lockdown measures it was important to emphasise that COVID-19 had not gone away and still presented a significant public health risk, especially as many people infected were asymptomatic.

The Director of Public Health responded to Members by stating that he was confident that local arrangements to trace individuals who may be at risk of infection following a positive test were suitable, however stressed that to do this effectively appropriate resources and capacity needed to be allocated to this function.

The Director of Public Health acknowledged the comments regarding BAME citizens and occupations and stated that whilst not currently mandatory, good practice was for all taxi passengers to wear a face mask. He stated that all taxi operators should be risk assessing their drivers and providing the appropriate PPE, and support was available for this. He further advised that the Head of Compliance, Enforcement and Community Safety was working with partners across Greater Manchester and the North West to ensure a consistent approach was taken by the taxi trade.

With reference to the older LGBT community, the Director of Public Health stated whilst this was not explicit within the plan, he reassured Members that a significant amount of work had been undertaken around that issue. He further reassured the Committee that work was also underway to support all people experiencing, or at threat of homelessness. He further stated that COVID-19 advice and guidance was available to all contract service providers.

The Director of Public Health acknowledged that for some individuals understanding and complying with COVID-19 guidance would be difficult, however the intention would never be to prosecute in those circumstances. He further described that care homes would seek to manage this in a compassionate and appropriate manner.

The Director of Public Health reiterated the importance of continuing to comply with all of the Public Health advice and guidance regarding COVID-19 to prevent a second wave, particularly as we move out of summer and into the winter period and flu season.

The Executive Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing informed the Committee that unaccompanied asylum seeking children would be considered as 'Looked after Children' arrangements. She described that discussions were ongoing with the providers of the emergency asylum accommodation to prevent evictions if an individual were to receive a favourable Home Office decision as to their status.

## **Decision**

To note the report.

## **HSC/20/29                      Addressing Inequalities**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Workforce and Organisation Development, MHCC and the Director of Policy, Performance and Reform Manchester City Council that described that clear evidence had emerged that COVID- 19 was having a disproportionate impact on some communities who already experienced health inequalities in our city. BAME (Black, Asian and minority ethnic), disabled and people in poverty were more likely to contract Coronavirus and had poorer mortality outcomes. The longer term health impacts were not known yet but it was expected that the socio-economic impacts and impacts of higher mortality rates not directly linked to COVID- 19 would also be within these communities, unless there were radical changes to the approach to health and social care.

Officers referred to the main points and themes within the report which included: -

- How the pandemic had affected different communities in the city and the actions that were to be taken to respond to this;
- Describing the strategy for planning ahead and describing the workstreams that had been identified to progress the city's recovery;
- Each workstream involved a significant portfolio of work, and each was in the process of identifying short, medium and longer term priority actions;
- Describing the requirement to continue to meet the statutory duty under the Equality Act 2010 to consider equality implications when reviewing policies and practices and introducing new ones through an equality impact assessment;
- Equality Impact Assessments would be used against each of the Council's relevant practical recovery actions;
- Describing that actions identified across Health and Care to address inequalities and provided a summary of the 'Community Cell' that had been established to

lead the out of hospital/care system within the City during the period of COVID-19 response and recovery;

- The Manchester COVID-19 Response Group (“the CRG”) (previously called the Manchester COVID-19 Locality Planning Group (MCLPG)) fulfilled the role of the Manchester Health Protection Group, which was the established group for all health protection issues in Manchester;
- Addressing inequalities/Health Equity was a key workstream under this group, with the purpose of that workstream was to improve experiences of, and outcomes for, communities that suffered disproportionate adverse impacts from COVID-19;
- The report described the governance and reporting arrangements.; and
- Workforce specific measures, noting staff risk assessments were being undertaken across MHCC, MCC, MLCO and other partner organisations to address the need to ensure that ‘at risk’ staff, including BAME staff were protected.

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

- Consideration needed to be given to the messages and imagery used when discussing older residents to ensure this was done in a dignified manner;
- Noting the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on BAME citizens and areas of socio-economic deprivation;
- Consideration needed to be given to ensure all sources of advice and information was accessible to all citizens;
- Welcoming the reported governance arrangements; and
- What were the barriers and challenges to progressing this important area of work.

The Equalities Lead noted the comment regarding the representation of older people and stated that the Age Friendly Board had met with the Chief Executive and Leader to ensure any communications were positive and age friendly and this had been accepted. He further stated that all of the national COVID-19 data and analysis undertaken of factors such as incidents of deaths within BAME communities, gender, socio-economic indicators and lifestyle factors would be reviewed and used to inform the local understanding and response.

The Equalities Lead further stated that emergency Hub had been established very quickly as the pandemic emerged, however acknowledged the comment regarding inclusive accessibility. He reassured the Committee that a review of this had been undertaken and the lessons learnt would inform any response in the event of second wave.

The Executive Member for Adult Health and Wellbeing stated that this area of work was not just a health matter but rather a wider issue that incorporated a range of factors and considerations, such as housing, planning and employment opportunities. All of which influenced and determined the health outcomes of residents, and as such needed to be considered in all strategies, plans and decisions. Further noting the detrimental impact that any economic down turn would have on the city and its residents.

The Director of Workforce & Organisation Development, Manchester Health and Care Commissioning stated that this was a very substantial and complex issue with many contributing factors, with consideration also needing to be given to the issue of racism when planning and considering next steps. She described that the work described was not a 'box ticking' exercise, but rather an opportunity to inform and direct the design and delivery of services. She stated that it was important that this agenda was kept at the forefront of all partners and organisations and was maintained as a key priority. She stated the Health and Wellbeing Board had recently considered the report and had agreed to review progress as a regular item.

The Chair stated that the Committee similarly recognised the importance of this work and would continue to review progress against this activity. He advised that update reports would be scheduled on the Work Programme for consideration at an appropriate time.

### **Decision**

To note the report.

### **HSC/20/30                      North Manchester General Hospital Update**

The Committee considered a report and presentation of the Executive Director of Workforce and Corporate Business, Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust and the Executive Director of Strategy, Manchester Health and Care Commissioning that provided an update on progress in relation to delivering the future strategy for North Manchester General Hospital (NMGH), including the planned acquisition of NMGH by Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust (MFT) as part of a Single Hospital Service (SHS) in Manchester; the delivery of the wider site strategy; and the Health Infrastructure Plan capital redevelopment of the site.

Officers referred to the main points and themes within the report and presentation which included: -

- Providing a background and information on the development of the SHS;
- An update on the interim arrangements for incorporating NMGH into the SHS, including management arrangements; and
- Describing the ambitions and delivery of the wider site strategy that set out how the capital redevelopment of the NMGH site could provide improved health and care facilities, act as a catalyst for local regeneration and support improved health outcomes for local people.

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

- Welcoming the plans and ambitions for the site and the benefits this would deliver to the wider area and community;
- Noting the significant progress to date;
- Recognising the evident commitment to the site and the improvements in the management arrangements at NMGH; and

- Welcoming the recognition that NMGH is an important site to deliver specialist services, both for the city and the North West.

The Group Executive Director of Workforce and Corporate Business, Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust stated that careful consideration continued to be given to the project spend and discussions continued with the Treasury. He said that he was confident that the Treasury remained committed to the project and the case for change was strengthened by the existing relationships across a range of partners in Manchester to deliver a broader scheme and deliver wider improvements and economic benefits to the area. He further stated that staff continued to be informed and consulted with as the plans progressed,

The Executive Member for Adult Health and Wellbeing stated that she wished to place on public record her thanks and appreciation to all involved in this project. She recognised the progress made to date, despite the challenges presented by COVID-19. This sentiment was supported by the Chair on behalf of the Committee.

The Executive Member for Adult Health and Wellbeing stated that north Manchester Councillors would be consulted with regarding the Strategic Regeneration Framework and when this was to be considered again by the Committee, Members may wish to consider inviting the Chair of the Economy Scrutiny Committee to attend and contribute to the discussion.

### **Decision**

To note the report.

### **HSC/20/31                      Overview Report**

A 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.

The Chair noted that the Members would be meeting in private following this meeting to discuss the work programme.

### **Decision**

To note the report.



## **Health Scrutiny Committee**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on 1 September 2020**

**This Scrutiny meeting was conducted via Zoom, in accordance with the provisions of The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.**

**Present:**

Councillor Farrell – in the Chair  
Councillors Clay, Curley, Holt, Newman, Riasat and Wills

**Apologies:** Councillors N.Ali and Mary Monaghan

**Also present:**

Councillor Craig, Executive Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing  
Lindsey Bowes, Senior Primary Care Manager (Dental) Greater Manchester Health & Social Care Partnership  
Emma Hall-Scullin, Consultant in Dental Public Health  
Don McGrath, General Dental Practitioner in Manchester, and Chair of the Local Dental Committee  
Jon Slattery, General Dental Practitioner in Manchester  
Adam Young, Associate Director of Operations GMMH  
Mark Edwards, Chief Operating Officer MLCO  
Dr Manisha Kumar, Executive Clinical Director MHCC  
Dr Veronica Devlin, Chief Transformation Officer MFT

**HSC/20/32                      Minutes**

**Decision**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 21 July 2020 as a correct record.

**HSC/20/33                      Manchester's 10 Point COVID-19 Action Plan**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Public Health that presented the 10 Point Action Plan that built on the Prevention and Response Plan that had been considered by the Committee at their meeting of 21 July 2020 (See HSC/20/28). The report set out the key actions that had been progressed over the month of August, noting that many of the actions in the 10 Point Plan would continue throughout September and the plan would be updated regularly.

The Consultant in Public Health delivered a presentation that included the latest available comparative data and intelligence.

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

- What work was being done to address the concerns of residents living in areas that also housed large numbers of students who would be returning to the city;
- Noting that guidance issued by Government to schools had been issued late;
- Thanking all of the staff working in Public Health on behalf of the residents of the city;
- Was it anticipated that the reported increase in positive COVID-19 cases would translate to an increase in hospital admissions;
- Noting that the messages issued regarding local lockdown changes issued by Government was confusing for residents;
- Appropriate funding should be allocated by central government to support and increase local testing and tracing services;
- Was it appropriate to establish a test centre at the Abraham Moss site noting it's close proximity to both the school and the leisure centre;
- Questioning the validity of the statement that residents would be no more than twenty minutes walking distance from a testing site;
- How many of the national track and trace cases were referred to the local service, and how many of those resulted in contact being made with individuals;
- What guidance was provided to chilled or frozen food businesses;
- What advice had been provided to schools regarding staggering start and finish times;
- Noting the recent press reports regarding the transmission of COVID-19 cases connected to a flight destined for Wales, what work was being undertaken with the aviation industry to mitigate the risk of further infection; and
- What work was being done with care homes to ensure contact with family members was maintained with residents in such settings.

The Consultant in Public Health advised the Committee that work was underway with the local Universities and the Student Partnership to prepare for the imminent return of students. She further acknowledged that this was a concern for some residents with students moving into communities from other areas of the country. She advised that communications regarding the work undertaken with the student population would be shared with residents and this would also be provided to local Members.

In regard to the number of positive cases identified in Manchester, the Consultant in Public Health stated that the increase in cases could be linked to the relaxation of lockdown restrictions and this trend was reflected nationally. She stated that the increase of positive cases were related to community and household transmissions, rather than transmissions in settings such as care homes as had previously been witnessed. She said that the effect of COVID-19 on younger people did not appear to be as severe and hence these cases did not translate into hospital admissions, however the risk remained that this could then be spread to older / more vulnerable people that could then result in an increase in hospital admissions. She stated that this landscape continued to be closely monitored, both locally, nationally and internationally, especially as the winter and flu season approached.

With reference to the testing centre located at the Abraham Moss site, the Consultant in Public Health informed the Committee that the decisions as to where to locate these sites was undertaken in consultation with Public Health Teams, the Department for Health and Social Care and the Council and all facilities had been

appropriately risk assessed. In response to the specific question regarding the number of cases referred to the local tracing service from the national service, she stated that approximately 50% of cases were referred from the national service, and of these, 99.5% had resulted in a successful contact. She further stated that whilst the local service were able to utilise their local knowledge and contacts, the ability to undertake additional test and tracing would require adequate resourcing.

In regard to national guidance, the Consultant in Public Health stated that this was updated regularly on the Public Health England website and advised that she would enquire as to any specific guidance for frozen food businesses. With reference to staggered start and finishing times for schools she advised that all schools would plan to mitigate the risk of infection and had been supported to devise plans that were most appropriate to their setting.

The Consultant in Public Health advised that Public Health England were working nationally with the aviation industry to ensure the correct advice and information was provided to both staff and passengers, and that appropriate contact details were obtained to assist with track and tracing in the event of an outbreak.

The Deputy Director, Adult Social Services addressed the issue of care homes by stating that whilst the importance of maintaining family contact was acknowledged the challenges that COVID-19 had on the ability of sites in maintaining this was recognised. He described that regular contact was made with individual settings and providers to ensure they were adequately supported at this time. He advised that care homes had facilitated visits in a number of imaginative ways, such as using video calls, supporting visits at a safe distance where appropriate and facilitating socially distant visits in parks. He advised that good practice would continue to be shared between sites to help support this activity. In regard to the specific issue raised by a Member he advised that this would be looked into following the meeting, adding that staff absence could impact on a settings ability to safely manage and facilitate a visit.

The Executive Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing advised the Committee that she was pleased to advise that there had been no significant issues reported over the bank holiday weekend. She paid tribute to the residents of the city for adhering to the lockdown restrictions and thanked all of the staff working in the Public Health team for effectively communicating key messages.

The Executive Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing advised that the 10 Point COVID-19 Action Plan helped Manchester manage and respond locally, noting the importance of local decision making. She further stated that the Government needed to commit to fully resourcing all local Council's in recognition of the financial demands and pressures COVID-19 had placed on already pressured budgets.

## **Decision**

To note the report.

[Cllr Wills declared a personal and non prejudicial interest as he is employed by the Manchester Metropolitan University.]

## **HSC/20/34                      Recovery of NHS Services**

The Committee considered a report of Manchester Health and Care Commissioning, Manchester Foundation Trust, Manchester Local Care Organisation, Greater Manchester Mental Health NHSFT and Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership that provided an update on the reinstatement of NHS services following changes in service provision as a result of the impact of Covid-19.

The main points and themes within the report included: -

- Acute Services (including Cancer);
- Community health services;
- Mental Health services;
- Dental services; and
- Primary Care (GP practices).

In attendance at the meeting were representatives from each respective service.

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

- Expressing the Committee's gratitude and appreciation to all staff working in the NHS;
- Noting that recovery of services was within the context of a continued response to COVID-19;
- Would there be an increased pressure placed on Primary Care to manage a medical condition, or if a patient's condition begins to deteriorate when surgery was delayed due to COVID-19;
- Noting the challenge and limitations of telephone / video consultations, especially when assessing patients with mental health issues;
- Noting that in Manchester cancer treatment had continued to be delivered, however nationally this had not been the case;
- What did 'partially stopped' service mean;
- Noting that the imminent winter pressures would place additional pressures on services;
- Noting the impact that COVID-19 would have on people's mental health and the increased demand for mental health services, adequate funding should be allocated by central government to deliver such services;
- Recognising the important role of the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector (VCSE) in supporting people with mental health issues;
- When would the 'No 93' Health and Wellbeing Centre in North Manchester be reopening;
- Where were the 92 Urgent Dental Care sites to meet the needs of any patients of practices currently restricted in their delivery located.
- Would the ability to treat a reduced number of patients in NHS dental practices and the NHS contract arrangements result in practices only treating private patients; and
- A person centred approach was required when delivering care and services.

Dr Veronica Devlin, Chief Transformation Officer MFT advised the Committee that patients who's surgery had been deferred due to COVID-19 would continue to be provided with advice and information as to how to manage any condition with advice on what to do if the condition deteriorated. She advised that patient waiting lists were regularly reviewed to prioritise patients based on clinical need.

Dr Devlin further stated that whilst the delivery of cancer treatment services had continued in Manchester throughout COVID-19, the anticipated challenge related to the testing for cancer and the impact this would have on the service as patients had not been attending for testing due to fears surrounding COVID-19. She advised that to address this consideration and planning had been given to increasing access to testing and delivering safe diagnosis pathways.

Mark Edwards, Chief Operating Officer MLCO reported that services would continue to be re-established and to support this process and to ensure that services could restart safely MLCO had established a Recovery and Programme Board that oversaw the processes. He acknowledged that the ability of the MLCO to deliver services and patient care impacted on the demand on secondary care services, so it was important that services resumed as quickly and as safely as possible. He further advised that where services had been partially withdrawn, those had been clinical decisions taken in consultation with patients with appropriate advice provided.

Adam Young, Associate Director of Operations GMMH informed the Committee that the Trust continued to monitor and map requests for services, and currently this was in line with planning, however this continued to be reviewed daily. In terms of resources to deliver mental health services he advised that Greater Manchester would be submitting a funding bid. With reference to the 'No 93' Health and Wellbeing Centre in North Manchester he stated that work continued to reopen this site as soon as was safely possible and added that staff had continued to work with patients and maintain contact whilst the site had been closed.

Emma Hall-Scullin, Consultant in Dental Public Health informed the Committee that the details of the 92 Urgent Dental Care sites would be circulated to Members following the meeting.

Jon Slattery, General Dental Practitioner in Manchester responded to the question regarding a practices ability to treat a reduced number of NHS patients and the NHS contract arrangements result in practices only treating private patients by stating that he did not recognise this as a concern. The Chair commented that the topic of NHS Dentistry provision across the city would be revisited by the Committee at an appropriate time.

With regard to the video and telephone consultations, all of the professionals present all reported that these had been received positively by both patients and practitioners, whilst recognising that for certain assessments 'face to face' meetings were preferable.

## **Decision**

To note the report.

**HSC/20/35                      Overview Report**

A 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.

**Decision**

To note the report.

## Health Scrutiny Committee

### Minutes of the meeting held on 6 October 2020

**This Scrutiny meeting was conducted via Zoom, in accordance with the provisions of The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.**

**Present:**

Councillor Farrell – in the Chair  
Councillors N. Ali, Clay, Curley, Holt, Mary Monaghan Newman and Wills

**Apologies:** Councillor Riasat

**Also present:**

Councillor Craig, Executive Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing  
Nick Gomm, Director of Corporate Affairs, Manchester Health and Care Commissioning (MHCC)  
Dr Manisha Kumar, Executive Clinical Director MHCC  
Heather Bury, Deputy Head of Medicines Optimisation, MHCC  
Jenny Osborne, Strategic Lead, Population Health Programmes, MHCC

**HSC/20/36                      Minutes**

**Decision**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 1 September 2020 as a correct record.

**HSC/20/37                      COVID-19**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Public Health that described that at their September meeting the Committee received the Manchester COVID-19 10 Point Plan setting out the key actions that were to be progressed over September. The Plan was to be updated regularly and the latest version that would cover the Autumn/Winter period was attached and given the very distinct work required for schools, universities and care homes it was now a 12 Point Plan.

The Director of Public Health and the Director, Adult Social Services delivered a presentation entitled 'Manchester's COVID-19 12 Point Action Plan – Autumn 2020' that reported activity against the actions. The presentation further included the latest available relevant data and intelligence.

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

- Noting the report of increased transmissions within households and enquired if there was any understanding of specific occupations that impacted on these rates of infections;
- Noting national press reporting of people being directed to testing centres located a significant distance from their home address, had there been improvements in the provision of testing facilities locally;
- Noting that occupation data was often not recorded from the national testing data and this needed to be improved;
- A Member commented that the rise in infections amongst the student population, both locally and nationally should have been anticipated and stated that the decision to encourage students to attend University rather than deliver courses online was an economic decision rather than a health decision;
- Noting that the Christmas and New Year period would present a challenge if and when students return to their homes and then return to their place of study;
- Noting the significant contribution the Universities made to the city and that it is impractical to deliver certain courses online;
- Noting that it was important to recognise that Universities employed a wide variety of staff in many different roles and were not comprised solely of teaching staff and students;
- Manchester remained a welcoming and inclusive city and called upon the government to adequately resource the city so that all residents remained safe;
- Recognising the benefits of local knowledge, experience and established relationships across local health partners, the delivery of COVID-19 vaccine, when available should be administered and managed locally;
- Was the 10pm curfew across the hospitality sector effective in managing transmission rates of COVID-19;
- Noting the often confusing messages relating to national and local lockdown requirements, would the introduction of a three tier system simplify the message;
- What was the current position on aerosol transmission of the virus and what was the current advice on the use of face masks; and
- Were people expected to make appointments to attend Accident and Emergency Departments.

The Director of Public Health responded to the Members discussion and questions by stating that the virus had never left communities in Manchester and the rates and incidence of community infections continued to be closely monitored to understand and respond effectively to outbreaks. With regard to testing he stated that he was confident that residents had appropriate access to testing facilities.

In regard to national data on testing the Director of Public Health said that it was the case that some data fields, such as occupation were not completed, and representations had been made to seek to improve this recording. He stated that of those cases referred to the local tracing service, 90% of these were successfully contacted and these contacts allowed for data that had been omitted nationally to be recorded. He commented that this data allowed for the better monitoring and understanding of cases so that resources could be allocated appropriately. He stated that the preference would be to undertake more local test and tracing, however to deliver this successfully would require additional resources to be allocated by government.

The Director of Public Health commented that he was of the opinion that the introduction of a three tier lockdown system would simplify the message, adding that a decision on this was expected to be announced by the Secretary of State later that week.

With regard to the Universities, the Director of Public Health said that Public Health and the Universities had met with the Cabinet Task Force to plan for the return of the student population to the city. He further paid tribute to Public Health England for their invaluable additional support that they have provide locally to the Universities. He recognised the comments regarding the movement of students during the Christmas and New Year period and the planning and preparation for this was underway with Universities and health partners. He commented that the Universities remained committed to the health and wellbeing of all staff and students. He again reiterated his call for additional national resources to be allocated to support local test and trace services.

The Executive Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing stated that Universities were operating on a financial model that had been imposed upon them due to government funding changes. She stated that it was a failure of government to provide a national position and leadership to Universities and their delivery of education during the pandemic. She commented that in the absence of national guidance, Universities locally, with the support of all local health partners had responded well to the issues they had found themselves presented with.

In response to the issue of administering the delivery of a COVID-19 vaccine once this was available, the Director of Public Health agreed with the Committee that this would be best co-ordinated and delivered locally, again with appropriate recourses allocated by government.

The Director of Public Health then addressed the question regarding the introduction of the 10pm curfew across the hospitality sector and the effectiveness of managing incidents of transmissions. He commented that as autumn and winter approached people attending bars and restaurants would prefer to be inside and this could be accommodated as long as the premises were safe and managed in a COVID secure manner. He stated that the evidence regarding the impact of the 10pm curfew was still being evaluated and he would be liaising with colleges in Bolton to understand the impact of changes to their restrictions were having on rates of infection.

Dr Manisha Kumar commented that the proposals for Accident and Emergency Departments were to be finalised, however they were to ensure that admissions to hospitals were managed in a COVID safe manner. She added that issues of language and safeguarding would be taken into consideration and an update on these developments would be provided to the Committee at an appropriate time. She further stated that whilst the learning and understanding of COVID-19 continued, the evidence was that masks did help with the reduction of transmissions.

## **Decisions**

The Committee

1. Note the report and support the call on government to allocate adequate resources to deliver a local test and trace service to help tackle COVID-19; and
2. In recognition of the knowledge and expertise of local health partners, support the call for the local control and management of the delivery of a COVID-19 vaccine when available.

[Cllr Wills declared a personal and non prejudicial interest as he is employed by the Manchester Metropolitan University.]

### **HSC/20/38                      Seasonal Flu Immunisation Programme 2020/21**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Public Health and the Medical Director, Manchester Health & Care Commissioning that described Manchester's Flu Programme for 2020/21 and outlined some of the key areas and challenges.

The main points and themes within the report included: -

- Providing the context and agreed system-wide approach as start of a three-year plan to drive up flu vaccination rates within the city;
- Describing the scope of the Manchester Flu Programme 2020/21; and
- Programme Approach.

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

- Welcoming the additional cohorts in scope for flu vaccination this year and were key workers included;
- Was the supply of the flu vaccine sufficient to meet the demand;
- Were there different strains of the vaccine that were appropriate for different cohorts;
- Would unaccompanied asylum seeking children be eligible to receive the flu vaccination;
- Noting the important roles of Councillors, especially those acting as school governors in promoting flu vaccination;
- Recognising the importance of reaching out to hard to reach communities to promote flu vaccination, including the use of social media to dispel myths and counter incorrect messaging regarding vaccination;
- Were GP practices proactively contacting their patients to offer the flu vaccine; and
- Could the service administer a COVID vaccine when one was available.

The Strategic Lead, Population Health Programmes, MHCC addressed the Committee and said that the take up of the flu vaccination had increased by 30% compared to the same period last year, noting that in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic this was very important, both in terms of the health of the general population and mitigating pressures on health services. She described that vaccination data was obtained weekly to assist in the delivery of the vaccination. She described that to continue to progress this programme a system wide approach had been adopted at a neighbourhood level, working with communities to ensure every

contact with residents counted. She stated that this approach was complimented and supported with a communications and engagement campaign.

In response to the specific question regarding unaccompanied asylum seeking children, the Strategic Lead, Population Health Programmes stated that they would offer the vaccination via the primary school aged children and Year 7 children in secondary school cohort or via their GP practice.

The Strategic Lead, Population Health Programmes informed the Committee that the list of cohorts had been prescribed nationally and not determined locally, however local arrangements had been agreed to support staff to receive the vaccination.

With regard to national stocks of flu vaccination, the Deputy Head of Medicines Optimisation, MHCC described that the process for ordering stocks of vaccinations has been completed prior to the pandemic. She said the supply of vaccinations was a national issue and representations were being made to ensure Manchester had the required numbers. She further advised that there were four different strains of flu vaccination available, specific to different cohorts.

With regard to communications and engagement, the Deputy Head of Strategic Communications acknowledged the comment regarding listening to the messages that were being circulated on social media and the need to counter misleading or dangerous advice appropriately.

Dr Manisha Kumar reassured the Committee that GP practices were actively contacting patients with the offer of flu vaccination, including the use of text messaging that had proven to be very successful. She stated that the take up of the vaccination is monitored and reviewed weekly to inform any targeted work. She described that practices were working flexibly to deliver vaccinations to their patients.

With regard to the administration of a COVID vaccine once available, the Strategic Lead, Population Health Programmes stated that the planning and modelling for this had commenced, however was still at an early stage.

## **Decision**

To note the report.

## **HSC/20/39                      Overview Report**

A 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.

## **Decision**

To note the report and agree the work programme.



## **Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on 24 June 2020**

**This Scrutiny meeting was conducted via Zoom, in accordance with the provisions of the The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.**

#### **Present:**

Councillor Stone – in the Chair  
Councillors Sameem Ali, Alijah, Cooley, Hewitson, T Judge, Kilpatrick, Lovecy, Madeleine Monaghan, Reeves, Reid and Wilson

#### **Co-opted Voting Members:**

Ms Z Derraz, Parent Governor Representative  
Dr W Omara, Parent Governor Representative

#### **Co-opted Non Voting Members:**

Mr L Duffy, Secondary Sector Teacher Representative

#### **Also present:**

Councillor Bridges, Executive Member for Children and Schools

#### **Apologies:**

Councillor Sadler  
Ms S Barnwell, Parent Governor Representative  
Ms J Fleet, Primary Sector Teacher Representative

### **CYP/20/19 Councillor Sue Murphy**

The Chair paid tribute to Councillor Sue Murphy, who had recently passed away, and the Committee paused to reflect on her life.

### **CYP/20/20 Minutes**

The Chair noted that an update had been requested about the work to address the issues arising from the decision to close Newall Green High School, including progress in finding new school places for the affected pupils, and asked that this be provided to Committee Members.

#### **Decisions**

1. To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2020.
2. To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Ofsted Subgroup held on 22 January 2020.
3. To request that an update on the work to address the issues arising from the

decision to close Newall Green High School, including progress in finding new school places for the affected pupils, be circulated to Committee Members.

### **CYP/20/21 Children and Education Services response to COVID-19**

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of Children and Education Services which provided an update on the impact, progress and response of schools, children and education services to the presenting challenges of COVID-19, with a specific focus on the support being provided to Manchester's schools and those children considered to be more vulnerable than their counterparts. The report noted that, through the learning and education system, children were informed about and understood environmental issues and the negative impact of carbon, promoting safe and healthy lives.

The Strategic Director of Children and Education Services referred to the main points and themes within the report which included:

- An update on schools, early years settings, childminders and post-16 providers;
- Initiatives to support children and young people, including the provision of laptops and support to children at transition stages in their education;
- Support for Children with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND);
- Free School Meals;
- Support for children who were not currently on a school roll;
- An update on Children's Services, including the impact of lockdown on demand, interface with the Family Court and work to support Our Children and Young People (Looked After Children and Care Leavers);
- The potential impact of COVID-19 on the mental health of children and young people and how this was being addressed; and
- The financial implications of COVID-19.

The Executive Member for Children and Schools recognised the achievements of Council staff and partners, including schools and early years providers, during this challenging time and welcomed the high quality of the data which had been provided to the Executive. He also highlighted the work of the Director of Customer Services and Transaction and her team in putting in place the Manchester Free School Meals Scheme. He reported that, while there had been some positive outcomes from the current situation, such as increased engagement from young people who preferred to communicate via digital means, there were many challenges for the Council and its partners to address. He advised that these included most children not attending school, lower social work referrals and existing issues such as poverty and domestic abuse being exacerbated by the crisis.

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

- Concern about children not being in school, including that there was variation in what support children were getting from their schools and how much learning they were doing at home;
- Concern that mental health issues would increase as a result of the pandemic;

- Preparations for children returning to school;
- Concern that some children and school staff were in a high risk category or lived with someone who was, noting that data indicated that Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups were at higher risk of mortality from COVID-19;
- What progress had been made in providing laptops to pupils who needed them;
- Free School Meals (FSM), including recognising the success of Marcus Rashford's campaign for FSM to be provided to eligible families over the summer holidays and to thank him for using his platform to achieve positive change;
- Concern about the financial impact of the pandemic on Council services if the national government did not provide sufficient financial support to local government; and
- The potential for increased referrals to social services once children returned to school and issues which had arisen or worsened during lockdown were identified and how the Council would manage that increased demand.

A Member highlighted the work that some Councillors were doing to support residents during the pandemic, including producing a leaflet about support that was available. She advised that this being distributed to try to reach residents who might not be accessing information online and encouraged other Councillors to do the same. The Chair suggested that the Member circulate the leaflet to other Councillors.

The Deputy Director of Children's Services advised Members that the pandemic and lockdown had not impacted equally on everyone, with some children and families being worse affected by not being able to attend school, by financial problems and other issues such as mental health. He reported that Children's Services expected to see an increase in referrals once children returned to school and needed to plan for this. He drew Members' attention to the information in the report on the mental health services available to children and young people. He advised Members that there had been an increase in eating disorders during the lockdown which was putting a pressure on the support services.

The Director of Education reported that the Council and schools were still waiting for government guidance on how schools could safely re-open to all pupils in September; however, she advised Members that her service had already been discussing this with schools and colleges. She informed Members that schools and colleges wanted to have all pupils attending school, not just some year groups, either full-time or on a part-time basis, using a blended learning approach. She reported that schools were currently working with "bubbles" of 15 pupils who did not mix with other pupils in the school but that in future the bubbles might potentially be increased to a full class. She highlighted that secondary schools and colleges faced additional challenges as pupils were studying different combinations of GCSE and A-Level subjects but needed to stay in a bubble with one group of students. She informed Members that a lot of work had taken place to develop home learning, for example online lessons, and that schools needed to continue to work on that offer, particularly as there could be another spike in virus transmissions or a case of COVID-19 within a school requiring a class to self-isolate for two weeks. She advised Members that there would also be some children who could not attend school because they, or

someone in their household, was in a high risk group so the remote learning offer would need to be available for them. She informed the Committee that schools had also been provided with risk assessment forms to complete with individual staff members and that this took into account the risk factors relating to being from a BAME group. She reported that the Council had received 3000 laptops from the national government and 150 from the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA). She informed Members that these had been distributed to schools to give out to pupils and that a number of schools had already used their own resources to provide laptops to pupils who were most in need of them. In response to a Member's question, she reported that the government had announced that £650 million would be allocated to schools to support children to catch up on their education and that £350 million would be provided to the national tuition service to provide subsidised tuition but that further detail was still to be announced on how this would work in practice.

The Deputy Director of Children's Services stated that officers shared the concern that there could be an increase in demand for social work services but highlighted that the average social work caseload was currently 17.8 and the progress in the Council's social worker recruitment campaign, both of which, he advised, provided some assurance of the capacity to cope with increased demand. He also reported that increased use of technology during the pandemic, for example, use of virtual meetings, had highlighted some efficiencies which could be adopted longer term. A Member requested a report at a future meeting on social work recruitment, including the impact of this recruitment on caseloads and information on how cases were allocated and responded to. The Executive Member for Children and Schools suggested that this include information on the recent recruitment campaign, highlighting a video which had been made featuring a current Manchester social worker.

## **Decisions**

1. To express concern about the financial impact of the pandemic on Council services and recognise the importance of the government providing financial support to local councils.
2. To thank Council staff and partners, including schools and early years providers, for their hard work.
3. To write to Marcus Rashford to thank him for using his platform to campaign for eligible families to receive Free School Meal vouchers over the summer holidays.
4. To request a report at a future meeting on social work recruitment, including the impact of this recruitment on caseloads and information on how cases are allocated and responded to.

## **CYP/20/22 Attainment and Progress 2019**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Education which provided an analysis of the 2019 outcomes of statutory assessment at the end of the Early Years

Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1, Key Stage 2, Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5. The report also included a summary of performance according to groups by ethnicity.

Officers referred to the main points and themes within the report which included:

- Early years outcomes;
- Primary school outcomes;
- Secondary school outcomes;
- Post-16 outcomes;
- Outcomes by groups, including disadvantaged children, those with English as an Additional Language (EAL), Our Children, children with SEND and children by ethnicity; and
- Next steps.

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

- That GCSE and A-Level results for 2020 would be based on teacher assessments as no examinations would be taking place, noting that the situation had been made more challenging by the move from modular assessments to a system where results were based on final examinations at the end of the course, and concern that pupils from BAME groups could be negatively affected due to unconscious bias;
- How the Council could support schools to have a more inclusive curriculum that represented all communities in the city, commenting that this should not just be restricted to Black History Month; and
- Request for an update on work to ensure young children were school ready.

The Head of Schools Quality Assurance and Strategic SEND outlined how GCSE and A-Level results would be assessed, which involved schools sending two pieces of each student's work to the examination board, along with the grade they expected they would have received and a list ranking all students entered for that subject. She advised Members that the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) was standardising grades against schools' historic performance and that this was concerning for Manchester schools which had previously been failing but were now on a strong improvement journey. She reported that attainment data was analysed by ethnicity and that this would continue with the 2020 results.

The Director of Education informed Members that there was some very good practice in Manchester of ensuring that the curriculum was relevant to all communities and that the data analysis of outcomes by ethnicity would be used to identify schools which had good practices and share that learning across the city. The Executive Member for Children and Schools informed Members that discussions were currently taking place on how issues relating to Black Lives Matter and racial equality could be better addressed and that further information on the Council's response could be provided to the Committee at a later date.

The Director of Education reported that the Council was involved in the Greater Manchester plan to improve school readiness but that a lot of young children had not been in early years settings over the past few months due to COVID-19, although

schools were now able to re-open to nursery children. She advised the Committee that the Council had been working to address this, for example, providing learning materials to the families of two-year-olds who were eligible for the free two-year-old early years offer; however, she reported that the money that the government was providing to schools to enable pupils to catch up on missed learning did not include support for early years. In response to a Member's question, she reported that COVID-19 had placed an additional financial strain on early years settings, particularly as many parents were not yet sending their children back to these settings, and that work which had started prior to the pandemic on addressing financial challenges in this sector would be resumed.

### **Decision**

To note the report.

### **CYP/20/23 Overview Report**

A report of the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit was submitted. The overview report contained key decisions within the Committee's remit, responses to previous recommendations and the Committee's work programme, which the Committee was asked to approve.

The Chair informed Members that a decision had not yet been made about when the next meeting would take place but that Members would be informed.

A Member highlighted some of the Committee's previous recommendations to which Members had not yet had a response and, while recognising the current pressure on officers, asked that a date be agreed by which a response would be provided.

### **Decisions**

1. To note the report.
2. To request that a date be agreed by which officers would provide a response to the three recommendations which had been on the recommendations monitor for over a year.

## **Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on 22 July 2020**

**This Scrutiny meeting was conducted via Zoom, in accordance with the provisions of the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.**

#### **Present:**

Councillor Stone – in the Chair  
Councillors Sameem Ali, Alijah, Cooley, Hewitson, T Judge, Kilpatrick, Lovecy, Madeleine Monaghan, Reeves, Reid and Sadler

#### **Co-opted Voting Members:**

Ms S Barnwell, Parent Governor Representative  
Dr W Omara, Parent Governor Representative

#### **Co-opted Non Voting Members:**

Ms J Fleet, Primary Sector Teacher Representative  
Mr L Duffy, Secondary Sector Teacher Representative

#### **Also present:**

Councillor Midgley, Mental Health Champion  
Councillor Russell, Chair of the Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee  
Councillor M Sharif Mahamed, Assistant Executive Member for Children and Schools  
Michael Devine, Manchester Health and Care Commissioning (MHCC)  
Darren Parsonage, MHCC  
Dr Paul Wallis, Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (MFT)  
Maria Slater, MFT

#### **Apologies:**

Councillors McHale and Wilson

#### **CYP/20/24 Councillor McHale**

The Chair informed the meeting that Councillor McHale was ill and that the Committee sent him its best wishes for a speedy recovery.

#### **CYP/20/25 Minutes**

The Chair reported that, following the requests at the last meeting, an update on Newall Green High School had been circulated to all Members of the Committee and a letter had been sent to Marcus Rashford

#### **Decision**

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 24 June 2020.

## **CYP/20/26 Manchester's Transformation Plan for Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing**

The Committee received a presentation of Michael Devine, Lead – Children and Young People, Manchester Health and Care Commissioning (MHCC) which provided an overview of the transformation plan for children and young people's mental health and wellbeing.

Representatives from the MHCC and Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (MFT) referred to the main points and themes within the presentation which included:

- The current situation, including access rates to children and young people's mental health services, waiting times and presenting issues and outcomes;
- Wider community children's mental health developments;
- The MHCC-commissioned grants programme to engage the Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector and schools in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people in Manchester; and
- M-thrive, the new delivery model of place-based care.

The Mental Health Champion shared her positive experiences of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and how the service had continued to operate through the COVID-19 pandemic. She welcomed the M-thrive programme to improve mental health and wellbeing services for children and young people. She highlighted that most mental ill health issues started before the age of 25 and advised that, therefore, work to improve the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people would make a positive difference to their life chances, as well as preventing further costs later on. She asked what percentage of the budget for mental health and wellbeing was allocated to services for children and young people, which Darren Parsonage from MHCC said he would look into. She welcomed that waiting times were reducing and asked about the waiting time target. Maria Slater from MFT advised that the waiting time target was being reduced nationally to four weeks. In response to a concern raised by the Mental Health Champion about the transition from children's to adults' mental health services, Maria Slater advised that an 18 to 25-year-old offer was being looked into so that young people would not have to transition directly for children's to adults' services.

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

- That Catalyst, an organisation which provided mental health services to children and young people, had been producing a regular newsletter during the COVID-19 pandemic which included a lot of useful resources;
- That young people trying to directly access support online needed a more user-friendly digital front door to help them to access services;
- How this work fitted in with the work to become a trauma-informed city;
- What was being done to support young people presenting with gender dysphoria; and
- Support for young people leaving care.

Maria Slater agreed that a more youth-friendly digital front door was needed and advised that her service was currently working with a company to develop this. She informed the Committee that the online support offer had been increased during the pandemic and that CAMHS had worked with Education Services and third-sector organisations to provide a leaflet to schools on support available.

Dr Paul Wallis from MFT assured Members that a trauma-informed approach was being embedded in M-thrive, including training on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).

Darren Parsonage from MHCC reported that the support for young people leaving care had recently been increased to the age of 25 so those young people now had a contact point through their LAC (Looked After Children) Nurse for signposting and support. In relation to young people with gender dysphoria, he highlighted the funding which had been provided to the Proud Trust to carry out work in this area.

The Chair thanked the guests for their contribution. He noted the reference in the report to No Wrong Door and the Alonzi House Hub Mental Health Support, and commented that this was a good initiative which the Committee supported. He also noted the plans related to schools outlined in the presentation, including the plans for a Mental Health Lead in every school and college. He requested that school governors be included in this and that CAMHS and the support on offer be included on the agenda of a future Chair of Governors briefing.

## **Decision**

To request that school governors be included in the plans for schools and that CAMHS and the support on offer be included on the agenda of a future Chair of Governors briefing.

## **CYP/20/27 A five-year workforce strategy to sustain and continually improve Children's Social Care Services**

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of Children and Education Services which set out the strategic direction of the service and its workforce plan, including an approach to recruitment and retention for the next five years.

Officers referred to the main points and themes within the report which included:

- The five year strategy for recruiting and retaining qualified social workers;
- The introduction of financial incentives for social work staff;
- An update on the current recruitment campaign;
- Performance management; and
- Service redesign and development.

The Chair of the Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee informed Members that her Committee's HR Subgroup had considered a report on this issue in October 2019. She commented that officers had previously not been in favour of offering retention bonuses and asked why a decision had since been made for social workers

to be offered financial incentives to stay with the Council. She also asked how the workforce strategy would fit in with the work on racial equality.

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

- The use of agency staff;
- Social work caseloads;
- How many social work staff were shielding and what impact was that having on the service; and
- Race equality in relation to the service's staff and children and young people.

The Deputy Director of Children's Services reported that there had been a significant reduction in the use of agency staff, which had included successfully recruiting a number of agency staff to become permanent Council employees. He advised that reducing the number of agency staff was beneficial from a financial perspective and in enabling the service to build a different culture. He informed Members that the strategy to retain social work staff was not just about financial incentives but about professional and organisational development and providing a career pathway. He reported that, as the pandemic had resulted in more home working, it had highlighted more longer-term opportunities for the service to use agile working and that this would be useful in recruiting and retaining social workers with caring responsibilities, particularly women.

The Strategic Director of Children and Education Services advised that the use of agency staff, staff retention and turnover would be used as measures of the strategy's success and he suggested that the Committee might want to receive a further report on the impact of the strategy in 12 months' time. He reported that the proposed retention payment was different from that which had been previously proposed as it was on a sliding scale of payback and linked to the service's ambitions.

The Deputy Director of Children's Services advised that the average caseload across the locality and permanence teams was 18 and that very few social work staff had a caseload of over 23, although he acknowledged the complexity of some of the work staff were dealing with. He reported that approximately 16 staff were shielding for medical reasons but advised that this was not impacting on the service's ability to carry out its responsibilities.

The Strategic Director of Children and Education Services reported that the service had a high proportion of staff from Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups but that, at present, too few were in senior positions and that the service was working to address this. He suggested that Members might want to look at this issue in a further report, to either this Committee or the Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee. The Chair commented that this would be discussed in the work programming session, which was taking place after the meeting. The Strategic Director of Children and Education Services informed Members that work was also taking place to address issues faced by BAME children and young people, for example, that that they were disproportionately likely to be in the criminal justice system.

## Decision

To note the report and that this area of work would continue to be monitored through this Committee and the Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee.

### **CYP/20/28 Children and Education Services Response to COVID-19**

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of Children and Education Services which provided an update on the impact, progress and response of schools, children and education services to the presenting challenges of COVID-19; with a specific focus on the support being provided in respect of planning for the start of the new academic year in September 2020.

In relation to the aim of becoming a zero carbon city, the report stated that, as part of the preparation for the start of the academic year in September 2020, parents and carers were being encouraged to walk, use public transport and cycle to work; making use of and accessing schemes that supported such approaches.

Officers referred to the main points and themes within the report which included:

- Feedback and learning from schools as they had increased the number of pupils attending;
- Government guidance on school attendance from September 2020;
- Proposed approach for Manchester schools in September 2020;
- Challenges; and
- Children's Services.

The Assistant Executive Member for Children and Schools provided an overview of the impact of the pandemic on schools, children and families and how the Council and schools had responded. He advised that it was important to ensure that diverse communities across the city were aware of the guidelines on sending children back to school in September and that it was also important for schools to keep developing remote learning in order to be prepared for a possible second wave of infections.

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

- Whether there was any data on children and families not engaging with schools during lockdown;
- Whether the number of families choosing to home school might increase as a result of the lockdown period;
- Recognising the hard work of schools and the support the Council had provided to them during the pandemic;
- Concern about the additional financial costs for schools in responding to the pandemic; and
- How information about the full re-opening of schools from September could be best communicated to families.

The Director of Education informed the Committee that the Council did not have figures on families not engaging but that schools were doing welfare checks and

taking additional measures where necessary, including carrying out doorstep visits. She reported that schools had been informed how to access information and advice where there were serious concerns about a family. She informed Members that, where children were not on a school roll, for example because they had just moved into the area, welfare checks had been carried out by Council staff and, where requested, an education offer had been made available through One Education. She reported that digital access, particularly access to wifi and data, was one of the biggest challenges, although schools had been working hard to enable their pupils to access education, including delivering work packs to pupils who could not access them online. She informed Members that schools were being required to produce a business continuity plan by the end of September 2020 on how they would provide education continuity in case a group of pupils or the entire school had to remain at home due to an outbreak of COVID-19.

The Director of Education agreed that the number of families choosing Elective Home Education (EHE) might increase as some families had found that this approach had worked for them but that it needed to be made clear to them that this would not include the access to remote learning being provided by their school during lockdown. She also reported that the Council was working on a summer campaign on school attendance in advance of schools re-opening to all pupils in September. She advised Members that the Frequently Asked Questions document for parents, which was appended to the report, had been translated into a number of community languages. She reported that she would circulate these translated documents to the Committee Members and asked that these be shared as widely as possible.

### **Decision**

To consider this further at the Committee's next meeting in September 2020.

### **CYP/20/29 Overview Report**

A report of the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit was submitted. The overview report contained key decisions within the Committee's remit, responses to previous recommendations and the Committee's work programme, which the Committee was asked to approve.

### **Decision**

To note the report.

## **Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2020**

**This Scrutiny meeting was conducted via Zoom, in accordance with the provisions of the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.**

#### **Present:**

Councillor Stone – in the Chair  
Councillors Sameem Ali, Hewitson, T Judge, Kilpatrick, Lovecy, Madeleine Monaghan, Reeves, Reid and Wilson

#### **Co-opted Voting Members:**

Ms S Barnwell, Parent Governor Representative  
Ms Z Derraz, Parent Governor Representative

#### **Co-opted Non Voting Members:**

Mr L Duffy, Secondary Sector Teacher Representative

#### **Also present:**

Councillor Bridges, Executive Member for Children and Schools

#### **Apologies:**

Councillors Alijah, Cooley and McHale  
Ms J Fleet, Primary Sector Teacher Representative  
Dr W Omara, Parent Governor Representative

#### **CYP/20/30 Dr Omara**

The Chair informed the Committee that this was Dr Omara's last meeting as a Co-opted Member of the Committee, although unfortunately he had been unable to attend due to another commitment. He reported that Dr Omara had been a valuable Member of the Committee and advised that he would write to him to thank him for his contribution.

#### **Decision**

That the Chair will write to Dr Omara to thank him for his contribution to the work of the Committee.

#### **CYP/20/31 Minutes**

#### **Decision**

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 22 July 2020.

## **CYP/20/32 September opening of schools and colleges for all children and young people**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Education which provided an overview of the work that had taken place in Manchester to support the reopening of schools and colleges for all children and young people in response to the most recent Government guidance which was also summarised in the report. The report also noted that, through the learning and education system, children were informed about and understood environmental issues and the negative impact of carbon; promoting safe and healthy lives.

Officers referred to the main points and themes within the report, which included:

- Government guidance;
- Implementation in Manchester;
- Supporting pupils to attend school;
- School operations;
- Curriculum offer;
- Continuity planning;
- Mental health and wellbeing;
- Safeguarding; and
- School/college workforce.

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

- To thank everyone involved for their work in re-opening schools to all pupils;
- How the position of schools would be reviewed if infection levels increased significantly and increased lockdown restrictions were required;
- The mental health impact of the pandemic on both pupils and staff;
- The additional funding that had been made available to schools;
- The use of bubbles in schools, noting that many households would have more than one child in different bubbles;
- Request that the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) documents being shared with schools also be circulated to Members of the Committee;
- Discussion about the wearing of face coverings by secondary school pupils when moving around school and whether these should also be worn in the classroom;
- Concerns about the potential for the transmission of the virus outside of school, for example, from parents congregating at the school gate and from secondary school pupils mixing on the way home; and
- The impact on children transitioning to the next stage of their education who had not had the normal support through the transition period.

The Executive Member for Children and Schools recognised the hard work involved in re-opening schools to all pupils and thanked all those involved. He expressed concern that new Government guidance had been issued shortly before the start of term, which had presented challenges for schools as they had already made plans.

The Director of Education drew Members' attention to the Government guidance on schools, which included four tiers of restrictions for education settings. She reported that, despite local restrictions in Manchester, schools were currently operating at Tier 1, where schools were open to all pupils; however, if necessary, a decision could be taken to move to Tier 2, where secondary school pupils would attend school on a rota basis, Tier 3, where secondary schools would be closed to most pupils and, in the most serious circumstances, Tier 4, where primary schools would also be closed. She advised Members that, under all these circumstances, schools would still be open for the children of key workers and vulnerable children, as they had been during the full lockdown earlier in the year. She informed Members that the Government guidance was to not require pupils to wear face coverings in the classroom on the basis that this impeded teaching and meant that pupils would be wearing them for long periods but that the rules on this were at the discretion of individual schools. The Consultant in Public Health advised the Committee that schools had reviewed their classroom layouts, for example, making sure that pupils were not facing each other at close proximity so this reduced the risk of transmission in classrooms in a way that was not always possible when groups of pupils were moving around school corridors. In response to a Member's question, the Director of Education clarified that pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) were not required to wear a face covering.

The Director of Education advised the Committee that a lot of work was taking place to support the mental health of pupils but agreed that support for teachers should also be considered and she suggested that this could be raised with schools through the Headteacher briefings and Chair of Governor briefings. She clarified that schools had been provided with additional funding from the Government, which they could use however they thought best to support pupils to catch up on missed learning, and that there was separate provision for subsidised tuition through the Education Endowment Fund, although schools had to pay the rest of the cost of this tuition.

The Consultant in Public Health advised the Committee that the purpose of bubbles was to enable the quick identification and isolation of close contacts of an infected person. She acknowledged that this was complicated because each pupil within a bubble would also have other close contacts, such as other family members, and she advised that, if that child subsequently tested positive, the rest of their household would also have to isolate.

The Director of Education advised that a few schools had experienced problems in the first week with parents gathering around school gates when dropping off and collecting their children and that the Council had offered support to the schools on managing this situation. She informed the Committee that no schools had contacted her service to report problems with this in the second week of term so it would appear that these issues had been resolved. She advised Members that a letter had been sent out to parents at the end of the last term about the importance of them working with schools to ensure that procedures were followed and that it would be worth sending another letter to remind them of this. She also stated that she would circulate the FAQs to schools to Members of the Committee.

The Director of Education reported that every school would receive a visit from a member of the Quality Assurance Team during the Autumn term to look at how

schools were managing, including where they were up to in teaching the full curriculum, what their remote learning plan was and which children had the greatest gaps in their learning which they needed support to catch up on. She advised Members that this would include how children entering Year 7 were doing, considering that they would not have had gone through the normal transition process to prepare them for secondary school.

## **Decisions**

1. To have a standing item on future agendas on the response to COVID-19, including updates on schools, for as long as is necessary.
2. To note that the Director of Education will circulate the FAQs that have been sent to schools to Members of the Committee.

## **CYP/20/33 Working With Children and Young People and Their Families During COVID-19**

The Committee received a presentation from Children's Services which provided an overview of how Children's Services was working with children and young people and their families during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Head of Locality (North) delivered the presentation which referred to:

- The service's principles, approach, behaviours and impact;
- Response to the pandemic and initial crisis management;
- Creative responses in practice;
- Quality assurance and performance; and
- Next steps.

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

- Preparations for a potential increase in referrals following the re-opening of schools to all pupils;
- Availability of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE);
- Concern that supervised contact visits between children and their families had not been able to take place;
- Concern about young people being at risk of criminal exploitation and involvement in knife crime over the summer; and
- Concerns about the level of funding from the Government and the impact on Children's Services.

The Deputy Director of Children's Services reported that some modelling had taken place in relation to future demand for social work services following the lockdown but that this was difficult to do without past similar events to compare it to. He informed the Committee about the planning taking place for a potential increase in demand, including engagement with a range of partners such as school clusters, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and Greater Manchester Police (GMP), consideration of staffing levels and ensuring that the front door service and the

provision of advice and guidance were as robust as they could be. He also confirmed that, beyond the first week or two of the lockdown, Children's Services had not had any issues with the availability of PPE.

The Deputy Director of Children's Services reported that planning had been taking place for the re-opening of centres for supervised contact and that two contact centres were re-opening that week. He outlined the work of the Complex Safeguarding Hub, the Community Safety Partnership and GMP in addressing child criminal exploitation and knife crime, including joint working using intelligence to target specific areas or individuals where there were concerns. The Director of Children and Education Services highlighted the role of the Inclusion Strategy in preventing young people from being excluded and becoming exposed to negative influences and the Youth Offer which had been available over the summer.

## **Decision**

To thank officers for an informative presentation and to pass on the Committee's thanks to frontline social work staff and other key workers.

## **CYP/20/34 Early Years sector update and the response to COVID-19**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Education which provided an update on how the Early Years sector had responded to the COVID-19 pandemic and gave an update on the key activities that had taken place to support the Early Years sector and plans to support providers moving forward in the Autumn term. The report also stated that education about the environment started in Early Years and a high quality Early Years sector supported this agenda. In addition, the buildings review of the Tendered Day Care Sites would enable the sites to have greater energy rating efficiency.

Officers referred to the main points and themes within the presentation which included:

- Response and financial support to the Early Years sector during COVID-19;
- Quality assurance support for the Early Years sector during the COVID-19 pandemic;
- Changes to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework;
- Review of day care provision in Sure Start Children's centres; and
- Next steps.

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

- That the support the Council had provided to Early Years providers had been excellent;
- Concerns about the financial position of Early Years providers, particularly loss of income from private fee-paying families, as the funding commitment from the Government did not include this;
- That parents were concerned about sending their children back to Early Years settings due to COVID-19; and

- Reforms to the EYFS Framework.

The Senior School Quality Assurance Officer advised that his team was regularly engaging with and offering support to the Early Years sector regarding the financial challenges they were facing during the pandemic. He reported that a significant majority of Early Years settings across the city had re-opened but acknowledged that there were concerns about a loss of income from private fee-paying families and reported that his service would continue to offer support and advice to providers. He advised Members that work was taking place with the Quality Assurance Team, Outreach Workers, the Communications Team and Early Years providers to communicate to parents that measures had been taken to make settings safe for their children to return to. He informed the Committee that it was hoped that attendance would continue to increase and that attendance figures would be monitored over the next month.

The Executive Member for Children and Schools thanked staff in the Early Years sector across the city, noting that some settings had been open through the lockdown period. The Chair echoed these thanks.

The Head of School Quality Assurance and Strategic SEND advised that, due to the Early Years reforms, the baseline of children's levels at the end of the EYFS would no longer be available as a basis for measuring progress through primary school. She also highlighted the focus on reading comprehension in the new Framework, informing the Committee that increasing numbers of children in Manchester's Early Years settings had English as an Additional Language (EAL) and that these children usually made more progress in this area further on in primary school; however, the progress made later on would be difficult to show without the baseline data. She advised Members that previous work to improve reading levels, such as the Every Child A Reader initiative, had been very successful, with work which had taken place 10 or 11 years ago being reflected in improved attainment at high school for that cohort of children. She reported that, prior to the pandemic, it had been noticed that this approach had become diluted, that work had been started to re-focus on improving reading and comprehension at an early age and that this work would continue. She reported that there was no clear picture yet of how school readiness would be assessed under the Early Years reforms. The Chair and the Executive Member for Children and Schools both expressed their concern about the Early Years reforms.

## **Decision**

To note the report and to continue to monitor the Early Years reforms.

## **CYP/20/35 Overview Report**

A report of the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit was submitted. The overview report contained key decisions within the Committee's remit, responses to previous recommendations and the Committee's work programme, which the Committee was asked to approve.

**Decision**

To note the report.



## **Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on 24 June 2020**

**This Scrutiny meeting was conducted via Zoom, in accordance with the provisions of the The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.**

**Present:**

Councillor Igbon – in the Chair  
Councillors Appleby, Azra Ali, Butt, Hassan, Hughes, Jeavons, Kilpatrick, Lynch, Lyons, Razaq, Strong, White and Wright

**Apologies:** Councillors Sadler and Whiston

**Also present:**

Councillor Akbar, Executive Member for Neighbourhoods  
Councillor Rahman, Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure  
Councillor Richards, Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration  
Councillor Stogia, Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport

#### **NESC/20/25            Tribute to former Councillor Sue Murphy**

The Chair paid tribute to the important contribution Sue Murphy had made to the city and to the Council. Members and all those present observed a minute's silence in remembrance of Councillor Sue Murphy.

#### **NESC/20/26            Minutes**

#### **Decisions**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2020 as a correct record.

#### **NESC/20/27            COVID-19 update**

The Committee considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer that provided a brief summary of the current situation in the city in relation to COVID-19 and an update on the work progressing in Manchester in relation to areas within the remit of this committee.

The main points and themes within the report which included: -

- Describing the Public Health response to the pandemic;
- Information on the financial implications and the additional costs incurred;
- Response and planning ahead for the recovery including a reset of the Our Manchester Strategy; and

- Specific updates on activities relating to the work of Neighbourhood Teams; Compliance and Enforcement; Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing; Highways; Housing and Residential Growth; Homelessness; Climate Emergency / Zero Carbon.

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

- Paying tribute and appreciation to all staff and those working with partner organisations for responding effectively and professionally during this unprecedented period;
- What was being done to support rough sleepers who had been accommodated in hotels during the pandemic to prevent them returning to the streets;
- What was being done to ensure appropriate levels of funding would be allocated to Local Authorities;
- What were the number of homeless presentations during the period of lockdown;
- What was the approach to promoting active travel and clarification was sought on the rationale not to introduce 'pop up' cycle lanes and a call for discussions on this area to be open and transparent;
- Communication with both residents and local business was essential when planning and developing active travel schemes;
- Noting the reduction in emissions and improved air quality during this period what work was being done to build on these improvements and could data be provided for different areas of the city;
- What analysis had been undertaken of the measures introduced, such as the temporary closure of roads on social distancing;
- How could residents suggest other areas for consideration for the introduction of similar measures to support social distancing and what would be the associated time frame for delivering any scheme;
- Noting the bid to the National Lottery's Climate Action Fund with the Manchester Climate Change Partnership was unsuccessful, what feedback and learning had been obtained that may inform future bids;
- How would the Highways Department and the Licensing Unit work with licensed premises to ensure they were managing their premises safely and in line with guidance as the lockdown began to ease;
- Recognising the important role of all staff who worked for Registered Social Landlords for their dedication in identifying and supporting vulnerable residents;
- What work was being done with landlords, particularly those with student properties to manage waste generated at the end of term;
- An update on the Private Rented Sector Licensing Policy and HMO (house in multiple occupation) Standards was sought;
- When would the green bin collection revert back to a weekly collection;
- Thanking the Biffa crews for their work, however noting that reports had been received regarding the inconsistency in the service provided by Biffa and could this be addressed;
- An update was sought on Household Waste and Recycling Centres;
- Had incidents of flytipping increased and could resources be allocated to tackling identified 'hot spots';
- Thanking residents for providing intelligence and reporting incidents of flytipping and anti social behaviour;

- How could residents report noise nuisance after 10pm;
- Thanking staff working in the Anti-Social Behaviour Team for responding to complaints; and
- Noting the detrimental impact that off sales of alcohol had on green spaces and parks and what was being done to address this.

The Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure informed the Committee that during the pandemic, in excess of 250 rough sleepers had been accommodated as part of the Everyone In scheme. He described that in addition to accommodation every individual had been provided with access to mental health and substance misuse services. He said that to prevent people returning to the street individual personal plans had been drawn up to support people enter secure accommodation and discussions were ongoing with registered landlords and other partners to identify suitable accommodation to facilitate this. He stated that the Government funding for Everyone In was due to cease on the 30 June 2020 and clarification was currently being sought as to future funding arrangements to support this activity. He stated that if required the arrangements for hotel accommodation would be extended to October 2020.

The Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure informed the Committee that in the period 19 March 2020 to 22 June 2020 there had been a total of 430 families and 1737 single people presenting as homeless, which represented a 12.8% decrease on the same period last year.

In response to the comments made regarding the impact on Local Authority budgets and the need for adequate funding the Director of Neighbourhoods stated that representations were being made to Government by the Leader, the Chief Executive and the Deputy Chief Executive & City Treasurer. In addition work was also ongoing with other Core Cities and the Local Government Association to lobby for adequate funding.

The Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure stated that adequate levels of funding were essential to ensure that the most vulnerable people in society could be protected and the appropriate wrap around services could be provided. He encouraged all residents of Manchester to donate to the Big Change campaign rather than giving money directly to individuals on the street as he said this was often counterproductive.

The Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport addressed the Committee and informed the Members that the Executive Members had continued to meet on a weekly basis to co-ordinate activities and collaborate on areas of work, such as the retrofitting of housing stock and the development of the Young Peoples Climate Charter. She stated that the Highways teams had continued to deliver programmes of work whilst adhering to social distancing guidance, with work prioritised across wards and to take advantage of the reduction in traffic witnessed during the period of lockdown.

The Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport commented that Highways had also introduced a number of measure to support social distancing and facilitate people's journeys as people returned to work and the lockdown eased. She

stated that if residents identified other areas that may benefit from similar measures they could suggest these via the Council website and if accepted measures would be implemented as soon as practically possible.

The Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport then addressed the issue of 'pop up' cycle lanes. She described that the Council remained committed to promoting active travel, including pedestrians in district centres. She stated that there were a number of conversations to be had over the summer period regarding future walking and cycling schemes. With specific reference to 'pop up' cycle lanes she stated that there were a number of myths circulating regarding the Council's approach to these. She clarified that not all neighbouring authorities had applied for funding for pop up lanes and evidence indicated that the majority of cycle journeys were undertaken in local, district centres rather than the commute into the city centre. She explained that the Council's Emergency Active Travel submission follows government guidance which stated that the quickest and cheapest way to reallocate road space to cyclists and pedestrians was point closures, which was in effect active filtered neighbourhoods and was a more effective measure to support both pedestrians and cyclists as opposed to pop up cycle lanes that support cyclists only. She said through the proposals, support for additional work was being sought which could be delivered in the short-term, but which also had the potential to secure longer-term benefits for people cycling or walking across the city while remaining committed to delivering high quality, well designed active travel schemes and infrastructure.

In regard to zero carbon, the Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport stated that the green agenda would be at the heart of the city's recovery plans and the Annual Carbon Emissions report would be published in the near future. She stated that a report on the proposals to deliver the Clean Air Plan would be considered by the Executive at their meeting of 3 July 2020 and a public consultation exercise would be undertaken. In response to the data regarding air quality she advised the Committee information and data obtained from the various monitoring stations located across the city could be viewed via the Greater Manchester Clean Air website.

In response to the specific question regarding the unsuccessful applications to funding, the Strategic Lead Policy and Partnerships stated that the bids for the eCargo bikes was oversubscribed nationally, however they would continue to explore alternative funding options for these. He also advised that they were awaiting the formal feedback from the National Lottery regarding the unsuccessful bid, and when this was available this would be shared with Members.

The Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration described that officers working within strategic housing had worked with Registered Social Landlord staff to mobilise a community response to identify and support vulnerable residents. She described that this co-ordinated response had identified people who required support and appropriate services were engaged. She stated that the lessons learnt during this period would inform any future response if required. She paid tribute to the staff, adding that in addition to their normal duties, many had undertaken additional voluntary work to assist vulnerable residents.

The Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration described that many of the normal services, such as repair and maintenance services were beginning to resume and measures were being taken across all providers to ensure these were being reinstated in a coordinated manner so there was consistency in this offer. She described that this was being achieved through the Manchester Housing Provider Partnership that had been established, and the benefits of this local arrangement had been realised during the pandemic.

The Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration stated that the housing allocations scheme, Manchester Move remained suspended with housing priority being given to homeless people and those requiring discharge from hospital. She further described that the compliance and enforcement teams continued to respond to enquiries and a communications exercise had been delivered to inform private landlords of tenants' rights during lockdown to prevent evictions. She described that a tool kit for landlords had been produced at a Greater Manchester level and that the updated Private Rented Sector Licensing Policy and HMO Standards would be submitted for consideration by this Committee later in the year.

The Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration responded to the comments regarding student accommodation by advising that landlords had been engaged with around the appropriate management of their properties at the end of term and this had been supported by the delivery of a Landlord Forum that had been very positive and an opportunity to engage with Landlords. In addition to this, work continued with the Universities and Manchester Student Homes to promote this message.

In regard to Selective Licensing, the Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration stated that the Council remained committed to use this power on the permitted 20% of privately rented sector stock and a rolling programme would be developed to deliver this. She stated ward Members and local Registered Housing Providers would be consulted on these proposals as they progressed and a report would be submitted to the Committee at the appropriate time.

The Executive Member for Neighbourhoods described the critical role of the Neighbourhood Teams in supporting those residents that were identified as being vulnerable and at risk during the pandemic. In addition, he described the work of the various teams within in the Compliance and Enforcement Unit and the Food and Health & Safety Airport Team for providing specialist food safety advice to those involved in food provision across the city, including to the new Nightingale Hospital. He also advised of the work with Trading Standards to enforce the new regulations during the lockdown period; Environmental Protection Team, Neighbourhood Compliance Team, Environmental Crime Team and the Licensing and Out of Hours Team.

The Executive Member for Neighbourhoods informed Members that the Licensing Unit had responded by adapting the service to mitigate public safety risks, and measures were put in place to help with the financial hardship faced by many of the individuals in the taxi and private hire trade. The Licensing Unit had also been working closely with their counterparts in Westminster to lobby government to allow more flexibility to Local Authorities with regard to the Licensing rules and regulations so that the businesses could be supported in the coming period.

The Executive Member for Neighbourhoods stated that currently the green bin would remain on the winter collection cycle, two weekly with priority and resources given to collecting the black bins. He described that following a phased reopening Household Waste and Recycling Centres were now fully operational, except for the textiles. The Strategic Lead, Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing stated that analysis had indicated that the numbers of visits to these sites was consistent with previous years.

In regard to flytipping, the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods stated that whilst there had been an increase in the number of reported incidents that actual number of incidents was comparable with other years. He stated this could be explained by jobs being reported multiple times.

The Strategic Lead, Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing stated that if flytipping hotspots were identified resources could be deployed to help identify and prosecute perpetrators.

In regard to Biffa and the reported inconsistency of service in regard to the passageway container service, the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods stated that if this was brought to his or officers attention this would be raised with Biffa. The Strategic Lead, Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing added that Monitoring Officers are monitoring collections and had flagged some issues with Biffa. She further advised that Members needed to consider that staff from different crews and agency staff had been deployed to support the Biffa crews, which had accounted for some errors. The Executive Member for Neighbourhoods further informed the Committee that 27 new electric vehicles had been purchased and would be in service from September.

In response to the discussion regarding the approach to be taken to support licensed premises and other businesses following the relaxation of lockdown the Head of Compliance, Enforcement and Community Safety stated that the approach taken with businesses was always one of engage, educate and enforce. She described that during the lockdown period there had been a reduction in the number of enforcement notices require and they would continue to work with premises to ensure they were managing the areas outside of their premises appropriately. She described that ultimately it was the responsibility of the premises to manage and comply with national guidance and if a premises was proving to be problematic appropriate enforcement action would be taken.

The Head of Compliance, Enforcement and Community Safety acknowledged the comment regarding the impact of off sales and public space and commented that it was anticipated that as the lockdown was relaxed and licensed premises reopened this should address the issues experienced. The Strategic Lead, Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing further commented that the Keep Manchester Tidy project had piloted a scheme for parks that would be rolled out.

In regard to residents reporting noise disturbance after 10pm, the Head of Compliance, Enforcement and Community Safety stated that any complaints would be picked up and responded to the next day and residents would be directed to the appropriate website via the pre-recorded message. She stated that the decision had

been taken to end this service at 10pm due to resources, however this would be reviewed.

In concluding the discussion the Chair, on behalf of the Committee thanked all staff, across all partner organisations for supporting the residents of the city during this unprecedented public health emergency.

### **Decision**

To note the report.

[Councillor Appleby declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest as her partner is employed by Biffa.]

### **NESC/20/28            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.

In response to a question regarding the Climate Change Subgroup, the Chair reminded the Committee that at the 25 March 2020 meeting of Council the report 'Constitutional Amendments and Other Matters for Council Business Continuity' was considered and approved. The Committee were reminded that within that report it recommended that Scrutiny Subgroup meetings should be suspended for the time being. The Chair stated that consideration would be given to scheduling an update report on climate change at an appropriate time.

### **Decision**

To note the report.



## **Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on 22 July 2020**

**This Scrutiny meeting was conducted via Zoom, in accordance with the provisions of The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.**

**Present:**

Councillor Igbon – in the Chair  
Councillors Azra Ali, Butt, Flanagan, Hassan, Hughes, Jeavons, Kilpatrick, Lynch, Whiston, White and Wright

**Apologies:** Councillors Appleby, Lyons, Sadler and Strong

**Also present:**

Councillor Akbar, Executive Member for Neighbourhoods  
Councillor Rahman, Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure  
Councillor Stogia, Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport

**NESC/20/29            Minutes**

**Decisions**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 24 June 2020 as a correct record.

**NESC/20/30            COVID-19 update**

The Committee considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer that provided a brief summary of the current situation in the city in relation to COVID-19 and an update on the work progressing in Manchester in relation to areas within the remit of this committee.

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

- Expressing disappointment that the report made no specific reference to BAME citizens;
- Expressing disappointment following the decision to withdraw the 179 bus service, noting that this service was important for key workers and older residents and calling for an end to any further cuts to bus services;
- Calling upon the Chair to write to the Chief Executive of Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) to request an immediate review of this decision to withdraw the 179 bus service;
- What advice had been provided to schools to support social distancing as schools prepare for a return in September and requesting an update on the Active Travel Bids;

- Recognising the amount of work delivered by the Highways Department during the lockdown period, however commenting that communication with residents still appeared to be an issue;
- Requesting an update on the number of homeless people in temporary accommodation;
- What was the approach to supporting homeless people in district centres;
- Noting the pressures that would be placed on the Homeless Service following the end of furlough and the ending of the restriction on the use of Section 21 (Notice to Quit) by private landlords;
- Information on the number of licensed premises across the city and the number of staff employed in the Licensing and Out of Hours Team to understand the scale of the challenge;
- Commenting upon the positive and proactive approach taken by licensed premises; Council officers and Greater Manchester Police to ensure the easing of the lockdown measures was managed in a responsible and safe manner.

The Strategic Director, Neighbourhoods stated that the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on BAME residents was acknowledged and the strategies and recovery approach had been reported to both the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Health Scrutiny Committee.

The Chair stated that she would consult with the Chair of the Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee with the intention to writing a joint letter to the Chief Executive of TfGM to express the views of the Committee and to request a review of the decision to withdraw the 179 bus service.

The Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport stated that she shared the disappointment of the Committee in regard to the withdrawal of bus services, recognising the importance of these for residents and providing an alternative to journeys by car. She described that this clearly highlighted the need for the introduction of a democratically controlled, regulated bus service.

The Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport further stated that work with the Education Department continued around the issue of active travel in preparation for the schools returning in September. She advised that the local Neighbourhood Teams were supporting this activity, however resources were limited and called upon local Councillors and partners to support this activity. She stated that information on the Active Travel Bids would be provided to Members following the meeting

In response the comments regarding communications and school crossings work, the Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport advised that letters were sent to all affected properties and schools to inform them of planned works and local Members were informed via email. In addition the contractor would display signage in the area to notify the public of the works. She also added that it might be the case that some schools had not picked up correspondence due to Covid19 lockdown. She was aware of only one specific incident in Withington where the programme for the crossing delivery was paused following concerns from residents on the location of the proposed works. However, she invited where Members experience any communication issues they were to let her know, and that she would circulate a note

to members on how many crossings have been delivered to date. The Chair stated that a separate private meeting with Members of the Committee and the Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport would be useful for Members to raise issues they had experienced. The Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport agreed to convene such a meeting if there is interest from the committee for it.

The Director of Homelessness stated that there were currently 158 individuals placed in temporary hotel accommodation who had been rough sleeping at the start of the pandemic. He said that each had individual housing plans with a view to securing them permanent accommodation so they did not return to the streets. He stated that the decision had been taken to continue funding the hotel accommodation for rough sleepers until March 2021, despite the funding from central government ending.

The Director of Homelessness stated that currently there were approximately 2000 households in temporary accommodation across Greater Manchester. He stated that Bed and Breakfast (B&B) accommodation was only every used as a last resort and there was a statutory limit on the length of time a person could be accommodated in such a setting. He further advised that there had been a significant reduction in the number of families accommodated in B&Bs, adding that if families had been placed in them the average time before being moved to more appropriate accommodation was two weeks. He informed Members that the Homeless Service worked with private landlords, charities and registered housing providers to secure accommodation for people experiencing homelessness and a number of supported accommodation units had been commissioned to provide additional support.

In regard to the district centres, the Director of Homelessness acknowledged this issue and stated that the Outreach Team were working in district centres and were included in the regular homeless counts. He stated that whilst Outreach Workers continued to work with street homeless individuals, the approach was still on the prevention of homelessness. He further acknowledged the concerns expressed by the Chair regarding the ending of furlough and Section 21 Notices, and stated that this situation would continue to be closely monitored and the service was working closely with Shelter to understand the emerging situation, noting the importance of preventative work around the issue of homelessness.

The Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure stated that the Council had both a statutory and moral duty to respond to the issue of homelessness. He commented that the current situation of using temporary accommodation was not ideal, however this was as a result of a failure of government to invest in the building of social and affordable housing. He concluded by encouraging any residents wishing to help rough sleepers to donate to the Big Change campaign rather than giving money directly to individuals on the street as he said this was often counterproductive.

The Head of Compliance, Enforcement and Community Safety informed the Members that across the city there was in excess of 2000 licensed premises and the Licensing and Out of Hours Team currently had 38 staff and managers working a shift pattern that covers from 10am to 4.30 am on Friday and Saturdays and 10am -

1 am the rest of the week She stated that the staff have a wide range of duties and responsibilities and also undertake a significant amount of proactive work.

With regard to the number of Requests for Service, the Head of Compliance, Enforcement and Community Safety reported that whilst the number had not significantly changed compared to the same period last year, the nature of complaints had with far more domestic noise complaints being received. She explained that this could be attributed to the fact that people were at home a lot more than they usually were as a result of COVID-19 and would therefore likely be more conscious of noise from neighbours including music, DIY, parties etc. The Head of Compliance, Enforcement and Community Safety described that in terms of COVID-19 guidance the vast majority of premises had managed the transition from lockdown well. She described the circumstances that had resulted in two premises being required to close, however these had both successfully reopened and the situation would continue to be monitored.

The Executive Member for Neighbourhoods paid tribute to all of the staff working within the Licensing and Out of Hours Team and further reiterated the wide remit and responsibility for a relatively small team, noting that they were not just responsible for licensed premises. He further stated that the recent successful and safe reopening of licensed premises was to be applauded and had been informed by the positive proactive work undertaken by officers and the positive relationships that had been established. He stated that officers would, if necessary take appropriate enforcement action to ensure public safety.

In regard to the strategy for planning ahead and describing the workstreams that had been identified to progress the city's recovery, The Strategic Director, Neighbourhoods reported that the move to reopening leisure centres, play areas and hosting events would be managed with due attention to the national public health guidance regarding COVID-19.

## **Decision**

To note the report.

## **NESC/20/31          Clean Air and Climate Change progress update**

The Committee considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer that provided an update on the Greater Manchester (GM) Clean Air Plan including the impact of COVID-19 (C19) on the timetable for its implementation. It also provided an update on progress to deliver the Council's Climate Change Action Plan 2020-25 and annual direct emissions data for the 2019/20 financial year.

The main points and themes within the report included: -

- Information on the Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan and the considerations given to the statutory public consultation on the GM Clean Air Plan to be undertaken as soon as reasonably practicable due to COVID-19;

- An update on Manchester City Council Climate Change Action Plan, noting the documents provided Annual Direct Emissions Report, Pathway to Zero Carbon 2038, Quarterly Quantitative Emissions Reporting, Quarterly Qualitative Reporting and the correspondence with the Greater Manchester Pension Fund; and
- Information on Manchester Climate Change Framework 2020-25 annual report that was due to be launched 21 July 2020.

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

- Noting the anniversary since the Council declared the Climate Emergency motion, what progress had been made against the fifteen specific asks of the motion;
- What progress had been made in retrofitting domestic properties across the range of tenures;
- How would the Local Plan promote the mitigation of climate change and support the stated ambitions to reduce carbon emissions;
- An update was sought on the number of carbon / environmental themed engagement events held across the city;
- An assurance was sought that any consultation on proposals for a Clean Air Plan for Greater Manchester was inclusive and captured the voice of young people;
- Welcoming the introduction of 27 electric refuse vehicles;
- Was there any information on the proposals by Manchester Metropolitan University to distribute mobile air quality monitoring stations; and
- Noting the disappointing response from The Greater Manchester Pension Fund and reiterating the need for them to disinvest from fossil fuels as soon as possible to support the ambitions of Greater Manchester to address climate change.

The Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport addressed the Council motion and described that progress against each of the "asks" which had also been provided within the report submitted for consideration by the Committee. She detailed which actions were either completed or partially completed and described the reasons for this including those which had been impacted by COVID-19. She further stated that she shared the disappointment and frustration of Members in regard to the response from The Greater Manchester Pension Fund. She said the Pension Fund needed to set out a clear pathway so as to address climate change in line with the ambitions of the region, and she would work with her colleagues from across Greater Manchester to continue to lobby on this important issue.

The Strategic Lead Policy and Partnerships informed the Members that work had been commissioned to understand the cost of retrofitting Northwards properties, and this analysis was being used as the basis to estimate the costs of retrofitting the city's Private Rented Sector stock but with a 20% uplift to take into account the condition of these properties. . He stated that this would involve significant sums of money to deliver and that bids were being prepared to submit to government as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review. He further stated that confirmation was still awaited on the full details of the Green Homes Grant that had recently been announced by government including eligibility criteria.

The Chair commented that a substantive item on the issue of housing would be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee and this would provide an opportunity for Members to discuss this further.

With regard to the Local Plan, the Head of Local Planning and Infrastructure stated that the existing Core Strategy included the requirement for developments to include a range of environmental standards to mitigate climate change. He commented that Manchester was the first to require BREEAM assessments to be completed for proposed developments, noting that BREEAM assessments were undertaken by independent licensed assessors using scientifically-based sustainability metrics and indices which covered a range of environmental issues. He concluded by saying that the new Manchester Local Plan whilst needing to comply with national guidance would also seek to be ambitious in demanding high environmental standards from new development and a full consultation exercise would be undertaken.

The Head of Local Planning and Infrastructure informed the Members that a GM wide consultation on the GM Clean Air Plan would be conducted in October 2020. He noted the comments from the Committee regarding the need to ensure this was inclusive and stated that an Equality Impact Assessment of the proposed consultation would be undertaken prior to the launch. He acknowledged the need to capture the voice of young people in this exercise. He concluded that further enquiries would be made regarding the proposals by Manchester Metropolitan University to distribute mobile air quality monitoring stations.

The Head of Neighbourhoods described that prior to the COVID-19 lockdown a number of environmental themed resident events had been held across the city, which had included engagement with schools and young people. In addition ward coordination meetings continued to promote environmental issues and local climate change actions. She said work would continue with schools around the issue of active travel and that a list of all events held would be circulated to Members following the meeting.

The Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport stated that she had attended a number of events across the city and consideration was being given as to how these can be reinstated in a safe and appropriate manner with regard for the current guidance regarding COVID-19.

The Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport summarised the achievements to date of the City Council to address climate change and reduce carbon emissions. She stated that the Council had achieved a 53.8% reduction in its direct CO<sub>2</sub> emissions against the target set of 41% between 2009/10 and 2019/20. She said this had been achieved by an ambitious and wide ranging plan of action that had seen the delivery of the civic quarter heat network; the introduction of electric vehicles; the switch to LED street lighting; reducing emissions from the estate; a programme of planting trees; supporting bio diversity and nature based solutions; allocating space for active travel and progressing the introduction of clean air zones. She described that in response to comments from the Committee regular reporting of this progress had also been introduced.

The Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport concluded by stating that the impact of COVID-19 was unprecedented and reflection and consideration would be given to this as the city planned for green recovery. She recognised the impact that COVID-19 had on young people and the importance of recognising their concerns and ambitions around climate change. She reiterated that

the Council recognised this and supported them. She further commented on the significant socio-economic impact that COVID-19 would have on a large number of residents as the ending of furlough was realised and the impact that have on food and fuel poverty experienced by residents. She stated that this was recognised as a social justice issue and she called upon all partners and local businesses to continue to build upon the good work and help deliver a cleaner, healthier, carbon neutral city.

### **Decision**

To note the report.

### **NESC/20/32            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.

The Chair noted that the Members would be meeting in private following this meeting to discuss the work programme.

### **Decision**

To note the report.



## **Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on 2 September 2020**

**This Scrutiny meeting was conducted via Zoom, in accordance with the provisions of The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.**

**Present:**

Councillor Igbon – in the Chair  
Councillors Appleby, Butt, Hassan, Hughes, Jeavons, Lynch, Lyons, Strong, White and Wright

**Apologies:** Councillors Azra Ali, Flanagan, Kilpatrick, Razaq, Sadler and Whiston

**Also present:**

Councillor Akbar, Executive Member for Neighbourhoods  
Councillor Richards, Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration  
Robin Lawler, Chief Executive, Northwards Housing

**NESC/20/33            Minutes**

**Decisions**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 22 July 2020 as a correct record.

**NESC/20/34            Private Rented Sector Strategy 2020-2025**

The Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director (Growth and Development) that provided an overview of the new Private Rented Sector Strategy 2020-25. The report was accompanied by the delivery plan.

The Committee had been invited to comment on this report prior to its submission to the Executive on the 9 September 2020.

The Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration referred to the main points and themes within the report which included: -

- Providing a rationale for the strategy and setting out how the Council along with its partners would support the improvement of housing standards within the sector over the next 5 years (2020-25);
- Describing how the strategy had been developed; and
- Describing strategy themes and objectives.

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

- Consideration needed to be given to other methods and opportunities of providing information to tenants on their rights, suggestion that information should be sent out in the annual Council Tax mailing;
- Had there been any indication if the Local Housing Allowance in Manchester would be increased;
- Supporting the ambitious strategy and requesting that the Committee receive regular progress reports;
- Requesting an update on the numbers and location of temporary accommodation across the city;
- More information was sought on the retrofitting of homes;
- Noting the difficulty tenants had obtaining relevant information relating to their property; and
- What was the approach to short term lets.

The Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration stated that she thanked Members for their contributions and suggestions in bringing forward this strategy. She said that the priority of the strategy was to tackle low quality housing in Manchester and to protect the most vulnerable residents who were increasingly reliant on the private rented sector to meet their housing needs, noting that it was anticipated that the impact of COVID-19 would see an increase in those on welfare benefits and the impact this had on their housing options.

The Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration stated that currently there was still no clarification as to what the government intended to do in relation to Section 21 notices (notice to quit), similarly with the Local Housing Allowance following the temporary uplift. She described that lobbying of government would continue on these important issues and despite the budget pressures she remained committed to progressing and delivering this ambitious plan. She called upon the government to adequately fund local authorities and pending further announcements she stated it was the correct decision to focus all available resources on those residents most in need within the city. She said the delivery plan would enable progress to be analysed and mapped and agreed to submit progress reports and updates to the Committee.

The Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration welcomed the suggestion regarding including information on tenant rights in the annual council tax mail out, adding she would take this away to progress. She described that it was important that information was available in languages other than English and she said the local Neighbourhood Teams provided advice and signposting for residents. She described local resident forums and similar community engagement events were opportunities at a local level to signpost residents and provide advice on a range of issues, including tenant rights. The Chair stated that it was important to be able to deliver advice in local community settings to residents in addition to online sources.

The Neighbourhood Manager informed the Members that forums had been established to engage with and create a dialogue with landlords and understand issues and concerns that they were experiencing within the sector.

In response to the issues raised regarding short term lets, the Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration stated that she would encourage residents to report issues and the appropriate action would be taken. She further informed the

Committee that the intention was to launch a Short Term Letting Charter in Manchester to address the issues experienced within this sector and set out expectations and management standards of both hosts and guests in this sector.

Members supported the establishment of a Short Term Letting Charter and commented that all stakeholders and interested parties, including local resident and community groups should be included in this process.

The Head of Compliance, Enforcement and Community Safety described that proactive work was undertaken with short let providers and platforms, such as Airbnb and booking.com, and where appropriate enforcement action would be taken to address issues. She stated that all available powers would be used, including anti-social behaviour legislation, noise abatement notices, fixed penalty notices and consideration was currently being given to using public health powers to close premises. She further made reference to the recent media reports where action had been taken to address problematic premises.

In response to the question requesting further information on the provision of temporary accommodation, the Head of Housing Services stated that this information would be requested from the relevant team and circulated to Members for information following the meeting.

The Head of Housing Services advised that funding bids to deliver retrofitting had been submitted, both at a local and Greater Manchester level and the outcomes of these bids were still awaited. The Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration advised that a report on this important area of work could be provided to the Committee at the appropriate time. She stated that despite budgetary pressures the Council remained committed to meeting its emissions targets.

The Head of Housing Services further informed the Committee that the Building Safety Bill and Fire Safety Bill made provision to access to information relating to a building that tenants had access to.

## **Decisions**

The Committee;

1. Note the report and endorse the recommendations that the Executive approve the Private Rented Sector Strategy 2020-25 and delivery plan.
2. Recommend that the Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration provide advice and information on tenant rights to be included in the annual Council Tax mail out to residents.
3. Recommend that a briefing note on the progress of the Private Rented Sector Strategy 2020-2025 be provided to Members in six months' time and a formal update report be submitted for consideration by the Committee in September 2021.

4. Recommend that the Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration consult with all stakeholders and interested parties, including local resident and community groups when developing the proposed Short Term Letting Charter.

#### **NESC/20/35                      Extension to Selective Licensing Schemes - Public Consultation**

The Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) that described that Officers were seeking approval to commence an extensive consultation exercise to establish whether the declaration of a selective licensing scheme was required within the 12 potential areas identified within the report.

The Committee had been invited to comment on this report prior to its submission to the Executive on the 9 September 2020.

The main points and themes within the report included: -

- Providing a context of the Private Rented Sector (PRS) in Manchester;
- The legal framework in the context of The Housing Act 2004, noting that Selective Licensing is intended to address the impact of poor quality property and management standards primarily in areas of low demand or high deprivation and with poor quality housing;
- Describing the measures required to introduce Selective Licensing in a designated area;
- Information on fees and conditions;
- Describing licensing considerations and objectives; and
- An update on the proposed Selective Licensing Consultation.

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

- Welcoming and supporting the proposed extension of the scheme;
- Noting the improvements realised in those areas where Selective Licensing had been introduced;
- Clarification was sought regarding the funding and staff resourcing to undertake property inspections of any agreed future schemes;
- Had consideration been given to increasing the Selective Licensing fee;
- Would temporary accommodation be subject to Selective Licensing; and
- Requesting that a list of all temporary accommodation by ward be circulated to all Members of the Committee.

The Head of Compliance, Enforcement and Community Safety informed the Committee that Selective Licensing schemes were self-funding via the license fee applied. She stated that the license fee had been set in accordance with agreed eligible charges. She stated that the extension of schemes and the corresponding revenue from fees would fund officer posts and the experience and knowledge obtained from the delivery of other schemes in the city had informed the planning for the delivery of the proposed schemes.

In regard to the comment regarding the numbers of inspections required, the Head of Compliance, Enforcement and Community Safety advised that in the initial stages of

a designated licensing period priority was given to processing the applications and this was then followed by a programme of inspections, noting that the programme of planned inspections had been impacted by COVID-19. The Neighbourhood Manager stated that she would circulate a flow chart to all Members that described the licensing process.

The Neighbourhood Manager advised the Committee that the legislation governing Selective Licensing did not extend to temporary accommodation. She acknowledged the issues raised in relation to temporary accommodation and stated that officers would continue to work with partners and colleagues to resolve any issues identified.

## **Decisions**

The Committee note the report and endorse the recommendations that the Executive:

1. Approve a consultation with residents, private landlords, businesses and other stakeholders to designate selective licensing schemes within the geographical areas listed in paragraph 4.2 of this report; and
2. Subject to the outcome of the consultation, delegate authority to the Director of Neighbourhoods in consultation with the Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration and the Executive Member for Finance and Human Resources to approve up to 12 selective licensing areas identified in the report.

## **NESC/20/36            Housing Compliance and Enforcement - Performance in 2019/20**

The Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) that provided Members with an update on demand for and performance of the Housing Compliance and Enforcement Team during 2019/20.

The main points and themes within the report included: -

- Data on reactive demand compared to the previous year;
- Data on service requests based on area and category of complaint;
- An update on activities to Rogue Landlord Team;
- Data on formal enforcement action;
- An update on the Selective Licensing Pilot, noting that selective licensing areas encompassed approximately 2,000 private rented properties;
- An update on Mandatory Licensed HMO (House in Multiple Occupation), noting that a public consultation was currently ongoing regarding HMO standards;
- Information on illegal evictions and landlord harassment;
- Electrical Safety Checks and the duties imposed on landlords;
- Information on Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) requirements;
- Describing the impact of the pandemic on the service; and
- Providing case studies.

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

- What more could be done through the HMO licensing scheme to encourage landlords and tenants to improve the management and maintenance of their properties;
- Requesting a breakdown by ward of compliance activity;
- Welcoming the inclusion of case studies to demonstrate the breadth of work undertaken by the service;
- All attempts should be made to encourage the return of HMOs to be reverted to family homes;
- What was the difference between a HMO and co-living models; and
- Noting the importance of the Rogue Landlord Team and questioning whether more officers were required for the team.

The Head of Compliance, Enforcement and Community Safety stated that a breakdown of activity by ward could be provided to Members following the meeting. She further acknowledged the work of the Rogue Landlord Team and stated that she would always welcome additional resources to expand capacity within the team. The Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration added that the team provided an important service to some of the most vulnerable residents across the city and lobbying for additional funding to deliver this service would continue.

In response to the question and comments regarding HMO licensing and standards, the Head of Compliance, Enforcement and Community Safety described that the definition of a HMO was prescribed in legislation. She stated that she was confident that the HMO standards and conditions applied in Manchester were robust, however they remained committed to working with and listening to both residents and landlords on this issue. She added that she would also welcome feedback and suggestions on this subject from Members.

The Neighbourhood Manager advised the Committee that officers from across different teams met regularly to share intelligence and identify any problematic HMO properties to then agree an action plan. She said this could include inviting in landlords for discussions.

The Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration reported that work was also currently underway with the local Universities to refresh the Student Strategy that would assist students to access high quality and better managed student accommodation, noting the benefits that could bring to local neighbourhoods. The Chair welcomed this and stated that it was important to recognise the impact of the behaviour of tenants and the management of properties had on communities and neighbourhoods.

The Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration stated that the aspiration would be to return HMOs back into larger family homes as it was recognised that there was a demand for these in areas of the city.

In regard to the question relating to co-living, the Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration stated that this was a model of housing that was distinct from HMOs and she made reference to the report that had been considered by Executive at their

meeting of 3 July 2020 and the approach to co-living adopted in advance of the review of the Local Plan

The Chair concluded this item of business by expressing her gratitude to all staff working within the service for the work they undertook on behalf of the residents of the city.

### **Decision**

To note the report.

### **NESC/20/37 Fire Safety in High Rise Residential Buildings**

The Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director (Growth and Development) that described those activities to address fire safety in high rise residential buildings.

The Committee had been invited to comment on this report prior to its submission to the Executive on the 9 September 2020.

The main points and themes within the report included: -

- The latest information on the removal of unsafe Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) cladding;
- An update on the collection of data on all External Wall Systems;
- Information on other fire safety issues in High Rise Residential Buildings;
- An update on work undertaken on council-owned High Rise Residential Buildings;
- A description of the Council's interdepartmental Fire Safety Group;
- An update on the Council's work with residents and, in particular, the Cladiators;
- A description of the Council's role as an Early Adopter of the Dame Judith Hackitt recommendations; and
- An introduction to the Building Safety Bill and Fire Safety Bill and the implications for Manchester.

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

- Welcoming the comprehensive report and acknowledging the work that had been undertaken to progress this important issue;
- Acknowledging the role of the Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration in leading on this issue and providing a voice for the many affected residents in Manchester;
- Welcoming the Council's role as an Early Adopter of the Dame Judith Hackitt recommendations;
- This approach should apply to all properties, including those under 18 metres;
- Developers should be encouraged to rectify any issues with cladding rather than occupiers; and
- Occupiers access to relevant information relating to the property was important; and

- Noting the difficulties experienced by occupiers who lived in High Rise Residential Buildings obtaining insurance, insurance companies should be lobbied on this issue.

The Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration said that the Council would continue to support residents and work with them to lobby the government for more resources to deal with all fire safety issues in multi-occupied buildings. The Council would continue to argue that leaseholders should not be made to pay to remedy problems in poorly constructed buildings. The Council would also support Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service and residents in lobbying the government to provide funding to remedy all fire safety issues in multi-occupied buildings irrespective of the arbitrary 18m height definition. She said the lobbying on behalf of residents extended to insurance companies.

The Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration described that Leader had written to the Secretary of State to suggest that VAT not be charged to developers to encourage them to rectify cladding, however this had been rejected by the Treasury. She further advised the Members that the Council was also a member of the Greater Manchester High Rise Task Force.

The Interim Director of Housing & Residential Growth advised the Committee that Manchester was a member of the national Early Adopters Forum which provided an mechanism for the Council to seek to influence national policy and directly represent the lived experience and views of residents to the government.

The Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration advised the Committee that because of the Council's role as an Early Adopter of the Dame Judith Hackitt recommendations they had undertaken proactive work with premises and managing agents to ensure occupants were aware of fire safety within the premises. She further stated that fire safety advice and responsibilities would also be included in the Short Term Letting Charter that had previously been discussed. The Committee welcomed this.

The Committee welcomed Robin Lawler, Chief Executive, Northwards Housing. He described that all of their high rise properties had been subject to an independent fire risk assessment. He said that the programme for installing sprinkler systems in blocks continued, however tenants did have the right to refuse the installation of these in their flats. He said that whilst every attempt had been made to encourage them to have these installed they respected the views of the tenant. He advised that that installation was such that at the time a property became vacant sprinklers could be installed prior to any re-let.

## **Decisions**

The Committee note the report and endorse the recommendations that the Executive:

1. Note this report;
2. Delegate to the Strategic Director (Growth and Development) in consultation with

the Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration responsibility to develop a process for Mandatory Occurrence Reporting as detailed in section 9.10; and

3. Agree that the Accountable Person for buildings in scope is the Council of the City of Manchester as described in section 9.16.

### **NESC/20/38            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 Chair informed the Committee that following discussions with officers it had been agreed that the budget item listed for the October would be removed from the work programme.

In response to a question regarding the Climate Change Subgroup, the Chair reminded the Committee that at the 25 March 2020 meeting of Council the report 'Constitutional Amendments and Other Matters for Council Business Continuity' was considered and approved. The Committee were reminded that within that report it recommended and agreed that Scrutiny Subgroup meetings should be suspended for the time being.

### **Decision**

To note the report subject to the above amendment.



## **Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on 7 October 2020**

**This Scrutiny meeting was conducted via Zoom, in accordance with the provisions of The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.**

**Present:**

Councillor Igbon – in the Chair  
Councillors Appleby, Butt, Flanagan, Hassan, Hughes, Jeavons, Kilpatrick, Lynch, Lyons, Razaq, Whiston, White and Wright

**Apologies:** Councillors Azra Ali, Lynch and Sadler

**Also present:**

Councillor Akbar, Executive Member for Neighbourhoods  
Councillor Stogia, Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport

**NESC/20/39            Minutes**

**Decisions**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 2 September 2020 as a correct record.

**NESC/20/40            Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing Update**

The Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) that provided the Members with an update on progress in delivering waste; recycling and street cleansing services.

The main points and themes within the report which included updates and information on a range of activities relating to: -

- The impact of pandemic (COVID-19);
- Service Update;
- Cycle lane cleansing;
- Bin collections;
- Collections and Quarterly cleansing of passageway bins;
- The Passageway Container Service Improvement Programme;
- Apartments;
- Contamination of recycling bins;
- Fly tipping;
- Household Waste and Recycling Centres (HWRC) and analysis of the impact of HWRC policy changes on incidences of flytipping;
- Keep Manchester Tidy – COVID Response;
- Littering in parks and green spaces;

- Love parks week and campaigns; and
- Engaging with residents in tackling litter and case studies.

The Executive Member for Neighbourhoods introduced the report by placing on record his thanks to all Neighbourhoods staff and Biffa crews for continuing to deliver a service during the challenging time of the COVID pandemic. He stated that those staff delivering these services are rightly regarded as key workers.

The Executive Member for Neighbourhoods stated that despite the challenges presented by COVID the city had maintained its recycling rate of 40%, commenting that this was an achievement when compared with the performance of other core cities. He stated that following conversations at previous scrutiny meetings and in response to concerns raised by Members significant work had been undertaken to improve aspects of the service, such as bin returns and passageway cleaning. He stated that Members had been kept regularly updated with these planned improvements. He further advised the Members that the 27 electric wagons were expected to be delivered before Christmas.

The Executive Member for Neighbourhoods described that challenges remained regarding the incidents of flytipping, collections from passageways and the sweeping of the areas around container bins. He described that he and officers were continuing to work closely with Biffa to address issues with the ambition to return stability to the service. He stated that when the green bin collection had moved to the winter schedule the staff resources that had been released had been redeployed to other duties.

The Executive Member for Neighbourhoods concluded by thanking the residents of Manchester for their understanding during the COVID period and continuing to recycle appropriately.

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

- The Committee wished to place on record their thanks to all staff and Biffa crews for delivering the service during the COVID period;
- Welcoming the positive case studies provided that described resident participation in Keep Manchester Tidy Campaigns;
- Noting the increase in PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) being disposed of irresponsibly and what was being done to address this;
- Noting that the implementation of physical measures to support social distancing had become traps for litter to accumulate and what was being done to address this;
- Had any analysis of capacity been undertaken of container bins been undertaken to ensure they meet the demand;
- Noting the incidents of missed bin collections was a recurring problem, causing frustration for residents;
- Passageways were not being swept;
- More detail was requested on contingency planning for the service;
- Questioning the issuing of a schedule for 2021 that had been sent to residents that had implied that it would remain on the winter schedule;

- Clarification was sought as to what constituted a passageway and information on the schedule and contract standards for the cleaning of walkways and ginnels would be welcomed;
- Had representations been made to government to help fund the additional demand on waste services that had arisen as result of lockdown;
- Communications with residents needed to be improved so that they fully understood the challenges experienced by the service; and
- Bins were not being emptied fully.

The Strategic Lead, Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing responded to the Members by advising that a review of container bins had been undertaken and information had been shared with Members, adding that a certain points on the year such as when students arrive and leave their accommodation additional resources were deployed, adding that if there were particular issues with certain locations Members could raise this with the local team.

The Strategic Lead, Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing stated that during the COVID lockdown period the service had experienced a 30% increase in residual waste and post lockdown this was still at a 15% increase level. She explained that to address this a decision had been taken to reduce the frequency of the green bin collections so that staff resources could be released and deployed to clear residual waste, adding that in Manchester side waste had also been collected. She acknowledged the comment regarding the information that had been circulated to residents regarding the green bin collection schedule for 2021 stating that the decision had been taken to issue this information and any subsequent changes would be relayed to residents. She commented that relevant information regarding the service was regularly reviewed and update on the Council's webpage in addition to the use of social media. The Chair stated that it was important that Members were informed of any changes to services in a timely and appropriate manner.

The Strategic Lead, Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing advised the Members that representations had been made to government to seek additional funding to address the increased pressures on the service, noting that this was being experienced by all authorities across the country.

In regard to missed bin collections, the Strategic Lead, Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing stated that Biffa crews would inform the contact centre if this occurred and crews would return the next day as a priority to collect. She further stated that in terms of priorities for service it was to successfully navigate the service through the COVID pandemic and all of the challenges that it presented with the hope of returning to pre COVID stability and delivering continued improvements to the passageway service. Further commenting that the impact of test and trace on Biffa crews and the subsequent use of agency staff had impacted on the stability of service delivery, noting that this situation continued to be monitored. She further clarified that no Biffa staff had been furloughed, however staff would have been deployed to other functions within the service and street cleaning had continued through the pandemic.

The Strategic Lead, Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing acknowledged the comment regarding the accumulation of rubbish around physical social distancing

measures, commenting that this was an unfortunate consequence, however they continued to work with Biffa to resolve, including the use of manual cleaning when mechanical cleaning was inhibited.

With reference to the return of bins by crews, the Strategic Lead, Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing acknowledged that this had been raised previously by the Committee and as a result this had been raised with Biffa and they had been tasked to look at their practice. She described that Biffa were actively monitoring this activity through the use of the cameras on the wagons and then providing feedback to crews. With regard to half emptied bins she described that she was unaware that this was an issue and explained that this could be as a result of bins being compacted so the waste was not released into the wagon when lifted and agitated.

The Contract Manager informed the Committee that the contract for passageways did not include every ginnel and walkway in the city, stating that the cleaning of those areas would be addressed in other service contract agreements.

The Keep Manchester Tidy Project Manager stated that during lockdown they had experienced an increase in interest from residents wishing to form groups to address litter in their local communities. She stated that they had run a campaign to address discarded PPE, and this would be re-run as an increase in discarded masks was being witnessed, adding that partners such as CityCo and local housing providers were also supporting this key messaging. She stated that 'Bin it or take it home' signage had been deployed around the city centre area, with a view to rolling this campaign out across the city following evaluation.

The Chair commented that despite the reported improvements in the service delivery, Members continued to receive complaints from residents on the same issues. She stated that a meeting would be arranged for Members from each district to meet with the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and relevant officers so that they could articulate their concerns and those of residents with the view to resolving recurring complaints. She further added that the cleaning of district centres needed to be improved and the communications strategy needed to be reviewed with due consideration given to access and equality. The Chair recommended that an update to Members on the review of communications strategy be circulated to Members when this was available.

In response to comments regarding the cleaning standards and areas prescribed as district centres the Strategic Lead, Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing commented that this would be recirculated to the Committee, this will also include maps for all district centres, the schedule for cleansing work and the agreed service standards. In addition she would also circulate the latest data relating to recycling rates in apartment blocks.

In respect to a discussion on the budget the Chair advised that this would be looked at in further detail as the Committee began to consider the budget options and proposals.

## **Decision**

1. To note the report.
2. Recommend that the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and relevant officers arrange a meeting with local Members so that the concerns of both Members and residents regarding the delivery of waste, recycling and street cleansing services be addressed.
3. Recommend that the Strategic Lead, Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing circulate an update to Members of the Committee on the review of communications strategy at the appropriate time.
4. Recommend that the Strategic Lead, Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing recirculate to Members the maps of all district centres, the schedule for cleansing work and the agreed service standards.
5. Recommend that the Strategic Lead, Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing circulate the latest data relating to recycling rates in apartment blocks to Members.

[Councillor Appleby declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest as her partner is employed by Biffa.]

#### **NESC/20/41            Highways Maintenance Programme**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Highways that provided an update further to the report that was considered by the Committee at their meeting on 6 November 2019. The update was provided in the context of a service that had progressed well through an improvement journey and provided an overview of both key successes over this period alongside some ongoing challenges and areas that continued to need further improvement.

The main points and themes within the report included: -

- The Highways Service Key Achievements and Challenges
- Inspections and Repairs
- Highways planned Maintenance Programme update – year 4 progress and year 5 programme confirmation;
- Major projects update;
- Dashboard Performance Monitoring;
- Social Value;
- How information about how major schemes is provided to both local Ward Councillors and residents;
- Managing disruption caused by major projects;
- An update on the Winter gritting programme;
- Motorcycle Parking; and
- Covid response and Active Travel.

The Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport introduced the item by expressing her gratitude to all staff and contractors for their continued work during the pandemic. She described the Highways department as a proactive and positive

service. She explained that work had continued to be delivered whilst complying with all local and national COVID guidance and that progress had continued to be made on the delivery of projects. She stated that the service had delivered social distancing measures and facilitated road closures so as to support people and business return to the city in a safe manner. In addition consultations had continued and the programme of active travel had continued and major schemes such as the CYCLOPS had been successfully completed. She further paid tribute to the contractors who had assisted the city's response to the pandemic and supporting residents by delivering food parcels, supporting homeless charities, delivering PPE and helping with social distancing measures so that schools could reopen safely.

The Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport stated that Manchester remained committed to encouraging active travel for all residents across the city, however to successfully deliver all of the schemes adequate funding needed to be allocated by government. She informed the Members that despite statements being made by government on this issue funding to deliver this was not forthcoming.

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

- Consideration needed to be given as to when works were to be delivered, noting that in residential areas it was not appropriate to undertake works at night that would cause a disturbance to local residents;
- Residents needed to be appropriately informed of the intention to undertake works;
- An update was sought on the green screening of the Princess Road roundabout;
- Noting the delivery of Social Value through the contracts an assurance was sought that Manchester residents benefited from this and all companies undertaking works were appropriately vetted;
- Road marking were not reinstated in a timely manner following patch repairs;
- Utility companies needed to be held responsible for reinstating highways following works;
- Welcoming the successful delivery of the Fallowfield Loop scheme;
- Welcoming the information that had been provided by ward on gullies;
- Welcoming the review to be undertaken relating to the provision of motorcycle parking and clarification was sought regarding what was meant by off road parking; and
- Did the Highways Department consult with the Neighbourhoods Department to mitigate disruption to services.

The Director of Highways advised the Committee that there was an officer within the Department who oversaw Social Value and contracts and if Members had any specific concerns they should pass on the information and this would be investigated. He further stated that he recognised the tension that arose as a result of late night working and said it was always a difficult balance to achieve between disturbance and progressing the projects, noting the particular challenges presented by the location and physical environment of the Princess Road roundabout scheme. In response to the specific question regarding the green screening he advised that he would provide local Members with an update on this following the meeting.

A Member commented upon the impact of construction works and building sites on highways and enquired what the approach to monitoring these was. The Director of Highways advised that section 8 of the report described the approach taken to managing disruption caused by major projects

A Member recommended that the Committee received a report at their next meeting that detailed all of the social value achieved to date as a result of contracts awarded through the delivery of the Highways Maintenance Programme. The Member requested a breakdown of each scheme, the social value achieved (including employment and apprenticeship opportunities) with this information provided at a ward level where possible, to identify where those residents who had benefited from this lived in the city. The Chair endorsed this recommendation.

In regard to communications the Director of Highways informed the Committee that both he and the Executive Member had convened meetings to hear the views, feedback and suggestions from Members with a view to lessons learnt from the delivery of major schemes and improving communications with both residents and Members. The Chair welcomed this dialogue and recommended that these meetings continued, to include all Members of the Committee and that a briefing note on the outcomes and identified actions arising from these meetings are circulated to Members at an appropriate time.

The Director of Highways stated that road markings should be reinstated within three weeks of works being completed and if Members were aware of cases where this was not being done to alert the team, similarly with any issues with drains and gullies following resurfacing. He stated that work was underway to prioritise the schedule for gully emptying, however reassured the Members that the service would always respond to emergency repairs. The Director of Highways stated that information and data on the cyclical gully cleansing programme would be included in the Members performance dashboards that was regularly circulated.

With regard to the Fallowfield Loop, the Director of Highways stated that the department had received a significant volume of detailed responses to the consultation that were currently being reviewed. He further stated that appropriate drainage formed part of the design of any cycle scheme, having due regard to the users safety.

In response to the issues raised regarding works undertaken by utility companies the Director of Highways stated he recognised the frustration of Members, adding that whilst some companies responded better than others it remained an ongoing challenge and Manchester did have representation on a national body to identify improvements in this area.

In answer to the question relating to off street secure parking spaces for motorcycles, he said this related to consideration for options to locate these in multi storey car parks.

The Director of Highways confirmed that following organisation redesign the service now worked closely with the Neighbourhoods Department and had an officer

dedicated to this role, adding that this had greatly improved dialogue between the services.

In respect to a discussion on the budget the Chair advised that this would be looked at in further detail as the Committee began to consider the budget options and proposals. The Chair further advised the Committee that at their November meeting the Committee would be receiving a report on active travel.

### **Decision**

1. The Committee requests that information is submitted to the November meeting, detailing all of the social value achieved to date as a result of contracts awarded through the delivery of the Highways Maintenance Programme. The information should provide a breakdown of each scheme with the information provided at ward level, where possible, to identify where those residents who had benefited from this lived in the city.
2. The Committee recommend that regular meetings are convened by the Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport with all Members of the Committee to discuss Members issues or concerns relating to the delivery of highways projects, and that a briefing note on the outcomes and identified actions arising from these meetings are circulated to Members at an appropriate time.
3. Recommend that the Director of Highways include information and data on the cyclical gully cleansing programme in the Members performance dashboards that was regularly circulated.

### **NESC/20/42            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.

### **Decision**

To note the report and agree the work programme.

## **Economy Scrutiny Committee**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 25 June 2020**

**This Scrutiny meeting was conducted via Zoom, in accordance with the provisions of the The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.**

**Present:**

Councillor H Priest (Chair) – in the Chair  
Councillors Abdullatif, Green, Hacking, Johns, Noor, Raikes, Shilton Godwin, K Simcock and Stanton

**Also present:**

Councillor Leese, Leader  
Councillor Richards, Executive Member for Housing and Residential Growth

#### **ESC/20/22 Tribute to former Councillor Sue Murphy**

The Chair paid tribute to the important contribution Sue Murphy had made to the city and to the Council. Members and all those present observed a minute's silence in remembrance of Councillor Sue Murphy.

#### **ESC/20/23 Minutes**

##### **Decision**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 5 March 2020 as a correct record.

#### **ESC/20/24 Update on activity under COVID19**

The Committee considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer, which set out a summary of the current situation in the city in relation to COVID-19 and an update on the work progressing in Manchester in relation to areas within the remit of the committee.

The main points and themes within the report included: -

- Detailing the overall economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic both nationally and at a Manchester level;
- Detailing the financial support packages available to residents, workers and businesses in Manchester;
- The impact of the crisis on the various sectors of Manchester's economy and the Councils delivery of Affordable Housing targets in regards to existing and future plans;
- Detailing the consequences of the pandemic on the city's transport and infrastructure ;

- The impact that COVID-19 had already had on the labour market and the unprecedented rise in the number of Manchester working age residents claiming out of work benefits; and
- Recovery planning to support business and sector growth and the response to the rise in unemployment, including a reset of the Our Manchester Strategy.

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

- Thanks and appreciation was to be placed on record to all Officers for the work they had undertaken during the crisis and the preparation of recovery and also to all the key workers across the city in coping with unprecedented levels of uncertainty;
- What work was ongoing in securing sources of funding to support the green economy and what success had been made to date;
- How was the UK's exit from the EU impacting on the ability to secure funding for the Green economy;
- What businesses were entitled to a support grant and what additional support where they in need of;
- How was the Council supporting businesses to look at their business models in light of a potential second wave of the pandemic to ensure they are prepared for its impact;
- Who would be part of the business led Sounding Board;
- With the move to more remote working arrangements for businesses, what impact would this have on office accommodation in the city;
- What support would be offered to ensure the viability of businesses within the culture sector as many businesses were Council funded;
- Did businesses across the whole city and across various sectors receive the bulletin about how to access support, guidance and updates during the COVID-19 pandemic or was this just city centre businesses and where there any gaps in sectors;
- How did city centre hospitality venues know what to ask for in terms of the use of outdoor space and did they know how to ask for it from the Council;
- Was there a risk of job losses resulting in the automation of some services as part of the city's economic recovery and what could be done to mitigate this/upskill the workforce;
- How long could the Council continue to provide financial support to businesses before it faced its own difficult financial decisions and what was being done to ensure businesses were not taking advantage of these schemes;
- Was it known what the support proposed by Intermediate Labour Market solutions to support the city's young people and residents consisted of;
- How would social value be brought into play to respond to the socio-economic challenges of COVID-19;
- What intelligence did the Council have on the potential impact of the business model for rents and properties with the possibility of less people working in the city centre and was consideration being given to alternative rental models;
- How was the Council ensuring a more equitable economy was being created as part of the city's economic recovery that addressed the current inequalities that existed in the employment market;

- What lessons had been learnt about which sectors of the economy were more resilient to economic shocks than others;
- More information was requested on the prospective residential retrofit programme and whether this was a programme of work that would be being out forward by the Council to government for appropriate funding to enable delivery;
- Clarity was sought as to who would be involved in the re-set of the Our Manchester Strategy and how this would be undertaken;
- There was concern in relation to the potential increase in the number of commuters that would park in wards that bordered the city centre to then walk to work; and
- Would tranche two of the Active Travel Fund include an increased focus on cycling provision within neighbourhoods as a means of accessing the city centre.

The Director for City Centre Growth and Infrastructure advised that the Sounding Board would be representative of all sectors across the city, including the cultural sector, and would be used to inform thinking of the next phase of recovery. She advised that there was a move to more smaller scale work space offices, however there was still a demand for office space in the city in order to provide appropriate social distancing measures. This intelligence was coming from direct engagement with business and MIDAS.

The Director of Inclusive Economy explained how businesses qualified for eligibility of the Small Business Rate Relief and the Retail, Leisure and Entertainment Grant and the steps that had been taken to take account of those businesses that did not meet the eligibility criteria but still required financial support. She also explained that in terms of the green economy, it had been built into the Council's recovery plans but it was acknowledged that it would need some substantial government investment to deliver the ambitions. The Leader added that the GMCA had written to the Prime Minister setting out a number of economic asks, including investment in the green economy. Similarly through Core Cities, there had been a general ask made to government identifying sectors where substantial investment was needed in order to create a greener future. The Council was also in the process of putting together a list of "ready to go" schemes to submit separately to government. Following a further question, the Leader provided an overview of the types of schemes that were being proposed.

The Head of Planning and Infrastructure explained that the Council had in the past benefited from European funding and it was intended that the government would replace by a prosperity fund however a formal announcement on this was still being awaited. The Strategic Lead Policy and Partnerships commented that a lot of work had been undertaken to support cultural organisations in the city alongside Arts England and a cultural recovery plan was being developed to kick start its recovery.

The Director for City Centre Growth and Infrastructure reported that the Sounding Board would provide data and intelligence around any gaps of support to businesses. It was also reported that Ipsos Mori had been appointed to undertake consultations with businesses within all key sectors in the city to identify any issues. The Council was also talking individually with businesses in the city on the impacts they were

facing. All of this would help develop an economic analysis and strategy to support the recovery of the economy.

The Committee was advised that guidance around the ability to relax some of the requirement for businesses to use outdoor spaces had not yet been made available by the government, so in the absence of this, a multi-agency approach had been adopted by the Council to explore the use of outdoor space, with the aim of this approach to be as flexible as possible, with public safety remaining a priority to enable hospitality businesses to reopen on 4 July 2020.

In terms of the labour market, the technology investment in automation of jobs had not been identified as a consequence of the recovery of the economy, other than the technology needed for businesses to enable their workforce to work from home. What had come to light was digital exclusion and inclusion around lower level learners who had struggled to access online/digital learning.

The Leader assured the Committee that the Council had undertaken proper due diligence when considering all the applications that had been submitted by businesses for grant support. In terms of how long this could last, some funds were revolving which tended to be low equity investment funds which could keep going for a period of time. The support that the Council paid for out of its own revenue budget could only last for a number of months unless substantial additional financial support was provided by government.

The Leader advised that it was expected that people would start using office space differently and there appeared to be continued demand for city centre office space so it wasn't envisaged that there would be detrimental impact on the business model for rents and properties. In terms of inequalities being addressed as part of the recovery phase, he advised that long term structural changes would be required to address these and it was envisaged that through the re-set of the Our Manchester Strategy this would be an area that would be addressed.

The Director of Inclusive Economy provided a brief overview of what Intermediate Labour Market solutions were being considered to support the city's young people and residents. In terms of social value it was reported that young people, over 50's and BAME communities had been worst hit by the impact the pandemic had had on jobs it was these three areas where it was hoped social value within the labour market could meet the needs of these groups.

The Leader advised that the economy of Manchester looked like it was going to be slightly more resilient than other areas of the country in its recovery from the pandemic, in part this was due to its economic divisiveness of the city, with some sectors growing during the pandemic, such as e-commerce.

The Interim Director of Residential Growth and Housing advised that some of the retrofit projects did qualify as programmes of work that would be being out forward by the Council to government for appropriate funding to enable delivery, however he added caution that the scale of retrofit agenda to reach a zero carbon position should not be underestimated and as well as the financial cost to deliver this ambition, there

were a number of practical things that needed to take into consideration, including the size of the workforce required to deliver this and the technical capacity.

The Leader explained how the Our Manchester Strategy was consulted on when it was first conceptualised and advised that whilst the re-set would be done digitally and include the widest cross section of Manchester organisations and residents so that it reflected something the city as a whole bought into.

Finally, it was commented that the criteria for the next phase of the Active Travel Fund was to ensure Manchester residents were kept healthy and safe and enabled Manchester residents to get back to work whilst delivering a maximum benefit for the whole city.

### **Decision**

The Committee note the report.

### **ESC/20/25 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.

### **Decision**

The Committee notes the report.



## **Economy Scrutiny Committee**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 23 July 2020**

#### **Present:**

Councillor H Priest (Chair) – in the Chair

Councillors Abdullatif, Johns, Noor, Raikes, Shilton Godwin, K Simcock and Stanton

#### **Also present:**

Councillor N Murphy, Deputy Leader

Councillor Rahman, Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure

**Apologies:** Councillors Green and Hacking

#### **ESC/20/26 Minutes**

#### **Decision**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2020 as a correct record

#### **ESC/20/27 Update on COVID-19 activity**

Further to Minute ESC/20/24 (Update on activity under COVID 19), the Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director (Growth and Development), which provided a further update of the current situation in the city in relation to COVID-19 and an update on the work progressing in Manchester in relation to areas within the remit of the Committee.

The main points and themes within the report included:-

- An update on the Our Manchester Strategy re-set, which included a proposal for an engagement plan structured around a three tiered approach comprising universal citywide engagement; targeted engagement with key groups; and targeted engagement at a neighbourhood level;
- An update on the economic recovery work structured around the nine sub-workstreams;
- The outcomes and recommendations of the report from THINK, who had been commissioned to develop a detailed labour market analysis and recommendations for potential interventions; and
- An overview of the Chancellor's Summer Statement which was structured around three themes, Supporting Jobs, Protecting Jobs and Creating Jobs.

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

- Clarification was sought on how the Council was gauging the likely long term occupancy levels of businesses going forward as part of the recovery phase and the impact this may have on associated businesses in the city;
- How was the Council communicating with residents on the constraints it faced in terms of "Building Back Better";

- In terms of the recovery of the cultural sector/offer in the city, what role would the Council play in this, including those self-employed;
- As part of the proposed High Street Fund, what was the expectation for Wythenshawe Town Centre;
- What support was to be offered to women in relation to the development of skills and their long term prospects for the workplace;
- How much employment opportunities for Manchester residents would the “shovel ready” projects bring;
- There was concern that the support from Government was short term based which would make it difficult for the Council to plan recovery for the long term;
- How would Councillors scrutinise the Transport Consultant Plan and would City Centre Councillors be able to comment on this Plan;
- How would the Council ensure that the funding it received to assist in the recovery of the City’s economy would be distributed in an equitable way;
- More information was requested on the “We’re Good to Go” kitemark and were there any potential barriers to businesses achieving this;
- Concern was made in relation to the survivability of businesses where advanced bookings did not turn up;
- There would need to be enough capacity to provide the necessary level of support to the labour market recovery to ensure there was equality for all in gaining employment;
- Clarification was sought on how the KickStart Fund would engage with current schemes;
- The COVID19 pandemic had highlighted large short comings in the way the city’s economy operated, specifically around employment opportunities within social care and health;
- There was concern that as the Government’s furlough scheme came to an end, certain families and communities within the city would be impacted by this more than others; and
- Further information was requested on the £10million allocation for unblocking Manchester’s railways.

The Deputy Leader commented that the Council had a strong desire to Build Back Better, with a green infrastructure at the heart of any rebuild, but the reality it faced was a £162million shortfall in its 2021/22 financial year on top of cuts to funding in previous years, and without further financial support from government, any form of rebuilding would be difficult and the need to communicate this with its residents was essential. He added that lobbying for further funding from Government would continue.

The Strategic Director (Growth and Development) reaffirmed that as the Council did build back, it wanted to do so in a way that focussed on environmental benefits and its 2038 net zero carbon ambition. In terms of the “shovel ready” projects, it was explained that the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government had established a fund, with the Council having made several bids so far and it was hoping for funds to be approved shortly. It was also reported that there would be a real emphasis on local labour opportunities from these projects.

The Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure advised that it was important to rebuild and revive the city's cultural sector as it was an intrinsic part of its economy. Steps had been undertaken to work with cultural institutions to address the impact the pandemic had had. Financial support of £71million from Government had been requested to help rebuild Manchester's cultural offer but the Council was still awaiting a response from Government on how it intended on distributing the £1.57billion that had been announced to prevent organisations and businesses across the country's cultural sector folding. It was also clarified that the financial support offered by the Government was for the current financial year only and without further government financial support for local authorities, they would struggle to continue to support the cultural sectors.

The Director of Inclusive Economy advised that the THINK report had picked up on the evidence based intervention that was needed to help the Council lobby Government for support for employment. It was noted that from the current evidence of claimant figures, there was nothing explicit that identified women as struggling to participate in the city's economy but it was agreed that this would be monitored.

In terms of the High Street Fund, it was reported that £488,000 had been provided to Manchester, but this also included some quite challenging stipulations as to how this money could be spent. It was also clarified that Wythenshawe Town Centre would be included in this Fund.

The Director of City Centre Growth explained that following a national survey by Deloitte, it had been identified from most respondents that it would be Autumn when they would prefer staff to begin returning to their places of work but this would be on a hybrid approach of 2 to 3 days a week, which would be a long term approach taken by businesses. It was acknowledged that this would have an impact on the city centre and associated businesses that relied on people being in the city centre and it would only be in the late autumn before a picture around the impact this was having would be able to be drawn to develop an appropriate response.

In terms of the kitemark position, it was reported that 150 businesses across Greater Manchester had downloaded the application form and Marketing Manchester were working to encourage more business to obtain the kitemark.

The Director of Inclusive Economy acknowledged the point made around capacity in supporting the labour market recovery and provided a brief overview of the steps that were currently being taken at regional level. She also noted that social care was an area of growing opportunities for employment within the city and city region as part of the recovery from the COVID19 pandemic.

The Deputy Leader commented that the Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter was a way of influencing employers within the city to look at equalities and provide secure jobs with good wages. Some of the work undertaken before the pandemic was even more important now to make sure areas that were not traditionally covered or left behind were now being included.

It was reported that the Council was still awaiting details as to how the Kick Start Fund was going to be rolled out by government but it was intended to commission

this at a GMCA level akin to the Future Jobs Fund. It was explained that when applying for this funding, employers would need to demonstrate that the funding would fund a new position and not just subsidise an existing position.

In terms of the funding to improve Manchester Railways, it was explained that at the present moment, detail was lacking however, it was intended to improve central Manchester railways. The funding had been given to Network Rail who had identified the Castlefield Corridor as a congested route and funding would possibly go towards feasibility studies as to what long term improvements could be made.

## **Decisions**

The Committee:-

- (1) Notes the report.
- (2) Supports the recommendations that have been made in the THINK report (appendix 2).

## **ESC/20/28 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.

## **Decision**

The Committee notes the report.

## **Economy Scrutiny Committee**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 3 September 2020**

**This Scrutiny meeting was conducted via Zoom, in accordance with the provisions of the The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.**

**Present:**

Councillor H Priest (Chair) – in the Chair  
Councillors Green, Johns, Noor, Raikes, Shilton Godwin and K Simcock

**Also present:**

Councillor Leese, Leader  
Councillor Richards, Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration

**Apologies:** Councillor Abdullatif, Hacking and Stanton

#### **ESC/20/29 Minutes**

#### **Decision**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 23 July 2020 as a correct record

#### **ESC/20/30 Update on COVID-19 Activity**

Further to Minute ESC/20/27 (Update on activity under COVID 19), the Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director (Growth and Development), which provided a further update of the current situation in the city in relation to COVID-19 and an update on the work progressing in Manchester in relation to areas within the remit of the Committee.

The main points and themes within the report included:-

- An economic overview at a national, regional and local level;
- A sectoral impact update, including the impact on footfall within the city, hospitality and visitor economies;
- Planned reopening dates within the cultural sector and the funding needed for Manchester's Cultural recovery plan;
- The closure of Terminal 2 at Manchester Airport and the potential impact this would have on employment in the city;
- The steps needed to stimulate development & investor confidence in the city;
- Work being undertaken with TfGM to agree a broad overall transport plan to support the gradual opening up of the city with a focus on pedestrian movement and safe use of public transport;
- Work being undertaken around Skills, Labour Market and Business Support following on from the THINK report findings; and

- A progress update on the lobbying of government for additional funding.

Some of the key points that arose from the Committees discussions were:-

- Concern was expressed with the reduction in residential property sales within the city centre might also be linked to cladding issues not just the impact of the COVID19 crisis;
- The increase in demand for turnover rent from hospitality businesses appeared to be a sensible response to the COVID19 crisis and was the Council engaging with landlords of businesses on this
- Concern was expressed on the dangers of monopolisation of hospitality and leisure businesses due to the impact of COVID19;
- How was the city centre likely to be impacted by the recently announced planning reforms;
- Had any progress been made with support for the city's culture sector, including small venues and freelance performers;
- Where would the capacity come from to enable people to transfer their skills into other areas as the city's economy recovered
- How was Kickstart positioned in the city and who would lead on this;
- Had there been any assessments on quality of life and wellbeing and environmental impact assessments in regards to the number of people now working from home;

The Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration advised that city centre residential sales had been affected due to the issue of remedial works required to the cladding of a number of buildings. This was an ongoing issue and due to a lack of qualified inspectors, was resulting in the slow certification and sign off for many buildings. Discussions were taking place to see if any partnership arrangements could be put in place to speed up this process.

The Leader commented that there had been a surge in mental health issues in the city which could likely be attributed to the increase in home working and there would be a need for some form of "return to work" for businesses as soon as possible to prevent this increasing further. It was also acknowledged that there was an environmental impact of working from home, and it was commented that as autumn/winter approached, there would be an increase in employees home fuel costs. The larger concern was not whether people were working from home but whether people were working at all as the government furlough scheme came to an end. The Leader also commented that there was a need to address the element of confidence within the city amongst businesses and people.

The Head of Local Planning and Infrastructure/City Policy stated that clarification had been sought from MHCLG on the planning reforms' impact on the ability to control the change of use of offices to residential accommodation. He advised that transition arrangements were being put in place which would mean that the Article 4 direction, previously agreed by the Council, which enabled the change of use of offices to residential accommodation to be controlled, would remain in place until the end of July 2021. A further announcement was expected from Government on any changes to the situation after that date.

The Chief Executive of Home Manchester advised that the Arts Council was managing the funds that government had made available to the country's cultural sectors and a small amount had been made available and allocated for small music venues. A second wave of applications for additional funding that had also been made available had also been submitted, the outcomes of which would be known later in September. In terms of the freelance economy, a number of projects were ongoing to support employment within this area of the cultural sector. It was commented that the biggest challenge facing employment within the sector would be next financial year.

The Director of Inclusive Economy advised that the Government had very recently announced the details of the Kickstart Programme, which would provide paid employment for unemployed 18 to 24 year olds claiming Universal Credit, for a 6 month period. Employers would need to demonstrate that the Kickstart opportunities were new or additional and wouldn't displace an existing job. If the employer had 30 or more opportunities, they applied directly to the DWP and once they had carried out their checks, they would be filled by Job Centre Plus. Where employers had fewer than 30 opportunities, they would be encouraged to work through an intermediary, which could be a business, public body, training organisation or charity and once the intermediary had 30 vacancies they would apply to DWP and receive a small one-off admin fee. On top of the wages, employers would receive £1500 to provide equipment and support to the young person. Councils or Combined Authorities had not been involved in the design of the programme nor did they have a formal role in the delivery other than what opportunities might be provided directly by the City Council or by acting as an intermediary. In response to the question relating to funding and capacity to upskill and reconnect residents to employment opportunities, the Director of Inclusive Economy said that given the likely levels of unemployment, the system currently would lack capacity to respond in a timely way.

### **Decision**

The Committee notes the update.

### **ESC/20/31 Economic recovery narrative for the City**

The Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director (Growth and Development), which provided an overview of plans to develop an Economic Recovery Plan for the city, as a key part of the Council's forward planning in response to the COVID-19 crisis. The Plan would primarily be directed at government, businesses and investors and set out a clear and detailed narrative on how the city is well-placed to use its strong assets in order to re-establish economic momentum over the next few years.

The report was accompanied with a more detail presentation delivered by Mike Emmerich of Metro-Dynamics and John McCreddie of Ekosgen who had been commissioned to develop the Plan on behalf of the Council.

The key points and themes in the report and presentation included:-

- The plan would focus on the three strategic aims identified in the Our Manchester Strategy and Our Manchester Industrial Strategy- People, Place and Prosperity, and on the priorities of inclusive growth and the foundational economy and our zero carbon commitments;
- The plan would incorporate transformational schemes and key projects under these areas, which would form part of the Council's ask to the Spending Review, highlighting how these could deliver new jobs, homes and leverage further investment.
- The narrative and projects would form a strong proposition to government, providing a clear plan for the city to come out of recession as powerfully and as quickly as it could, by building on its long-term strengths;
- It would reinforce the importance of regional cities such as Manchester as economic engines, particularly highlighting opportunities in the city centre, the Oxford Road Corridor, North Manchester and Airport City.
- There would also be an emphasis on working with distressed businesses as new opportunities emerged; youth skills and encouraging young people to stay in education; graduate re-skilling; apprenticeships schemes; and support for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents and the over-50's who had also been disproportionately impacted by Covid-19; and
- Following feedback from the Committee, the narrative and key project proposals would be further developed for wider discussion. The document would then be finalised in advance of the Comprehensive Spending Review for submission to Government.

The report would also be considered by the Executive at its meeting on 9 September 2020.

Some of the key points that arose from the Committees discussions were:-

- How would the Council seek to unlock funding from government so that the most disadvantaged residents in the city had the opportunities to access the opportunities that were envisaged as part of the Plan;
- It was important to remember the role of district centres and their contribution to the city's economy and there needed to be a continued focus on these centres going forward;
- It would be essential to obtain the necessary funding from government to deliver the ambition of zero carbon retrofitting of the Council's housing stock;
- Clarification was sought as to who was the primary audience for the Plan and what was unique about Manchester's Plan compared to other cities;
- It was commented that our response to the economic crisis needed to set a longer term trajectory in line with the local industrial strategy and Our Manchester Strategy rather than simply trying to get back to where the city was before the impact of COVID19; and
- It was felt that the narrative of the Plan needed to be mindful of the language it used in relation to "rescuing" those within the foundational sector, as the employment opportunities within this sector were also important to the cities recovery.

Mike Emmerich (Metro-Dynamics) commented that work was taking place to identify real distinctive Manchester propositions that delivered opportunities to all

communities across the city. He also acknowledged the point raised around district centres and advised that this would be picked up and incorporated into the Plan. In terms of low carbon and specifically the housing retrofit programme and fleet decarbonisation programme, he advised that these were two principle sources of carbon emissions in the city that the Council could directly affect and the Plan contained robust proposals that would profoundly change carbon emissions and fuel policy around affordable homes.

In terms of the audience of the Plan, it was explained that the principle audience of the Plan was government, as it was government who held a lot of the power to unlocking the ambitions for the city. In relation to what made Manchester's Plan unique it was commented that the Plan would be aligned to the key areas of strength that were unique to Manchester, such as its Science and Innovation sector. It was also closely aligned to the Our Manchester approach and had emphasis on achieving a zero carbon target by 2038.

The Leader noted too, the important role that district centres played in the city's economy. He commented that some of the biggest schemes with the proposals were not city centre or district centre based and emphasised that the city centre accounted for 10% of all jobs in Greater Manchester and the GMSF would identify that the city centre would see over 50% of commercial development across greater Manchester alongside the jobs that would come with this. As such it was important to acknowledge the important role the city centre played. He further commended that the business and investor sectors were of equal importance in terms of the audience for the Plan as without these, the city would not be able to get its economy back on to the correct trajectory.

Chris Oglesby (Chair of the Business Sounding Board), commented that it was essential that the city created satisfying, productive jobs for Manchester residents and this was critical to the Plan being successful, not only in high growth sectors but also the foundational sector of the economy, noting that a lot of the jobs created since the industrialisation of the 1980's had been neither satisfying or sustainable. He felt it would be challenging to get central government to empower the city through formal programmes to do more, as such, it was felt that the challenges the city's economy faced needed to be solved at a local level in partnership between the Council, businesses and education providers.

The Leader supported the point made around the language used in the narrative of the Plan centred around low skilled jobs and commented that there needed to be a system that recognised the value of the contribution that those who worked in these made to the economy.

## **Decisions**

The Committee:-

- (1) Requests that as the narrative of the Plan develops, it contains more of a balance between the role of neighbourhoods and district centres in correlation to the City Centre.

- (2) Requests that the narrative is clearer on active travel proposals tied to government initiatives and strategies;
- (3) Requests that the language of resilience is reviewed and taken into consideration especially when referring to the foundational economy;
- (4) Requests that part of the narrative focusses on delivering jobs that are satisfying and sustainable.

### **ESC/20/32 Economy Dashboard**

The Committee considered the most recent Economy Dashboard for 2020

Some of the key points that arose from the Committees discussions were:-

- Could there be comparative data to other major/core cities against the indicators in the dashboard for future reports;
- Was there any update on the extension of completion schedules in some developments and what impact this might have; and
- It was suggested that for future updates connected metrics should be provided

The Research Manager noted the points made around comparative data to other major/core cities and agreed to include this in future dashboards where possible. He also commented that on construction times these were at 90% productivity on sites and work was done to estimate how this affected the development pipeline. He agreed to look to include this in future updates if possible.

### **Decision**

The Committee:-

- (1) Notes the dashboard; and
- (2) Supports the proposal to move to a more integrated approach to economic monitoring that responds to and better supports emerging priorities

### **ESC/20/33 Housing Revenue Account Delivery model - Northwards ALMO Review**

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Executive, which informed Members of the outcome of the recent “due diligence” review of the Arms Length Management Organisation (AMLO), Northwards Housing, undertaken by Campbell Tickell. The report provided a summary of the findings and a proposal to develop a service offer to tenants in light of the findings in order to move to a full consultation and “test of opinion” of tenants and leaseholders to the service being brought in-house.

The main points and themes of the report included:-

- A summary of the rationale for the establishment of Northwards Housing Limited (NHL) in 2005 and its primary objective;
- The current and predicted financial position of the Council’s HRA at the end of the 30-year business plan which was projecting a deficit in excess of £400m.

- The methodology used by Campbell Tickle in undertaking the review of the HRA and Northwards ALMO;
- The main findings from the review, including the current service baseline and challenges to be addressed;
- A summary of the financial and non financial benefits of three options for consideration:-
  - Retention of the ALMO;
  - Return of the Housing service to MCC; or
  - Stock transfer;
- An outline of the next steps in developing the tenants offer, which was a critical part of moving to the test of opinion ballot; and
- An indicative timescale of the next steps should the Executive support the proposal to develop a tenants offer.

The report would also be considered by the Executive at its meeting on 9 September 2020.

Some of the key points that arose from the Committees discussions were:-

- Whilst acknowledging the financial savings returning the housing service to the Council would bring, It was not clear what the benefit to tenants would be by bringing the housing stock back into the Council or how they would receive a better service;
- There was no mention in any of the proposals of how the repair contract would be managed;
- It was questioned what the scope of the brief given to Campbell Tickle to undertake the survey was and what qualifications did they hold to undertake the survey;
- There was serious concern that the proposed financial savings by bringing the housing service back into the Council would result in the loss of jobs to Manchester residents;
- What would happen if the tenants did not agree with the proposal to return the housing stock to the Council;
- It was commented that the savings difference between improving the existing service and removing it, which was reported to be £77m, equated to only £45 per property per year over the 30 year business plan and it was felt that this needed to be clear to tenants on the level of impact this saving would have;
- Some Members were not convinced that the interests of the tenants living in Northwards managed properties were paramount in the proposals being put forward; and
- It would be essential not to lose the best elements of the current service provided by Northwards if the management of the housing stock was brought back under the control of the Council.

The Interim Director of Housing and Residential Growth advised that the report did not refer to how tenants would benefit from bringing the housing stock back into the Council as this was the next stage of the process. This stage was to validate previous assumptions that had been made that there was substance to the indicative and projected savings to be made and improvements to service. In order to deliver

the aspiration to improve services to tenants, there would need to be a test of opinion to see if there was support for the move of the management of the housing stock and to do this there would need to be an offer presented to tenants of what the service would look like if managed by the Council and how they could be engaged with and influence the service in the future.

He advised that the financial savings of returning the housing stock to the Council would be through various components, including shared back office/corporate core functions, achieving significant economies of scale.

It was reiterated that doing nothing was not an option so If the tenants didn't agree following the test of opinion, then other ways would need to be identified to tackle the financial pressures that the HRA faced.

The Leader commented that he felt there was sufficient evidence to maintain the HRA, improve the level of services and improve the overall neighbourhood management of areas by bringing the housing stock back in control of the Council.

The Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration acknowledged the positive from the survey of Northwards tenants undertaken by Campbell Tickle had identified some areas of concern that needed to be looked at in more detail. She also commented that whilst the Business Plan put forward by Northwards identified savings, the Council had had to use HRA reserves for the last few years in order to balance the budget, so questioned why these savings hadn't been identified previously.

## **Decisions**

The Committee:-

- (1) Does not endorse the proposal that the Executive confirm insourcing the service remains the preferred option and the intention to take over direct management of the Housing Service into the Council from 5 July 2021 subject to a "test of opinion" involving all tenants and leaseholders.
- (2) Notes the review concludes that doing nothing is not an option and that there is an opportunity to achieve savings of at least £77m over the 30-year business plan by ending the current arrangements under which the Council's housing stock is managed by Northwards Housing Limited (NHL).
- (3) Notes the proposals contained within the report about how the new council controlled service offer will be developed and how, in future, tenants will be involved and empowered in the decision making about services to homes and communities.

## **ESC/20/34 Overview Report**

The Committee considered a 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.

## **Decisions**

The Committee:-

- (1) Notes the report;
- (2) Agrees the Work Programme as submitted



## **Economy Scrutiny Committee**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 8 October 2020**

**This Scrutiny meeting was conducted via Zoom, in accordance with the provisions of the The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.**

**Present:**

Councillor H Priest (Chair) – in the Chair  
Councillors Abdullatif, Green, Hacking, Johns, Noor, Raikes, Shilton Godwin and Stanton

**Also present:**

Councillor Leese, Leader  
Councillor Rahman, Executive Member for Skills Culture and Leisure  
Councillor Richards, Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration  
Councillor Stogia, Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport

**Apologies:** Councillor K Simcock

#### **ESC/20/35 Minutes**

#### **Decision**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 3 September 2020 were approved as a correct record.

#### **ESC/20/36 Proposed Planning Reforms, Local Plan and Greater Manchester Spatial Framework**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Planning, Building Control and Licensing, which informed Members of the proposed response to the Planning White Paper, published for consultation by the Government which closed on 29 October 2020. It also included the response to the Government consultation on “changes to the current planning system” which required a response by 1 October. The report also covered the recent changes to the permitted development rights regime, and concluded with an update on the emerging Local Plan for Manchester and the next steps for the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF).

The main points and themes of the report included:-

- A summary of the proposed planning reforms and the significant challenges these would bring to how the Council used the planning system to enable and deliver key outcomes for the city including economic and sustainable growth, jobs and new homes;
- An overview of the key matters for consideration in the Council’s response to questions posed in the Planning White Paper;

- A summary of the proposed changes to permitted development and use class changes and how this might impact on manage the quantum and mix of development in key parts of the City;
- The next steps associated with the development of the Local Plan, which included consultation on a Scoping Report for the Integrated Assessment; analysis and further commissioning of key elements of an evidence base and development of a draft Local Plan;
- The GMSF was reaching an important stage with a final publication version of the plan due to be consulted on from early November until 31 December 2020; and
- The plan was then intended to be submitted for examination in summer 2021, with the Council's Executive being considering a report on 14 October 2020 recommending approval of the Publication consultation.

Some of the key points that arose from the Committees discussions were:-

- There was concern that the proposals within the Government White Paper would remove the ability for local people to shape the place in where they lived;
- The proposals failed to address the issues Manchester faced in relation to planning and they would not help Manchester deliver its affordable homes strategy;
- There was concern in relation to the proposal to increase the further digitalisation of both local plan and development management processes;
- There was also concern about the proposal to introduce a fast-track for beauty through changes to national policy and legislation;
- There was concern that proposals to set some policy targets at a national level rather than at a local level could have a negative impact on Manchester to deliver its net zero carbon development target by 2028;
- Further clarity was needed on what the prior approval process proposals in regards to permitted development would mean;
- The driving principle of the Council's response to the White Paper should be centred around the fact that the proposals would diminish the opportunity for locally distinctive policies that reflect specific local conditions and drive the Council's priorities;
- There was a lack of detail in the White Paper around how the proposals would address climate change;
- There was concern that the proposal to outsource Listed Building consent would have a negative impact on the Council's enforcement powers;
- It was felt that the response around the class order change relating to the conversion of office space to residential space could be strengthened;
- The proposals were a threat to the Council's ability to achieve its priorities for the city and to local democracy and Government was misunderstanding what was slowing down house building in the country;
- There was concern around the impact to fire safety in light of the proposals within the White Paper;
- It was heartening to see the views of local residents as to how they would like to see Manchester develop as part of the Issues consultation of the Local Plan, however was the level of responses received been enough to give the process legitimacy;

- There was concern about the proposal to compress some of the later stages of the Local Plan in order to allow the Plan to be adopted in 2023; and
- How was the Council proposing to act on TFGM's response to the Issues consultation in relation to public transport and zero carbon targets

The Committee was advised that Government felt by setting a number of policies at a national level would reduce the duplication of these across numerous local authorities. However it was commented that this ignored the need to acknowledge the distinctiveness of local areas, such as Manchester.

The Director of Planning supported all the concerns that had been raised by the Committee, noting specifically the difficulty the Council would face in trying to deliver its Zero Carbon target if these targets were set nationally and those around the ability to locally determine fire safety requirements in developments. In terms of prior approvals, this was already in place for particular developments, and allowed developers and applicants to submit proposals for assessment, however, the Council was limited in refusing these developments at present. She agreed that further detail was needed from Government on how the proposal to outsource building consent work in regards to enforcement powers that the Council currently had available.

The Committee was advised that Government had already introduced measures around class order changes, however there was a legal challenge taking place brought by a number of civic societies against the introduction of these orders. The Council was awaiting the outcome of this challenge before it determined what response it might need to take.

It was reported that the Council wished to press on with the local plan within the current legislative framework whilst acknowledging the risk should the proposals within the White Paper be adopted wholesale and the impact of these on the Local Plan. It was commented that transitional arrangements would be put in place which should result in Manchester adopting a Local Plan that it wanted which would then mean any future review would need to be undertaken under any new legislative framework

The Committee was advised that the level of responses to the Issues Consultation on the Local Plan was in line with similar consultations around the Core Strategy at a similar stage. It was explained that there had been quite a significant response to the Our Manchester Strategy re-set which covered similar issues so Officers were liaising with colleagues on these responses to help feed into the Local Plan consultation.

Officers acknowledged that the response from TFGM was a key response and they were working closely with colleagues on transport issues. One aspect that would be brought forward would be a refresh of the Transport Strategy 2040 and a local implementation plan, picking up key local transport streams outside of the city centre.

## **Decision**

The Committee:-

- (1) Supports the Council's draft response to the Government White Paper.

- (2) Requests that the Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport and Officers take on board the comments made by Committee Members to strengthen areas of the response were appropriate.
- (3) Notes the updates on the emerging Local Plan for Manchester and the next steps for the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF).

### **ESC/20/37 Economic Recovery of the City's Cultural Sector**

The Committee considered a report of the Strategic Lead Policy and Partnerships and Director of Culture (Home Manchester), which provided an overview of the impact of COVID on the City's cultural sector, outlined access to local and national financial support for the sector and the gaps identified in the assistance needed for the cultural economy.

Key points and themes in the report included:-

- The sector faced unprecedented challenges as one of the last industries able to reopen on a financially viable basis;
- The industry was reliant on a highly-skilled, flexible but vulnerable freelance workforce that had been severely impacted by a loss of business;
- A Manchester Culture Recovery Plan had been developed with a wide range of partners and stakeholders and a COVID Culture Recovery Board had been established to lead the city's response to the pandemic and aid the sector's recovery;
- Cultural partners had responded creatively to the crisis with many seeking new and digital solutions to engaging audiences and participants;
- There were a number of initiatives to assist businesses, support freelancers and deliver reopening strategies at a local and national level;
- Emergency assistance had been made available by Arts Council England and the Government had put in place a Culture Sector Recovery Fund for England; and
- There was evidence that the current level and means of support available would be insufficient to sustain the sector for the duration of the continued period business disruption.

Some of the key points that arose from the Committees discussions were:-

- The Cultural sector had a foundational importance to the future of the city in its ability to shape the identity of Manchester and ability to attract and retain people;
- It was pleasing to see in the request for support from Government that this included support for individual freelancers and sub-contractors;
- Without significant government support to sustain this industry there was a real risk that the city would not be able to sustain the industry;
- It needed to be recognised by Government that Manchester's cultural sector had been struggling pre-COVID due to the years of cuts in public funding streams and the redirection of funding to schemes in London;
- Inclusivity of the sector need to be looked at as part of the recovery plan;
- What consideration, if any, had been given to the use of empty assets within the sector;

- There was concern about the loss of smaller cultural venues that had happened during COVID and what landscape was needed to be created to allow new venues to emerge and have a chance of surviving;
- Consideration needed to be given to broadcast media, including radio, as part of the recovery plan;
- Was there any thinking around how greater security and stability could be afforded to those freelance jobs within the cultural sector; and
- Government needed to recognise the high quality provision of skills and training that Manchester provided for those wanting to or already working in the cultural sector.

The Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure advised that it was paramount that Manchester and other Core Cities approached government as one voice when making the case for funding. He also acknowledged the difficulty the sector had faced resulting from the removal of funding streams which in turn, had made the sector move to an income generation model which had been severely impacted by the restrictions brought about by COVID.

The Committee was advised that it was testament to the prudent financial management and good governance of cultural organisations that Manchester had not seen a more severe impact to the sector. Many organisations were now however, seeking cultural emergency funding to help support them to the end of March 2021 and the concern was how these organisations would survive past March 2021 if the restrictions related to COVID were still in place.

The Strategic Lead Policy and Partnership commented that a working group of UK Core Cities was being established with representatives of northern core cities to lobby government on the support needed around the hospitality, leisure and culture sectors.

The Committee was informed that an emerging cultural workspace plan was in development as it was acknowledged that property prices would have an impact on the ability of creative practitioners to find affordable workspaces and there would be a need to be live to the needs of grass roots venues to try and support them appropriately.

The Executive Member for Skills Culture and Leisure supported the point made around the need to provide greater security and stability for those working in freelance roles within the cultural sector. It was commented that the crisis had highlighted how valuable the creative ecology of freelancers and artists was to the city and cultural offer and how precarious and vulnerable those individuals were.

The Director of Inclusive Economy concurred with the point made around the need to recognise the high quality provision of skills and training that Manchester provided for those wanting to or already working in the cultural sector and alerted Members to what further provision was being made.

## **Decision**

The Committee notes the report.

## **ESC/20/38 Update on COVID-19 Activity**

Further to Minute ESC/20/30 (Update on activity under COVID 19), the Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director (Growth and Development), which provided a further update of the current situation in the city in relation to COVID-19 and an update on the work progressing in Manchester in relation to areas within the remit of the Committee.

The key points and themes included:-

- An economic overview at a national, regional and local level;
- A sectoral impact update, including the impact on footfall within the city, hospitality and visitor economies, aviation and universities;
- The steps needed to stimulate development & investor confidence in the city;
- Work being undertaken with TfGM to agree a broad overall transport plan to support the gradual opening up of the city with a focus on pedestrian movement and safe use of public transport;
- Work being undertaken around Skills, Labour Market and Business Support following on from the THINK report findings; and
- A progress update on the lobbying of government for additional funding.

The Leader also provided a verbal update on the most recent developments since the publication of the report.

Some of the key points that arose from the Committees discussions were:-

- Had there been an increase in footfall in some areas compared to others and was this as a result of displacement from the city centre;
- Was there any more detail on Kickstart and Jets and how these programmes would integrate;
- Was there any information on whether Manchester or Greater Manchester was going to apply to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund and if so what would be applied for.

The Director of Inclusive Economy advised Kickstart was not going to be locally designed or delivered but work had been undertaken with GM colleagues on what our approach and outcomes might be. The Council was committed to providing at least 30 Kickstart opportunities across the Council and where possible lining those up where there was turnover or apprenticeship vacancies. The Council had also started conversations with businesses around the use of Kickstart but further work was needed on this. Jet was a re-announcement of the chancellors Summer Statement for additional funding for those furthest from the labour market which would result in an additional £13m across GM delivered through the working well programme.

The Committee was advised that footfall increases likely related to the number of students that had returned to the city in Fallowfield, Withington and Rusholme wards.

The Strategic Lead – Policy and Partnership advised that Manchester intended to join the GM consortium bid for the Public Sector Decarbonisation fund with a bid being

submitted later in the year. A further update could be provided to Members closer to the time if required.

### **Decision**

The Committee notes the update.

### **ESC/20/39 Overview Report**

The Committee considered a 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.

### **Decisions**

The Committee:-

- (1) Notes the report; and
- (2) Agrees the Work Programme as submitted.



## **Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2020**

**This Scrutiny meeting was conducted via Zoom, in accordance with the provisions of the The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.**

#### **Present:**

Councillor Hacking - In the Chair  
Councillors Andrews, Chambers, M Dar, Doswell, Douglas, Grimshaw, Hitchen, Kirkpatrick, Rawlins and Rawson

#### **Also present:**

Councillor Craig, Executive Member for Adult Health and Wellbeing  
Councillor N Murphy, Deputy Leader  
Councillor Rahman, Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure

#### **CESC/20/23            Councillor Sue Murphy**

The Chair paid tribute to Councillor Sue Murphy, who had recently passed away, and the Committee paused to reflect on her life.

#### **CESC/20/24            Minutes**

Councillor Doswell requested that her apologies be recorded in the minutes for the 5 March meeting, to which the Chair agreed.

#### **Decisions**

1. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 5 March 2020 as a correct record, subject to the above amendment.
2. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2020 as a correct record.

#### **CESC/20/25            COVID-19 - Update**

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) which provided a brief summary of the current situation in the city in relation to COVID-19 and an update on the work progressing in Manchester in relation to areas within the Committee's remit.

Officers referred to the main points and themes within the report which included:

- Public health;
- Financial impact on the Council;
- Response and planning ahead for the recovery;
- The reset of the Our Manchester Strategy;

- Support to residents who were at risk during the pandemic;
- Update on the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector;
- Community safety;
- Parks, Leisure and Events;
- Libraries, Galleries and Culture; and
- Equality, diversity and inclusion.

The Chair thanked Council staff, partner organisations, charities and community groups for their work during this difficult time. The three Executive Members in attendance highlighted the work in their areas including the establishment of the Manchester Community Response Hub to support vulnerable residents with COVID-19 related issues, the work to enable emergency food provision from New Smithfield Market and the work of other teams across the Council, including the Anti-Social Behaviour Team, Cemeteries and Parks and thanked the officers involved. A Member also highlighted the work of the faith sector during this time and another Member praised the role of the We Love Manchester charity and Forever Manchester.

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

- To recognise that Manchester had led the way in testing people leaving hospital and going into care homes;
- That those accessing support and emergency food provision included people who needed help because they were shielding for medical reasons but also people experiencing food poverty, who could require longer term support from other services;
- Concern about what would happen if there was a second wave of the virus and the financial implications for the Council;
- Digital exclusion, including how the Council was communicating with people who did not have internet access;
- Challenges for the VCSE sector, including additional costs such as Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), additional cleaning, hand sanitisers and signage and volunteers who were medically vulnerable and might not want to return to their volunteering roles due to the risk of infection;
- The Council and Greater Manchester Police (GMP)'s strategy for dealing with breaches of lockdown;
- Plans to re-open libraries and Manchester Art Gallery;
- The temporary closure of leisure centres, including the financial implications of this;
- The letter sent to the Secretary of State raising issues about the recovery of the culture sector in Manchester; and
- The race review of the Council's workforce.

The Executive Member for Adult Health and Wellbeing confirmed that the level of infections was being closely tracked and that planning was taking place for a range of scenarios, including a second wave or ebbs and flows in virus transmission. She emphasised the financial consequences the Council was facing due to the pandemic and the importance of the national government providing the promised funding to local councils. She recognised that the people accessing emergency food provision

included different groups with different needs and reported that officers were ringing people in receipt of this to find out the reasons they were accessing it and to refer them to appropriate support. She advised the Committee that discussions were taking place with a range of partners about how to support those experiencing financial hardship and food poverty and that more information could be provided at a later date as this progressed. The Head of Neighbourhoods reported that a working group had been established to progress this.

The Executive Member for Adult Health and Wellbeing advised Members that the Council had recognised that some of the people who were vulnerable to COVID-19 might not have internet access and so had written to people and introduced the Community Response Hub telephone helpline. She reported that the Test and Trace service would also contact people who might have been exposed to the virus by telephone or letter. The Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure reported that some face-to-face services could not be offered during lockdown but that, as the Council moved into the recovery period, services would again become accessible through a range of methods. He suggested that the Committee might want to look at digital exclusion at a future meeting, noting that it related to all Council services, not just Leisure Services and Libraries.

The Programme Lead (Our Manchester Funds) reported that there were many volunteers who were older and at greater risk from COVID-19 but there had also been a lot of students and other people who had offered to volunteer. He advised that the challenge was to organise this and match people wanting to volunteer with volunteering opportunities, utilising the Volunteer Centre and MCRVIP (Manchester Volunteer Inspire Programme). He reported that some organisations had managed to obtain small emergency grants to help cover the additional costs related to COVID-19 and that the option of bulk-buying PPE for distribution to VCSE organisations was being looked into. He also informed the Committee that Macc, the organisation that was delivering the VCSE infrastructure contract, was providing support and guidance to VCSE groups across the city.

The Head of Neighbourhoods reported that the Council's Neighbourhood Teams had been contacting local voluntary and community groups to get an understanding of the challenges they were experiencing and that, while financial challenges had been the main issue which had arisen initially, there were also concerns that some medically vulnerable volunteers would not want to continue volunteering and officers were looking at how MCRVIP could help to fill those gaps.

The Deputy Leader reported that GMP's response to breaches of lockdown varied depending on the circumstances of the case, advising Members that GMP had finite resources which needed to be deployed effectively, while not exacerbating a situation.

The Head of Libraries, Galleries and Culture reported that national guidance for museums and galleries had just been released and that the service was planning for a safe, controlled re-opening of Manchester Art Gallery in mid-August, with a one-way system in place. He reported that, following discussions with the trade unions and the Health and Safety Team, some libraries would be re-opening on the 4 July 2020 as the start of a phased re-opening of libraries across the city; however, he advised that they would not be returning to their normal operation, although people

would be able to borrow books and use the computers. A Member who was also the Lead Member for Disability advised that it was important to ensure that any new ways of operating, such as one way systems, were accessible for all customers and that she was happy to be involved in work on this.

The Head of Parks, Leisure, Youth and Events reported that leisure operators across the country were reliant on income from customers to meet their costs and, during lockdown, were seeking financial support from the local authority to cover their fixed costs, noting that Manchester had been providing this financial support to its leisure operator, GLL. He informed Members that the Council had been working closely with Sport England, UK Active and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport to ensure that councils were reimbursed this money and that there was ongoing financial support for leisure providers during the recovery phase.

The Chair informed the Committee that discussions had been taking place about scrutiny of the race review of the Council's workforce and which Committee should consider this and that he would pursue this further outside of the meeting.

### **Decisions**

1. To request further information on MCRVIP in a future report at an appropriate time, including inviting people who had participated in the programme to attend.
2. To request that a copy of the letter sent to the Secretary of State raising issues about the recovery of the culture sector in Manchester be circulated to Members of the Committee and that any response also be circulated.
3. To note that the Chair will discuss outside of the meeting how the race review of the Council's workforce will be scrutinised.

[Councillor Hitchen declared a personal interest as a trustee of the We Love Manchester charity.]

### **CESC/20/26 Overview Report**

A report of the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit was submitted. The overview report contained a list of key decisions yet to be taken within the Committee's remit, responses to previous recommendations and the Committee's work programme, which the Committee was asked to approve.

The Chair requested an update on the proposed Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) around an abortion-providing clinic. The City Solicitor advised that she would send an email to the Members of the Committee once she had more information.

### **Decisions**

1. To note the report.

2. To request that the City Solicitor provide Members with an update on the proposed PSPO around an abortion-providing clinic.



## **Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on 23 July 2020**

**This Scrutiny meeting was conducted via Zoom, in accordance with the provisions of the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.**

#### **Present:**

Councillor Rawlins - In the Chair  
Councillors Andrews, Collins, M Dar, Doswell, Douglas, Hitchen, Kirkpatrick and Rawson

#### **Also present:**

Councillor N Murphy, Deputy Leader  
Councillor Akbar, Executive Member for Neighbourhoods  
Councillor Craig, Executive Member for Adult Health and Wellbeing  
Councillor Rahman, Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure  
Councillor Stogia, Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport

#### **Apologies:**

Councillors Grimshaw and Hacking

#### **CESC/20/27            Chair**

The Committee Support Officer informed Members that the Chair had sent his apologies for the meeting and asked for nominations for a Member to chair the meeting. A Member nominated Councillor Rawlins, which was seconded by another Member and agreed by the Committee.

#### **Decision**

To appoint Councillor Rawlins as Chair for the meeting.

#### **CESC/20/28            Minutes**

#### **Decision**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2020 as a correct record.

#### **CESC/20/29            Update on COVID-19 Activity**

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) which provided a further update summary of the current situation in the city in relation to COVID-19 and an update on the work progressing in Manchester in relation to areas within the remit of the Committee.

Officers and Executive Members referred to the main points and themes within the report, which included:

- the impact and challenges relating to residents at risk, community resilience and equality and inclusion;
- Key planning and recovery activity being undertaken in relation to these areas; and
- the residents and communities workstream which aimed to enable residents and communities affected by COVID-19 to live independent and fulfilling lives.

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

- Support for the approximately 2200 Manchester residents who had been receiving a food box from the national government scheme, but not local food support, when the national scheme was paused on 31 July 2020, including communication with the affected people, whether the Council had capacity to support them and whether there was any ward-level data on the number of residents affected by this and the number of people receiving support who were medically vulnerable rather than financially vulnerable;
- How domestic abuse victims could seek help and children affected by domestic abuse could receive support during lockdown;
- Request for more information on the Sanctuary Scheme;
- Digital exclusion and work to address this;
- What the definition of most vulnerable should be in the Our Manchester Strategy and that the Committee might want to consider this more at a future meeting;
- The valuable role of volunteers during the pandemic and how this could be recognised;
- Whether services had been resumed to residents who had previously been able to have library books delivered to their home;
- What measures were being put in place to ensure that play areas in parks could safely re-open;
- The re-opening of leisure centres and whether changes such as classes only being available at some leisure centres could have a greater impact on people with some protected characteristics;
- Summer youth provision;
- the Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector, including areas that the Committee would like to consider in a future report; and
- How COVID-19 was impacting differently on different groups.

The Head of Work and Skills assured the Committee of the Council's capacity to cope with additional demand from residents who had previously received support through the national government scheme. The Head of Neighbourhoods reported that the national government had already written to the affected people a few weeks ago and the Council was now following this up with a letter reiterating the support available locally. She advised Members that GPs had also been contacting their patients who were affected by this. The Head of Work and Skills reported that the Council had been mapping levels of need for food support across the city and had a good understanding of this. The Head of Neighbourhoods confirmed that the Council also had data on the number of medically-shielding people per ward and that work was currently taking place to map this against other datasets to get a better understanding of the situation and that this could be shared at a later date.

The Domestic Abuse Reduction Manager reported that during lockdown schools had continued to be notified of reports of domestic abuse affecting their pupils so that they could provide additional checks and support. She advised that, as in previous years, these notifications and support via the school's Safeguarding Lead would continue during the summer holidays. The Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) reported that the Council's targeted summer play offer would be available to some children who were affected by domestic abuse, although she recognised that there would be other children affected by domestic abuse which the Council was not aware of.

The Domestic Abuse Reduction Manager reported that the Sanctuary Scheme, operated by the Independent Domestic Violence Advisory Service, was available to private tenants, owner-occupiers and tenants whose housing providers did not have a similar scheme and that it installed security measures in the homes of those affected by domestic abuse. She informed Members that the messaging in relation to domestic abuse support had been reviewed in light of the lockdown to inform victims that services were still available to them and could be accessed by phone or online. She advised the Committee that her service had also been training universal services on how to identify domestic abuse and safely communicate with victims.

The Deputy Leader informed the Committee that the Council was looking at how the work of volunteers during the pandemic could be properly recognised. He also highlighted that the Lord Mayor had carried out virtual drop-ins to voluntary groups and that the High Sheriff and the Queen's Representative in Manchester had written letters of thanks to organisations.

The Head of Libraries, Galleries and Culture informed Members that the home delivery of library books had been resumed in mid-June for people who had their own front door and that the service was looking to expand this offer in the coming months.

The Head of Parks, Leisure, Youth and Events advised Members that strict guidelines for re-opening play areas had been set by the relevant governing body working closely with the national government. He informed the Committee that not all play areas had re-opened yet as the Council wanted to ensure that the right measures were in place first but the plan was to have all play areas safely re-opened before the end of the month with appropriate measures in place, such as sanitisers and signs about how to safely use the play area.

The Head of Parks, Leisure, Youth and Events reported that it was expected that only about 40% to 50% of leisure centre users would want to return within the next month, which would have a major effect on income, but that the Council was lobbying the national government for additional money to help cover these losses. He advised that, if it was left to market forces, it was likely that only leisure centres in areas of high demand would be re-opened; however, he reported that the Council was undertaking an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) to make sure that there was as much coverage across the city as possible and that a range of activities were available which met the needs of people with different protected characteristics, while being mindful of financial viability and the current COVID-19 guidelines. The Chair welcomed the service's use of EIAs to inform its decision-making. She requested that a future report on Equalities include information on how the different Directorates

across the Council were using EIAs, for example in relation to COVID-19 recovery work.

The Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure advised that he had circulated information on youth provision to all Members but that he would re-circulate this.

The Executive Member for Adult Health and Wellbeing reported that the Health Scrutiny Committee had been looking at health and inequalities, including in relation to COVID-19. She advised that there were three different pieces of work currently taking place in relation to equalities: one on the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on particular communities, another on work to address longer-term structural inequalities (primarily relating to health but connected to wealth) and a broader piece of work on equalities and inclusion led by the Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Team. She reported that the Health Scrutiny Committee was interested in further scrutinising inequalities in relation to COVID-19, possibly in conjunction with the Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee. The Chair advised that she would ask the Committee's regular Chair, Councillor Hacking, to discuss this with the Chair of the Health Scrutiny Committee.

In response to a question from the Chair on data-gathering and engagement with residents, the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) advised Members that engagement with residents was a key element of the refresh of the Our Manchester Strategy, which had been referred to in the report considered at the Committee's 25 June meeting.

## Decisions

1. To request a report on Domestic Abuse including details of the Sanctuary Scheme and the number of security installations carried out and information on how many families fleeing domestic abuse had been housed outside of the city and why.
2. To request a report on digital exclusion including how this varies across different parts of the city.
3. To note that the Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure will re-circulate the information on youth provision to all Members.
4. To request a report on the VCSE sector, including what support the infrastructure support services are providing, whether this has changed during the pandemic and whether they will continue to work differently to meet the changing needs of VCSE groups. To also look at equalities monitoring of groups which are being funded and groups which are closing down or are otherwise impacted by COVID-19. To consider in a future report what is being done to ensure that groups which are funded are carrying out work which meets the Council's priorities.
5. To ask that the Chair speak to the Chair of the Health Scrutiny Committee about how the issue of COVID-19 and inequalities will be scrutinised.

6. To request that a future report on Equalities include information on how the different Directorates across the Council are using EIAs, for example in relation to COVID-19 recovery work.
7. To consider engagement with residents at a future meeting.

**CESC/20/30            Overview Report**

A report of the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit was submitted. The overview report contained a list of key decisions yet to be taken within the Committee's remit, responses to previous recommendations and the Committee's work programme, which the Committee was asked to approve.

**Decision**

To note the report.



## **Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on 3 September 2020**

**This Scrutiny meeting was conducted via Zoom, in accordance with the provisions of the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.**

#### **Present:**

Councillor Hacking - In the Chair  
Councillors Andrews, Battle, Chambers, Collins, M Dar, Doswell, Grimshaw, Hitchen, Kirkpatrick and Rawson

#### **Also present:**

Councillor N Murphy, Deputy Leader  
Councillor Rahman, Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure  
Councillor Davies, Ward Councillor for Deansgate

#### **Apologies:**

Councillors Douglas and Rawlins

#### **CESC/20/31            Minutes**

#### **Decision**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 23 July 2020 as a correct record.

#### **CESC/20/32            Peterloo Memorial**

The Director of City Centre Growth and Infrastructure informed the Committee that a number of permanent options had been considered to make the Peterloo Memorial fully accessible to all disabled people, including a lift, a bridge and different designs of ramp. She advised Members that these options had been assessed by the Design Team, working with the access campaign group, but none of the options had proved viable, due to the constraints of the site and the geometry of the Memorial. She reported that discussions were now taking place about exploring a temporary ramp solution.

The Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure acknowledged that mistakes had been made which had resulted in the Memorial not being fully accessible. He reported that the Council had spent 12 months working to try to find a permanent solution, in consultation with the access campaign group, but had not been able to find one. He advised the Committee that a temporary ramp was now being considered which could be in place around the date of the anniversary of the Peterloo Massacre every year. He informed the Committee that the next steps were to communicate further with the access campaign group and hold a public meeting to discuss the options that had been explored, why they were not feasible and the proposals for a temporary ramp. He advised Members that the Memorial had not been used for protests or as a speakers' corner, as had been envisaged, as events

like that tended to take place in Albert Square, St Peters Square or Piccadilly Gardens and that very few people were climbing onto the Memorial. He reported that lessons had been learnt, that considerations about accessibility had been central in the design process for the Memorial to the victims of the Manchester Arena terrorist attack from the start and that this was the approach that would be taken for any future monuments.

The Chair reiterated the Committee's commitment to the Memorial being accessible to all people. He stated that the Committee had previously requested that the options for making the Memorial accessible be reviewed, that planning processes being reviewed to ensure that accessibility issues were identified and addressed at an earlier stage and that a public meeting take place, with an independent chair, so that interested parties could explore the options that had been put forward. He reported that the public meeting had not yet taken place, noting the challenges presented by the ongoing pandemic, but that his view was that this meeting should now be arranged. He advised that consideration would need to be given to holding this meeting virtually.

The Ward Councillor for Deansgate highlighted that Ward Councillors had raised the issue of accessibility at an earlier stage in the process; however, she acknowledged that lessons had since been learnt. She advised Members that accessibility needed to be embedded in the planning process more widely, not just for monuments. She reported that the Memorial had been used for a protest on the anniversary of the Massacre. A Member commented that a number of protest groups within the city had decided not to use the Memorial for protests at present in solidarity with disabled people who were not able to use it.

The Ward Councillor for Deansgate suggested that the Committee request a report on what options had been considered, what the obstacles were, who had been consulted and any alternative views so that officers' conclusions could be interrogated.

The Chair proposed that officers proceed with the rest of the agreed process, including the public meeting, and that the Committee then receive a report at a future meeting, where Members could review what had taken place and hear the views of those involved, including the accessibility campaigners. He expressed thanks to the groups involved for their co-operation in working with the Council to try to find a solution.

The Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure offered to circulate a note to Members outlining the work that had taken place to look for a solution, to which the Chair agreed. He acknowledged the Ward Councillor's comment about a protest having taken place on the Memorial on the anniversary of the Massacre and highlighted the proposal to put a temporary ramp in place around this date.

In response to a question from a Member on timescales for the rest of the process, the Chair advised that he would speak to the Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure and other stakeholders about when the public meeting could take place and stated that his view was that it should take place as soon as was feasible. He advised that he would feed back to the disability access campaigners what had been

discussed at this meeting. He also requested a short report to the Committee's October or November meeting outlining progress made since today's meeting.

### **Decisions**

1. To ask the Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure to circulate a note to Members which outlines the work that has taken place to find a solution to the accessibility issues relating to the Memorial.
2. To request a short report to the Committee's October or November meeting on the progress made since this meeting.

### **CESC/20/33 Proposed Public Spaces Protection Order Wynnstay Grove**

The Committee received a report of the Head of Compliance, Enforcement and Community Safety which provided an update on the outcome of the consultation for the proposed Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) for Wynnstay Grove.

The Deputy Leader and officers referred to the main points and themes within the report, which included:

- Background;
- Evidence of issues of concern;
- Impact of the behaviour;
- Action taken to address the issues reported;
- The consultation and the responses;
- Consideration of the articles for a PSPO;
- Human rights and equality considerations;
- The proposed PSPO;
- Enforcement; and
- Next steps.

In response to a Member's question on timescales, the Deputy Leader stated that he would want the PSPO to be implemented as soon as possible. He highlighted that action was already being taken by Council officers and Greater Manchester Police (GMP) to address anti-social behaviour around the clinic but that the PSPO would be an additional piece of legislation which would assist with this. The Community Safety Lead advised that, following the six-week period in which an appeal could be made, there would be a period of educating those affected by the PSPO on the prohibitions, requirements and consequences of a breach before it was enforced. The Deputy Leader informed the Committee that officers would still be working to address the prohibited activities during this period and move people on but that the penalties laid out in the PSPO would not be used during this education period.

Members commented that it appeared that a robust process had taken place. The Chair welcomed that an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) had been carried out. Another Member welcomed the proposed PSPO, advising that a similar PSPO in Ealing, London had been successful in addressing the issues there.

In response to a Member's question, the Community Safety Lead confirmed that the area covered by the proposed PSPO included the bus stops on Wilmslow Road which some of the people attending the clinic would be using.

### **Decision**

To note the report.

### **CESC/20/34            Update on COVID-19**

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) which provided a further update summary of the current situation in the city in relation to COVID-19 and an update on the work progressing in Manchester in relation to areas within the remit of this Committee.

Officers referred to the main points and themes within the report, which included:

- the impact and challenges relating to residents at risk, community resilience and equality and inclusion; and
- Key planning and recovery activity being undertaken in relation to these areas.

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

- The uptake of local welfare assistance for unpaid carers;
- Support for victims of domestic abuse, including refuge accommodation and safe rooms; and
- Work to address Digital Exclusion.

The Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) advised Members that she would speak to the Director of Customer Services & Transaction regarding the strategy for increasing the uptake of local welfare assistance for unpaid carers. She reported that a lot of work was taking place to address digital exclusion, through work being led by the Director of Inclusive Growth and also through the Library Service. She offered to provide Members with additional information on this after the meeting. The Chair advised that the Committee had a report on Digital Inclusion on the work programme, due to be scheduled for a future meeting.

The Chair reported that the Committee also had an item on Domestic Abuse on its work programme and suggested that this could be discussed further under the Overview Report item on the agenda. The Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) advised Members that she would ensure that this report included information on safe rooms. She reported that the availability of refuge accommodation was being monitored on a daily basis and would be considered as part of the refresh of the Domestic Violence Strategy. In response to a question from the Chair, she advised that a full report on Domestic Abuse could be provided to the Committee's November meeting but that she would ask the Domestic Abuse Reduction Manager to provide some information in response to Members' questions in the interim.

In response to a Member's question on food support, the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) reported that work was taking place to help people who had been

reliant on food parcels during the COVID-19 pandemic to access food in a different way and she asked the Member to contact her and the Director of Inclusive Growth if she had any particular concerns relating to her ward. Another Member praised the work of staff who had worked in the food hub at New Smithfield Depot and at local food banks to ensure that residents had access to food during this time. The Chair asked the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) to pass on the Committee's thanks to staff and partners for their work during this challenging time.

### **Decision**

To note the report.

### **CESC/20/35            Overview Report**

A report of the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit was submitted. The overview report contained a list of key decisions yet to be taken within the Committee's remit, responses to previous recommendations and the Committee's work programme, which the Committee was asked to approve.

The Chair recommended that the Committee receive the reports on Domestic Abuse and Digital Inclusion at its November meeting.

A Member reported that the Independent Race Review had been considered at the Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee (RAGSC) meeting on 1 September 2020 but that some elements of the Review fell within the remit of this Committee. He questioned whether this should be included as part of the Equalities item on the agenda for next month's meeting or whether it should be a separate item. The Chair stated that he would discuss with the Chair of RAGSC which aspects of the Review each Committee was looking at. The City Solicitor advised Members that, while this Committee should not duplicate the work of the RAGSC, there were some elements of the Review which were not workforce-related. She suggested that the presentation slides from the RAGSC's meeting be circulated to Members of this Committee and that Members might find it useful to watch the webcast of the RAGSC's meeting on 1 September 2020 to hear the contributions of the presenting officers. The Chair advised the Committee that he would speak to the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods regarding whether to consider the Independent Race Review as part of the Equalities item or as a separate report.

### **Decision**

To note the report and agree the work programme, subject to the above amendments.