

Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 1 December 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, B Priest, A Simcock, Stanton, Wheeler and Wright

Also present:

Councillor Leese, Leader
Councillor N Murphy Deputy Leader
Councillor Rahman, Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure
Councillor Hitchen, (Minute RGSC/20/56 only)

Apologies: Councillor Rowles

RGSC/20/51 Minutes

Decision

The Committee approves the minutes of the meeting held on 3 November 2020 as a correct record.

RGSC/20/52 Government Spending Review

The committee considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer, which detailed the main announcements from the Spending Review with a focus on those impacting the City Council's budget.

Key points and themes within the report included:-

- A 3% increase in Council Tax Adult Social Care precept (the referendum limit for the Council Tax precept remained at 2%);
- Nationally, an additional £300m social care grant (£150m of this was new funding);
- The New Homes Bonus scheme would continue for 2020/21 for additional homes delivered;
- Some additional support for COVID-19 losses;
- Nationally, unringfenced £670m in relation to Council tax losses including the impact of the increase in numbers receiving Council Tax Support
- 75% of irrecoverable 2020/21 Collection Fund losses would be reimbursed by the Treasury resulting in a smaller deficit to be smoothed over three years;

- The 100% Business Rate Pilots would continue for another year (including Greater Manchester) and there would be no Business Rates reset in 2021/22;
- Funding for Troubled Families scheme of £165m would continue on a roll over basis;
- Funding of £254m nationally was announced to reduce rough sleeping and Homelessness;
- Pay rises in the public sector would be restrained with only nurses, doctors and others in NHS receiving a pay rise next financial year;
- Due to the fact this was a one-year Settlement and many of the announcements were for one-off funding the position for 2022/23 would still remain extremely challenging with an anticipated gap remaining of c£120m; and
- The Council will also need to deliver around £50m of cuts in for 2021/22 to achieve a sustainable position for the future.

There were no questions in relation to this report.

Decision

The Committee notes the report.

RGSC/20/53 Setting of the Council Tax Base and Business Rates Shares for Budget Setting Purposes 2021/22.

The Committee considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer that advised on the methodology of calculating the City Council's Council Tax base for tax setting purposes and Business Rates income for budget setting purposes for the 2021/22 financial year, together with the timing of related payments and the decision on business rates pool membership. The Chair of the Committee would be requested to exempt various key decisions from call in.

Clarification was sought on how many properties were included in the Council Tax base for 2020.

The Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer advised that the Council tracked the number of council tax properties in each council tax band and the number of properties that were exempted from council tax which meant that the calculation was complex and the figure would only be confirmed in January 2021.

Decisions

The Committee: -

- (1) Note that the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer, in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance and Human Resources, has delegated powers to:
 - Set the Council Tax base for tax setting purposes in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2013;

- Calculate the Business Rates income for budget setting purposes in accordance with the Non-Domestic Rating (Rates Retention) Regulations;
- Agree the estimated council tax surplus or deficit for 2020/21;
- Agree the estimated business rates surplus or deficit for 2020/21;
- Determine whether the Council should be part of a business rate pooling arrangements with other local authorities;
- Set the dates of precept payments to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority.

(2) Note that the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee will be requested to exempt various key decisions from the call in procedures.

RGSC/20/54 Discretionary Housing Payments

The Committee considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer, which provided an update on the Council's Discretionary Housing Payment scheme and the potential impact of anticipated budget cuts

Key points and themes in the report included:-

- The officer proposal that was being considered as part of the budget consultation was to remove £1.5m of the £2m additional Council contribution to the Discretionary Housing Payment Scheme Budget;
- The Council's contribution has supported the policy objective to sustain tenancies and avoid further intervention and support costs;
- Taking money out of the system would mean that decisions would have to be carefully managed to ensure that the Council could continue to support its most vulnerable residents;
- The Council could if required, reduce the budget and still provide valuable, additional support to residents in the city that need extra support with rent costs with a reduced contribution of between £500,000 and £1m; and
- The impact of which would depend upon what the government did with the, at present, temporary changes to Universal Credit and Local Housing Allowance.

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

- Why had the percentage of cases relating to Registered providers increased significantly;
- It was suggested that when referring to under occupancy in the report this needed to be clear that this was a bedroom tax introduced by the previous coalition government to target the least well off;
- There was concern that the potential cuts to this budget would impact on potential further homelessness incidents and as such any decision should be put on hold until the next financial year;
- There was a need from Government to commit to the £20 payment in regard to Universal Credit;
- If the DHP budget was reduced, what contingencies would be in place to put more money in to the budget if pressures increased during the course of the next financial year;

- What processes were in place to handle, in a timely manner, housing benefit claims for temporary accommodation;
- Was there enough resources to support the level of homelessness being presented in the city;
- Members did not feel it was appropriate to remove £1.5m of the £2m Council contribution to DHP and the Chair proposed instead that the Council made a contribution to this budget at £1m in order to maintain the current level of service.

The Head of Corporate Assessments advised that the number of cases per registered providers had increased in large part due to the proportions of the payments being made, as the proportion paid to homelessness cases had reduced by some extent which had in turn increased the proportion being paid in to registered providers.

The Leader, whilst acknowledging the point being made, advised that reference to under occupancy being referred to as a bedroom tax was a political terminology, which was not appropriate for Officers to be using when producing reports. He also advised that he recognised the point being made around the potential impact of cutting this budget would have on the number of homelessness cases, but to maintain the current level of intervention would result in an over budget of between £0.5m and £1m and this was not appropriate to do. He added that whilst the budget could be reduced for 2021/22, in subsequent years there may be the need to increase it again due to the uncertainty of changes to Universal Credit and Local Housing Allowance

The Committee was advised that the Council would always maintain an unallocated contingency budget for instances where pressures for services became higher than anticipated.

The Head of Corporate Assessments advised that there were fortnightly meetings with colleagues in Homelessness to try and address the issues arising with making timely and successful benefit claims for those in temporary accommodation. It was acknowledged that this was a difficult area to overcome the issues that currently existed but was something that Officers were continually working on. The Chair suggested a follow up note to Members on this would be beneficial.

The Leader commented that the Government's Spending Review had identified additional funding to address homelessness but the precise details and allocation had not been released.

The Leader commented that he would be comfortable supporting the proposal for the Council to provide a £1m contribution to the service, which was in line with the current costs of maintaining the existing level of service and suggested that a deeper analysis of how other local authorities were supporting this service area via other routes.

Decision

The Committee recommends that the Council keeps its contribution to this budget at £1m in order to maintain the current level of service.

RGSC/20/55 New Customer Service Centre Delivery Model

The Committee considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer, which outlined the proposed new delivery model for face-to-face services currently delivered by the Customer Service Organisation (CSO).

Key points and themes of the report included:-

- An overview of the pre Covid Customer Service Centre (CSC) offer,
- Current arrangements as a result of the COVID19 pandemic; and
- Further detail on the piece of work to look at what a future operating model could look like and deliver for the Council and its residents.

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

- There was a need to be clearer on what was meant by a signing service, if this was in reference to BSL;
- Would consideration be given to offering the video conferencing service in more libraries than just the three referred to in the report;
- What impact would the proposals have on non-staffing related budgets;
- What level of staffing was being proposed for the delivery of the new model of service;
- It was felt that the service currently provided by the Council was superior to organisations providing a comparable service;
- Further clarity was sought on the co-browsing proposals;
- What model had been used to identify the three pilot areas;
- It was felt that there was still a need to provide a direct face to face homelessness services for those who needed it in the Town Hall;
- Was there enough capacity to deal with any increase in demand on the service, including homelessness triage when the current hold on evictions due to the COVID19 pandemic comes to an end;
- The Committee had understood the report to be indicating that there would be face-to-face services in the libraries, but was this not in fact the case;
- It was requested that information be provided to the Committee on the number of residents requesting face to face appointments and subsequently getting these appointments and what follow up is being done to ensure residents are getting the support they require

The Director of Customer Services and Transactions acknowledged the point made around signing service but advised that there was a range of different signing languages that people used so a collective reference was currently being used but this could be changed to something more appropriate if required.

The Committee was advised that the three libraries were just being used as a pilots for the video conferencing service. If this was well received then consideration would

be given to implementing this in other libraries across the city as the cost/physical infrastructure requirements for implementing were not insignificant.

The Director of Customer Services and Transactions advised that there were currently 18 staff in the CSC. There had been no face to face service offered since March 2020 due to the COVID19 pandemic and this new model only provided a face to face service at the CSC in the Town Hall, staffed by six employees, who would undertake a meet and greet function and any appointments that were required to be face to face at an appropriate location for the customer, which would include home visits if needed. Elsewhere would be via video conferencing.

In terms of the co-browsing proposal, this would allow for Council staff to provide real time digital support and view what the resident was looking at on their screen or having difficulty in completing.

The Deputy Leader advised that the three pilot areas had been identified on geographical grounds, representing the north, central and south of the city where a library had a large enough interview room that could comply with COVID19 spacing requirements.

The Director of Customer Services and Transactions advised she would speak to the Director of Homelessness in regard to the point made around the need to retain a face to face service. There was no plan to do this in libraries. In terms of increase demand on the service in relation to benefit claims, it was explained that any new benefit claimants would tend to be made by phone and the co-browsing proposals would support this. In relation to concerns around any possible increases in homelessness triage, this too would need to be passed to the Director of Homelessness for an appropriate response.

Decisions

The Committee:-

- (1) Note the content of this report.
- (2) endorse the proposed approach to developing and implementing a new operating model for face-to-face Council Services.
- (3) Requests the officers take into account the comments made by the Committee when developing and implementing the new operating model.

RGSC/20/56 Withdrawal from school catering provider market

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director, Neighbourhoods that informed the Committee of the current financial and operating position of Manchester Fayre, which provided catering services to 80 sites across the City. The report outlined the forecast cost of the service in the current year and the additional budget requirement that will be needed to continue operating the service.

The main points and themes within the report included: -

- Providing an introduction and background to Manchester Fayre;

- Describing the current operating position;
- Detailing the current budget position;
- Staffing implications; and
- Proposed transition arrangements.

It was also reported that the Council was not required to provide a school meals service and the subsidy now required to continue to operate the service to a minority of Manchester schools was significant. This subsidy would have a consequential impact on other service reductions that would be required. It was also commented that the market for school meal providers in Manchester was competitive and alternative providers could service the demand without the subsidy that would be required for Manchester Fayre.

Some of the key points that arose from the Committees discussion were:

- Rebutting the assumption that the jobs and employment terms and conditions of staff would be protected under TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006) arrangements if transferred to alternative providers, and noting that the limitations within those legal protections meant that in the current economic climate, TUPE was highly unlikely to be effective and might actually incentivise redundancy;
- Did any other local authorities in Greater Manchester have a service that was not loss-making, and if so, how had that been achieved;
- What consultation had been undertaken with Trade Unions, noting that concerns had been expressed by the Trade Unions regarding the consultation process, and suggesting that industrial relations were not being adequately maintained;
- Expressing the need to explore every option to protect the jobs and wages of the lowest paid workers, with more than one member commenting that it was a service predominantly staffed by relatively low paid, female workers;
- Noting that this proposal had been made repeatedly over a number of years, and questioning whether the communications strategy to sell the service was adequate;
- Noting that Manchester Fayre had been independently identified as a very good service, providing high quality and nutritious food and noting the importance of this for the children of Manchester;
- Commenting that the proposals amounted to an outsourcing of services;
- The Council should give consideration to using capital funding to deliver this service;
- Questioning the argument regarding the inability to deliver the service at economy of scale, noting that other providers had expressed an interest in delivering this service;
- Seeking clarification on the cost charged by Manchester Fayre to provide a school meal, commenting that there were different figures on the Council's website;
- Had consideration been given to delivering a Greater Manchester service to schools; and

- What was the actual budget of the service, commenting that the loss incurred during the pandemic should be disregarded as it has been for other Council services.

The Director of Commercial and Operations responded to the comments and questions from the Committee by stating that consultations had been undertaken with local Trade Unions in accordance with agreed protocols and process. He advised that staff would be transferred to any new provider under TUPE arrangements. He stated that the service could not compete with alternative providers due to the economy of scale, noting that approximately six schools per year were opting out of the service and the financial loss incurred by the service next year was anticipated as a minimum of £600k. He further clarified the cost to a school for a meal provided by Manchester Fayre, however the cost charged to the pupil was determined by the individual school, commenting that the information on the Council's website would be revised to ensure the information provided was correct.

The Director of Commercial and Operations stated that discussions had been undertaken with other local authorities, and that Salford had a more profitable service, but that school finances were arranged differently in Salford. Due to the different local funding arrangements and each school managing their own budget for this function in Manchester, this presented a significant challenge. He stated that previous attempts to re-recruit schools had stopped as the tactics used were not proving successful. The conversations would continue in addition to the local service manager and nutritionist promoting the Manchester Fayre service to Manchester schools, noting the positive comments on the service identified by the independent report.

The Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer confirmed that in some cases capital receipts could be used to fund transformation programmes where there was a financial payback. However caution needed to be taken when using capital funding to finance a transformation project and some local authorities had got into difficulties from it. It was also noted that it was the schools and their governing bodies that had decided to opt for alternative providers to deliver schools meals as they retained and managed this budget.

The Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure addressed the Committee and stated that the report did not propose any job losses and did not impact on the provision of Free School Meals. He stated that the budget to provide school meals had been delegated to individual schools and it was their decision as to how they procured this service, commenting that of the 185 schools in Manchester 110 of these had opted for alternative arrangements. He stated that the financial situation was such that it was unjustifiable to continue to subsidise this service. He stated that the report detailed the alternative options that had been considered and reiterated the point that this report did not propose any job cuts. He concluded that the money saved by not continuing to subsidise this service could be used to protect jobs and services when considering the broader budgetary pressures the Council was experiencing.

The Leader stated that the decision had been taken some time ago by the Council to delegate this budget to individual schools, noting that any surplus achieved was

retained by the school. He commented that 63% of schools currently procured school meals from other providers and nutritional standards had not deteriorated, adding that in many cases the menu variety had improved, and produce had been procured from local providers. He stated that there was no evidence to indicate workers' pay and conditions for those who had transferred to other providers had been adversely affected in his ward. He concluded by stating that the Council could not afford to continue to subsidise this service.

Decisions

The Committee: -

- (1) Recommends that the proposals described within the report are not progressed.
- (2) Accepts that Manchester Fayre may not be sustainable in its current form but recommends that alternative options are considered to maintain the offer of Manchester Fayre and protect jobs, including delivering a service with other Greater Manchester local authorities to achieve economies of scale and be a competitive provider of school meals.

RGSC/20/57 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) Note the report.
- (2) Note that the Chair will finalise the Work Programme for the February and March 2021 meetings in consultation with Officers.

Health Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 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, Doswell, Hitchen, Holt, Mary Monaghan, Newman O'Brien and Wills

Apologies: None received

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
Naomi Ledwith, Director of Commissioning, NHS Trafford CCG
Veronica Devlin, Chief Transformation Officer, MFT
Sara Fletcher, Head of Reform for Delivery, MHCC
Dr Peter Fink, GP & Clinical Lead for Urgent Care, MHCC
Kaye Hadfield, Urgent Care Reform Manager, MHCC
Cathy O'Driscoll, Associate Director of Commissioning, NHS Trafford CCG
Siân Goodwin, Urgent Care Reform Co-ordinator
Fiona Meadowcroft, Deputy Director of Strategy MHCC
Deborah Partington, Executive Director of Operations, GMMH
Adam Young, Associate Director of Operations, GMMH
Dr Sarah Follon, Ancoats Urban Village Medical Practice

HSC/20/46 Urgent Business – World Aids Day

The Chair introduced an item of urgent business by inviting Councillor Wills, LGBT Men's Lead to address the Committee on the subject of World Aids Day.

Councillor Wills stated that the George House Trust had organised a World AIDS Day online vigil to remember people lost to HIV, show solidarity with people living with HIV around the world and commit to challenging HIV stigma and discrimination.

Councillor Wills encouraged all Members to attend the vigil at 7pm on Tuesday 1st December and stated he would recirculate the information and link. He further encouraged Members to donate to Passionate about Sexual Health (PaSH) Partnership, a collaboration between BHA for Equality, George House Trust and the LGBT Foundation. The PaSH Partnership worked to deliver a comprehensive programme of interventions to meet the changing needs of people newly diagnosed with HIV, living longer term with HIV or at greatest risk of acquiring HIV.

Members were reminded that Manchester was a Fast Track City that was working to ending new cases of HIV within a generation.

The Executive Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing paid tribute to all clinicians and the Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector for their work in this important area and stated that she fully supported the virtual vigil.

Decision

To note the update and support the virtual vigil.

HSC/20/47 Minutes

Decision

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

HSC/20/48 COVID-19 Update

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Public Health that described that in October the Committee had received the latest version of the Manchester 12 Point COVID-19 Action Plan. This report and accompanying presentation provided a brief update on some aspects of the Plan, including Targeted Testing at Scale and the Manchester Mass Vaccination Programme,

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

- Welcoming the reported improvements in infection rates, however the need to be mindful that infection rates were still high and COVID-19 remained a threat;
- The public needed to continue to observe Public Health advice and guidance to reduce the risk of infection;
- How many critical care hospital beds were occupied by COVID-19 patients;
- Were there concerns regarding the potential impact on infection rates in the New Year following the relaxation of restrictions over the Christmas period;
- What work was being done with the student population to avoid a spike in cases when students return to Manchester in January;
- Welcoming the introduction of mass testing and what was the anticipated timescales; and
- Noting that communities often crossed borders within Greater Manchester as assurance was sought that all residents would be offered a vaccine.

The Director of Public Health reiterated the message that all residents needed to consider their personal risk when considering their options during the Christmas period. He said it reminded essential that everyone continued to observe the Public Health messages to mitigate the risk of further infections.

In response to the specific question regarding students, the Director of Public Health stated that the local Public Health team continued to work closely with the local Universities and they continued to make representations to Government to ensure students were tested prior to their return to Manchester to prevent another outbreak, similar to that what was experienced in October. He said that this was important as the focus and priority in the new year should be to focus resources on the roll out of the vaccination. He said that despite this the testing sites at the Universities would be retained and Universities would continue to be supported to digest national guidance and formulate plans and strategies that could be clearly communicated.

The Director of Public Health stated that at the time of reporting the number of critical care hospital beds occupied by COVID-19 patients was 46 and that he would circulate further data on this following the meeting.

Regarding vaccination, the Director of Public Health stated that priority groups would be vaccinated by Easter 2021, with the remaining adult population vaccinated by summer 2021. He described that all of the Greater Manchester authorities would work together to progress this programme in line with national guidance to ensure a consistent delivery.

The Executive Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing stated that the decline in the infection rate was as a result of the determination and sacrifice of the residents of Manchester. She expressed that caution was required over Christmas to avoid a further spike in cases in the New Year and that communications and messaging regarding household mixing over Christmas needed to be explicit and unambiguous.

The Executive Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing paid tribute to the Public Health Team and the Universities for responding to the outbreaks within the student population in the absence of national guidance.

Decision

The Committee notes the report.

HSC/20/49 Urgent and Emergency Care by Appointment

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Commissioning NHS Trafford Clinical Commissioning Group that updated Members on the urgent care changes happening in Manchester in line with Greater Manchester (GM) and national strategy.

The main points and themes within the report included: -

- In response to Covid-19, there was a refresh of the GM Urgent Emergency Care (UEC) priorities, which included a 'UEC by Appointment' model to reduce the risk of crowding within Emergency Departments (ED) with the principal aim of reducing the number of self-presenter attends by 25%;
- Proving a description of the various elements of the programme that comprised of:
 - NHS 111 First

- Streaming at the Front Door
- Clinical Assessment Service
- Virtual Clinical Hub
- Urgent bookable appointments
- Describing progress to date; and
- Next steps.

Dr Manisha Kumar, Executive Clinical Director MHCC provided the Committee with an oral update on the Walk In Centre located in the city centre. She described that this facility was co-located in Boots and due to the available space and the numbers of people attending changes were required to ensure it remained COVID safe. She described that a Talk Before You Walk model would be introduced to manage patient flow at the site and minimise the risk of COVID infection. She described that a facility would still be provided for the most vulnerable patients to present and wait for treatment. The Chair thanked Dr Kumar for the update and commented that the Committee would consider scheduling an update on this issue for a future meeting.

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

- The Committee had always advocated for the provision of Walk In Centres across the city and had vigorously opposed the closure of these, noting that the consequence of this would be an increase in presentations at Emergency Departments;
- Would Emergency Departments still have to comply with national waiting time targets;
- The model was predicated on an effective NHS111 service and what had been done to support and adequately resource this service;
- What consideration had been given to ensure the service was inclusive and accessible to all, including those for whom English was not their first language;
- Noting the difficulties some patients experienced accessing Primary Care it was understandable that many patients resorted to attending Emergency Departments in the knowledge that they knew they would receive treatment;
- Whilst recognising the need to introduce measures to ensure patient safety during COVID-19 was it anticipated that this model would continue post COVID;
- Noting the importance of assessments being undertaken by clinicians to ensure the most appropriate patient care pathway was identified;
- To ensure the safe and appropriate transfer of care it was important that patient records were accessible across the various health services;
- What was the initial feedback on the Clinical Assessment Service that went live on the 4 November 2020; and
- How was this change being communicated to the general public.

The Director of Commissioning, NHS Trafford CCG responded to questions and comments by advising the Members that initial analysis of the Clinical Assessment Service had been positive with no issues or complaints identified. In response to access she described that Equality Impact Assessment workshops would continue to convene to consider access and develop and refine targeted communication campaigns.

The Urgent Care Reform Co-ordinator stated that a 'soft' national advertising campaign had been launched and the local message was designed to complement the national campaign. She explained that engagement with various community groups had been planned and would be reviewed to ensure this method was appropriate and effective.

The Chief Transformation Officer, MFT advised that Emergency Departments would still have to comply with national waiting time targets and the new system was designed to relieve pressure on Emergency Departments; allow for more effective management and staffing; manage patient flow and ensure that patients received the most appropriate care by the service best equipped to deal with their health needs in the most appropriate setting. She advised that all patient assessments would be undertaken by a clinician to manage risk and safety. She explained that if a patient was referred to Primary Care an appointment would be made for the patient. She further described that such referrals would be monitored and reported and any 'Did Not Attends' would be followed up.

The Executive Clinical Director MHCC stated that during COVID-19 Primary Care had continued to deliver services to patients and how this had been achieved in the context of the pandemic had been recently reported to the Committee.

The Chief Transformation Officer, MFT stated that national discussions around improving Emergency Departments had been ongoing for many years and was an element of the NHS Long Term Plan, however COVID-19 and the need to ensure patient safety at this time had prioritised the issue. She described that there were many valid clinical reasons for introducing the changes and stated that some aspects of the changes would remain post COVID. She stated that at an appropriate time a review of the model would be undertaken to understand lessons learned and this would include the views of patients. The Chair commented that the Committee would request a further update on this subject at an appropriate time.

The Director of Commissioning, NHS Trafford CCG acknowledged the comment regarding the need to improve integrated IT systems and record sharing across services and she advised the Committee that this work was ongoing.

In response to specific concerns raised by Members the Committee was advised that no patient would be turned away from an Emergency Departments if they required urgent care, including those patients who self-presented. In response to comments made the Committee were informed that the new model was designed to improve patient care and was not driven by cutting costs or staff.

Members were further informed that additional staff had been recruited and trained to deliver the NHS 111 service. The Chair stated that an update report on the NHS 111 service would be scheduled for consideration at a future meeting.

The Executive Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing described her recent personal experience of accessing emergency care during the pandemic and stated that it had been very positive. She further supported the call for an update report on the implementation of the new model and suggested that this would be most appropriate post COVID.

The Executive Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing further recognised the importance of Primary Care and the role that they would play in the delivery of the COVID-19 vaccination programme that was planned.

The Executive Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing concluded by paying tribute to all health professionals and staff delivering services on behalf of the residents of Manchester.

Decisions

The Committee;

1. Note the report;
2. Recommend that a report on the delivery of services at the city centre Walk In Centre be submitted for consideration at an appropriate time; and
3. Recommend that a report on the delivery of the NHS 111 Service be submitted for consideration at an appropriate time.

HSC/20/50 Mental Health Services and COVID-19

The Committee considered a report of the Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust (GMMH) that described the organisational response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the steps taken to sustain services throughout the initial lockdown period and then develop a sustainable model of provision. Steps taken to forward plan the changing demand and impact on services as a consequence of the pandemic were also presented with a surge predicted to coincide with the autumn and winter months.

The main points and themes within the report included: -

- Providing an introduction and an overview of national guidance;
- Describing the GMMH COVID-19 Governance Arrangements;
- Information on the Recovery Planning Group;
- Information on the work of the Physical Healthcare and Infection Prevention and Control workstream;
- A summary of the work of the Service Users and Carers workstream;
- A summary of the work of the Workforce workstream;
- Information on Demand and Capacity Planning;
- Information on Community Activity;
- Information on Crisis Response;
- The response to Student Mental Health;
- Winter Planning;
- Infection Prevention and Control;
- Vaccination; and
- Lateral Flow Testing.

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

- What work had been undertaken with local universities to support the local student population;
- How was this specific work with students communicated;
- Welcoming the extended 24/7 crisis helpline and did this link in with other services such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS);
- Noting the IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Therapies) service reported as providing increasingly efficient access and as a result the service had reduced secondary waits throughout Manchester by over a 1000 clients, what percentage of clients did this represent;
- What work was being done to improve the transition from Children's Services to Adult Services;
- Noting the anticipated long-term impact of COVID-19 on mental health what comparisons could be made with other periods of economic downturn;
- Has there been an increase of people with mental health issues presenting at Accident and Emergency Departments; and
- Noting the increase in digital access to services, could people still access face to face services and support.

The Executive Director of Operations, GMMH informed the Members that the service for students had been established pre COVID-19 and had been established using the GM Transformation fund. She described that teams were established at each University and the number of referrals to this service had increased and staff had been deployed to support this service. The Deputy Director of Strategy MHCC further added that COVID-19 had highlighted the need to improve access to this service and Commissioners across Greater Manchester were looking at this using the lessons learned.

The Associate Director of Operations, GMMH stated that the 24/7 crisis helpline was open to all age groups and not restricted to mental health. He advised that the helpline could sign post to other services and offer advice on other issues such as substance misuse, NHS 111 and CAMHS.

The Associate Director of Operations, GMMH stated that he would circulate the details of the percentage of clients the reduction in secondary waits for IAPT services represented. He further confirmed that clients could still access face to face services, subject to COVID safe requirements and this was in addition to the provision of virtual services.

In response to the specific question regarding CAMHS and the transition to Adult Services the Executive Director of Operations, GMMH advised that work was ongoing to develop standards and protocols and commented that during COVID-19 teams across services had responded positively and collaboratively to ensure continuation of care and support.

In response to the numbers of patients with mental health issues presentation at Emergency Departments the Associate Director of Operations, GMMH informed the Committee that in the initial stages of the pandemic the incidents of this dramatically

reduced, however the number was beginning to increase again. He added that the Trust was working closely with Acute Services to address this.

The Executive Director of Operations, GMMH informed the Committee that the long term impact of COVID-19 continued to be modelled and analysed, noting that this was comparable to periods of economic recessions and the impact on mental health would be felt for at least two years to come. She stated that Greater Manchester was engaging with NHS England to ensure appropriate funding was secured to continue to deliver mental health services.

The Executive Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing called upon the government to adequately fund mental health and wellbeing services in Manchester. She further paid tribute to all staff delivering mental health services.

Decision

The Committee note the report and welcome the steps taken by GMMH to support the strategic objectives of the City Council to address local need throughout the pandemic

HSC/20/51 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.

Health Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 12 January 2021

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, Doswell, Hitchen, Holt, Mary Monaghan, Newman O'Brien and Wills

Apologies: None received

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
Ant Hanlon Chief Executive Manchester Irish Community Care
Martin Moran Manager Manchester Irish Community Care
Laura Foster, Director of Finance Manchester Local Care Organisation

HSC/21/01 Urgent Business – Manchester Irish Community Care

The Chair introduced an item of urgent business by informing the Committee that he had invited the Chief Executive, Ant Hanlon and the Manager, Martin Moran from Manchester Irish Community Care to be provide Members with a verbal update and presentation on their work.

The main points and themes within the presentation included: -

- A background to the organisation;
- Describing what services and support they provide;
- An overview of the structure of the organisation;
- Operational objectives;
- Describing how these activities were funded;
- Describing the approach to partnership working; and
- The desired outcomes of this work.

In response to questions Members were advised that the Irish community experienced many adverse health outcomes that were particularly associated with historical social and economic experiences. Members were informed that the referral telephone contact details were available on the organisations website, and it was anticipated that a referral form would be available via the site following a redesign.

The Committee were advised that the work of Manchester Irish Community Care had been restricted due to COVID-19, however telephone support had continued to be offered and all working practices had been reviewed in accordance with all Public Health guidance.

Following a discussion on funding and how the organisation could support the wider health and wellbeing ambitions of the Council the Chair recommended that the relevant Executive Member should engage with the group to explore these options further.

Decision

The Committee;

1. Notes the presentation and thanked the representatives from Manchester Irish Community Care for attending the meeting.
2. Recommend that the relevant Executive Member should engage with the group to explore the options for how the service can support the wider health and wellbeing ambitions of the Council.

HSC/21/02 Minutes

Decision

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

HSC/21/03 COVID-19 Update

The Committee considered the joint presentation of the Director of Public Health and the Executive Clinical Director Manchester Health and Care Commissioning that provided an update on COVID 19 activity and an update on the Manchester COVID-19 Vaccination Programme.

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

- What was the view on how best to protect yourself from the latest strain of the virus;
- Noting the infection rates amongst the over 60's and the corresponding numbers of hospital admissions;
- Noting that the pressures currently experienced by hospitals as a result of COVID-19 was impacting on their capacity to deliver other services and care;
- Acknowledging the positive work of the Woodhouse Park Lifestyle Centre to support residents;
- It was important that as the vaccination programme progressed all residents were given the opportunity to be vaccinated;
- How quickly would schools obtain the result of mass testing;

- Noting the current two different vaccines that were being administered was there a clinical difference as to who should receive these;
- What was the view of the Director of Public Health on the time gap between the administration of the vaccine;
- What was being done to ensure that the children of key workers could still access school places during lockdown;
- Were volunteers still required for the vaccination sites;
- How would residents be contacted to inform them to attend for a vaccination; and
- What was the approach to addressing and dispelling the many misconceptions surrounding the vaccine.

The Executive Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing stated that she wished to pay tribute to all staff who had worked to mobilise the vaccination programme and she had every confidence on the delivery of this, however noted that the success of the vaccination programme in Manchester was predicated on the successful supply of the vaccine that was being coordinated at a national level.

The Director of Public Health responded to questions by stating that in regard the new variance of COVID-19 the public were being advised to continue to follow all of the Public Health advice and guidance to ensure the rates of infection decreased. He advised that by reducing the rates of infection this would in turn reduce the pressures being experienced in hospitals. He described that the next couple of weeks would be critical and every attempt was being made to safely discharge patients from acute settings to help relieve the pressure on hospitals. He described that the levels of infections continued to be monitored and analysed.

The Executive Clinical Director MHCC stated that whilst the pressures currently experienced by hospitals as a result of the pandemic could not be underestimated it was important to emphasise that if anyone was experiencing a medical episode to seek immediate advice and assistance. She stated that the successful delivery of the mass vaccination programme would contribute to the stabilisation of hospital services.

The Director of Public Health stated that following briefings of senior clinicians he was confident that the current guidance relating to the time between vaccine injections was correct. He advised that a communications campaign relating to the vaccination programme had been developed and added that an individual did not need to be registered with a GP to be eligible for a vaccination.

The Director of Public Health stated that the results of testing in schools would be available after thirty minutes and schools had developed protocols to administer and manage this in line with advice from the Department for Education. He further commented that colleagues within Children's Services and the Education Department had responded positively to the issue of school places for children of key workers and a dedicated phone line had been established for parents to contact if they were experiencing difficulties.

The Executive Clinical Director MHCC stated that the different vaccines that were being administered were appropriate for the vast majority of all over 18 year olds, however one was more appropriate for some patients with severe allergies and those

who were pregnant or breast feeding. She described that the difference between the two vaccines was due to the storage and management of the vaccine.

The Executive Clinical Director MHCC expressed her gratitude to all those who had volunteered to assist at the vaccination centres and additional volunteers would be welcomed as this would be an ongoing programme, adding that training and support would be offered to all volunteers.

The Executive Clinical Director MHCC informed the Committee that residents would be invited for a vaccination, using the contact details retained by Primary Care. She commented that if people did not subsequently then book in for an appointment or did not attend a booked appointment would be monitored and followed up. She described that the booking system for the mass vaccination sites was currently administered nationally.

The Director of Corporate Affairs, MHCC described that a specific vaccination communications campaign had been designed in consultation with a range of partners. He described that the campaign would engage with a variety of different community groups and organisations and local intelligence would be used to target the campaign and deliver key messages regarding vaccination.

The Chair, on behalf of the Committee placed on record his gratitude to all staff and volunteers working to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Decision

The Committee notes the report.

HSC/21/04 Budget Options for 2021/22

The Committee considered a report of the Acting Chief Executive Manchester Local Care Organisation and Executive Director of Adult Social Services that detailed the service and financial planning and associated budget strategy work that is taking place for adult social care with partners across the health and care system.

The report detailed the identified and proposed opportunities to make savings in 2021/22 aligned to the remit of the Health Scrutiny Committee, to support the City Council to achieve a balanced budget in 2021/22.

As adult social care is both within the MHCC health and care pooled budget, works in partnership is increasingly focused on integrating with community health services through the Manchester Local Care Organisation (MLCO); this report is jointly presented to the Scrutiny Committee by the key partners of MHCC, MCC and MLCO, noting the areas that would be led by MLCO.

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

- Commenting on how the pandemic had highlighted the consequences of continued and prolonged underfunding of NHS and Adult Social Care by central government;
- Welcoming the Better Outcomes, Better Lives programme, noting that the level of savings from within this programme would increase in future years and substantively replace the one-off grant and support funding provided;
- Commenting that the Health Scrutiny Committee should have regular updates and oversight of the delivery of the Better Outcomes, Better Lives;
- More information was requested on the governance arrangements of the Manchester Partnership Board;
- Noting the anticipated long term impact of COVID-19 on mental health, was the budget allocated to deliver mental health services sufficient to meet these demands both in the immediate and long term;
- Members would welcome a separate briefing session on local pooled budget arrangements;
- Welcoming the ongoing commitment to paying the National Living Wage; and
- Welcoming the stated commitment to ensure that as service plans for neighbourhoods were shared with the relevant elected members and other key stakeholders as they are developed.

The Executive Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing advised the Committee of the significant pressures that had been placed on services and budgets as a result of COVID-19. She commented that this had been exacerbated by continued and repeated cuts to funding imposed by the government. She stated that the government had failed to deliver on their commitment to address Adult Social Care and she called on the Chancellor to adequately and fairly fund all local authorities. She stated that despite these cuts Manchester had worked to respond to these challenges and support the most vulnerable residents in the city. She described that the Better Outcomes, Better Lives programme was one example of innovative working and she gave a commitment that the Committee would be regularly updated on the delivery of this programme.

The Executive Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing further commented that Public Health services would be reviewed in line with all funding announcements and the Committee would be kept informed with any developments.

The Executive Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing informed the Members that there was political representation on the Manchester Partnership Board, stating that she was appointed to the Board. She stated that further information on the work of the Board and the organisational arrangements could be submitted for consideration at a future meeting.

The Interim Deputy Director of Adult Social Services noted the positive comments from Members regarding the Better Outcomes, Better Lives programme and commented that it was important to note that this was supported by the work force who were essential for the successful delivery.

In response to the comments regarding mental health budgets, the Director of Finance Manchester Local Care Organisation stated that the Greater Manchester

Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust were managing and delivering these services within the budgets that were available to them.

Decision

The Committee agree the savings proposals as described within the report and endorse these to the Executive.

HSC/21/05 Our Manchester Strategy Reset – Draft Strategy

The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Adult Social Services and Director of Public Health that provided an update on the draft *Our Manchester Strategy – Forward to 2025* reset document. The draft of the reset Strategy is appended to this report.

Our Manchester Strategy – Forward to 2025 would reset Manchester's priorities for the next five years to ensure we could still achieve the city's ambition set out in the *Our Manchester Strategy 2015 – 2025*.

The main points and themes within the report included: -

- Describing the background to the Our Manchester Strategy reset;
- Providing an overview of the Our Manchester Strategy – Forward to 2025;
- Describing the final design and communications; and
- Next Steps.

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

- Welcoming the engagement with local elected Members;
- Every attempt should be made to increase participation with the consultation to ensure all views of the community were captured and reflected;
- Congratulating staff for the work they had delivered on this area of work in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic;
- Noting that it was important to feedback to residents to provide confidence that their views had been listened to and were reflected; and
- Was data and information collected on who responded to consultations.

The Deputy Leader stated that 3,800 people who had directly participated in the engagement activity that had ran from 3 August 2020 to 25 September 2020 compared favourably to the original Our Manchester Strategy engagement in 2015 when approximately 2,000 people were directly engaged, and is higher than other recent similar Council activity, however he stated that this activity would always be reviewed to ensure maximum participation.

Officers reported that this activity was supported by a communications campaign with specific targeted campaigns to reach hard to reach groups. She stated information was asked for and recorded when responses were completed, such as gender, ethnicity etc however this it was not compulsory for residents to complete this information.

Decision

The Committee endorse the recommendation that the final version of *Our Manchester Strategy – Forward to 2025* be taken for consideration by the Executive in February 2021.

HSC/21/06 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 2 December 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, Chohan, Cooley, Hewitson, 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
Ms J Fleet, Primary Sector Teacher Representative

Also present:

Councillor Bridges, Executive Member for Children and Schools
Councillor Rahman, Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure
Tracey Forster, Health Visiting, Vulnerable Babies and Community Health Services
Lisa Sanchez, Health Visiting, Vulnerable Babies and Community Health Services

Apologies:

Councillors Abdullatif, Alijah and McHale

CYP/20/49 Minutes

Decision

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

CYP/20/50 Early Years

The Committee received a presentation of the Strategic Head of Early Help, the Early Years Strategic Lead and Tracey Forster, Lead Manager, Health Visiting, Vulnerable Babies and Community Health Services. The presentation provided a progress update on the priorities and delivery from Early Years and partners during the coronavirus pandemic.

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

- Strategic priorities;

- The impact of the pandemic on Early Years settings;
- The financial impact of the pandemic;
- The Early Years Service's response to the pandemic;
- The performance and impact of the Speech and Language Pathway;
- The performance and impact of the Parenting Pathway;
- Work to support school readiness; and
- The Health Visiting Service, including its performance and its response to the pandemic.

The Chair clarified that the budget savings referred to in the presentation slides were officer proposals at this stage.

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

- To praise the way that the services had adapted in response to the challenges presented by the pandemic, as well as the impact and outcomes of their work, which had been outlined in the presentation;
- How many Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) families had the service been in contact with regarding speech and language support;
- To note from the presentation that 120 daycare settings were open and to ask how many settings there were in Manchester in total;
- The challenges that new parents were experiencing during the pandemic; and
- The limitations of health visitors only speaking to parents on the telephone rather than seeing them and whether any alternatives were being used, for example, Zoom meetings.

The Early Years Strategic Lead clarified that 120 daycare settings were now open, out of a total of 130 settings. She reported that uptake of daycare places was being monitored on a weekly basis and that this was 20% lower than the previous year, which was due to parental choice and fear of perceived risks. In response to the question about BAME families and speech and language support, she advised that she did not have the figures to hand but could provide this information outside of the meeting. She outlined how the Early Years Service had responded to the needs of new parents during the pandemic, including baby groups, which had been taking place since September 2020, outreach work and projects with partners, such as work with Manchester Art Gallery to provide sensory boxes.

Tracey Forster agreed that, where possible, face-to-face contact was best for health visiting. She reported that most contacts had been swapped to telephone contact during the pandemic but that the option of appointment-only clinics had been retained and that staff had Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to carry out home visits, where this was needed. She informed Members that the service could also use online video meetings to speak to families but that this was not been heavily used, although it had proved useful for observing and providing advice on feeding. She advised that telephone contact had been the main means of contact during lockdown but that health visitors had made a note of families where they felt that face-to-face contact would be most beneficial and, from June onwards, those families had been prioritised to receive home visits or to be invited in for a clinic-based appointment. She advised that families who were not known to the service, for example, families

who had recently moved into the city and first-time parents, had been prioritised for these face-to-face contacts.

Decision

To thank Manchester's health visitors for the excellent work they are doing and to thank everyone involved in the Early Years work for their contribution.

[Ms Barnwell declared a personal interest as a Member of Manchester Parents Forum]

CYP/20/51 Early Help Evaluation (2015 - 2020)

The Committee received a report and presentation of the Strategic Director of Children and Education Services which provided an overview of the Early Help evaluation and its findings.

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

- Presenting needs of families that had been worked with;
- Evidence that support had led to reduced needs; and
- How investment in Early Help and a 'whole family' way of working could help support wider city priorities and strategies.

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

- To welcome the preventative approach being taken and the impact that had been made, in particular the number of children kept out of care;
- The difficulty in demonstrating what a preventative approach had achieved;
- The financial impact of the pandemic on families and what work was being done, including to help families who could become at risk of homelessness due to rent arrears;
- The availability of parenting classes during the pandemic;
- Whether the Early Help Hubs had connections with local food banks; and
- Whether Early Help was working with housing providers.

The Strategic Head of Early Help informed Members that work was taking place at a Manchester and Greater Manchester level to prevent and alleviate homelessness. She outlined the support available to families in rent arrears or experiencing other financial difficulties, including provision of advice on benefit entitlement and on debts, as well as work on gambling harm reduction, which had become an area of increasing concern during the pandemic.

The Strategic Head of Early Help reported that there was a high demand for parenting support and this was being provided through a range of means including online parenting support, one-to-one support, interactive video guides, a telephone helpline and small socially distanced parenting classes in Sure Start centres. She reported that there were a number of food clubs which were based at Sure Start

centres and that the three locality-based Early Help Hubs were well-connected with local food banks, although she would welcome the opportunity to expand those links.

The Strategic Head of Early Help advised that evaluations and feedback from families were used to demonstrate the value of investing in preventative work which would improve outcomes for families and result in savings later on. In response to a Member's question, the Early Help Project Manager explained that police data about offences relating to a particular address in the 12 months prior to an intervention and in the following 12 months demonstrated the impact of this work in reducing offences.

The Executive Member for Children and Schools advised that the evidence presented demonstrated that it had been a good decision to continue with the early intervention work and, in response to Members' comments, he suggested that in future it would be useful to clearly articulate the savings from this work in the evaluation.

In response to a Member's question, the Early Help Project Manager offered to provide information on the number of families concerned, in relation to the data on areas of the city and the sustainability of impacts, as only percentages had been provided. The Chair requested that he send this to the Scrutiny Support Officer for circulation to all Members of the Committee. In response to a question from another Member, the Early Help Project Manager advised that officers would look at analysing data broken down by sex and ethnicity.

The Strategic Head of Early Help informed Members that registered housing providers were a key partner in Early Help but that stronger connections were needed with the private rented sector. She reported that she would take this issue to the next partnership board meeting.

Decisions

1. To recognise the success of Early Help.
2. To ask officers to consider how Councillors could help with this work and to circulate a note to the Committee Members on this.
3. To request that the Early Help Project Manager provide information on the number of families, in relation to the presentation slides on areas of the city and the sustainability of impacts.

CYP/20/52 Children and Education Services Proxy Indicators March 2020 - October 2020

The Committee received a presentation of the Deputy Director of Children's Services and the Strategic Lead (SEND and School Improvement) which provided proxy indicators in relation to the performance of Children and Education Services.

The Deputy Director of Children's Services referred to the main points and themes within the presentation, which included:

- The rate of Children in Need;
- The rate of Child Protection Plans (CPP) and the percentage of children required a second or subsequent CPP; and
- Average Social Worker caseloads.

The Strategic Lead (SEND and School Improvement) provided an overview of the education data within the presentation. She also informed Members about changes to the way school attendance was being recorded, which meant that the attendance figures could not be directly compared to the previous figures. She reported that the Department for Education (DfE) had introduced a new attendance code of 'X', which was used if a pupil was self-isolating or a group of pupils had been sent home due to a COVID-19 case within the group. If a pupil tested positive for COVID-19, she advised that they would then be classed as 'I' for ill. She reported that pupils with the 'X' code were not classed as either present or absent so were excluded from the overall attendance figures. Therefore, she informed Members, while the school attendance rate was 94% overall, only 84% of pupils were present in school.

The Executive Member for Children and Schools informed Members that he had written to the Secretary of State, recommending that national assessments should not take place next year and should be replaced by teachers' assessments, as some pupils had been required to spend a number of weeks self-isolating while other pupils had not been affected by this. He expressed concern that Manchester children could be disproportionately affected compared to pupils in areas with lower infection rates and also that pupils from less privileged backgrounds would have already been disadvantaged when studying at home during the first lockdown. In response to a question from the Chair, the Executive Member stated that he had not yet received a response to his letter. A Member advised that it was important for Members to lobby on this issue.

A Member commented that, while social workers' caseloads had increased recently, they were still a significant improvement on the situation a few years ago.

In response to a Member's question, the Deputy Director of Children's Services advised that there was no comparator data available on Children Missing from Home.

In response to a Member's question, the Director of Education advised that the Children Missing from Education referred to in the presentation slides were children whose families had recently applied for a school place, as new families were moving into the area all the time, and they were still in the process of being offered a school place. She advised that some children were offered places through the In Year Fair Access Protocol and, for others, the School Admissions Team would look for the most suitable vacancy for a maximum of four weeks before offering a place. She also advised that, where a child had an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP), her service had to consult with the school prior to offering the place.

Decision

To thank officers for the presentation.

CYP/20/53 Holiday Provision Evaluation

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of Neighbourhoods and the Strategic Director of Children and Education Services which provided an evaluation of the summer and half term offer following the agreed proposal to enhance the offer during the COVID-19 pandemic. The report stated that all youth providers were working alongside young people to understand what impact their lives had on the environment.

The main points and themes within the report included:

- The objectives of the summer and half term offer;
- Its implementation;
- Statistics on the sessions and attendees;
- Outcomes;
- Holiday hunger;
- Young people's feedback; and
- Next steps.

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

- To welcome the focused, targeted offer that had been made available to young people;
- To request a ward breakdown of the take-up of these activities; and
- Would there be any activities over the Christmas holidays for children with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND).

The Head of Youth Strategy and Engagement advised that every ward, with the exception of the city centre wards, had had provision available on most days and that she would provide Members with the requested information. She reported that all providers were now asked to make their provision inclusive of children with SEND and that officers had worked with providers to ensure they understood how to do this, although some activities specifically for this group had been provided at Debdale Outdoor Centre. She reported that she was currently working with Manchester Active and Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL) on an offer for the Christmas period and that she would share this with the Committee. The Chair praised the provision for children with SEND at Debdale Outdoor Centre.

Decisions

1. To thank everyone involved in this work.
2. To note that the Head of Youth Strategy and Engagement will share with Committee Members a ward breakdown of take-up of the holiday provision and the offer for the Christmas period, once this has been finalised.

CYP/20/54 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 and agree the work programme.

Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 13 January 2021

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 Abdullatif, Cooley, Hewitson, 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
Councillor Murphy, Deputy Leader

Apologies:

Councillors Alijah and McHale
Ms J Fleet, Primary Sector Teacher Representative

CYP/21/01 Minutes

Decision

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

CYP/21/02 Children and Education Services Budget 2021/22

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of Children and Education Services which outlined the financial management and leadership of the Directorate's budget, the financial position which included demography, growth of demand and a series of savings options proposed by officers aligned to the remit of the Committee to contribute to the Council's duty to achieve a balanced budget in 2021/22. The report also set out the impact the options would have on residents and the workforce. It noted that the Council's budget proposals for 2021/22 and onwards would be subject to further refinement following feedback from public consultation and scrutiny committees and that final budget proposals would be made to Scrutiny and Executive in February 2021. The report reflected the fact that the Council had declared a climate emergency by making carbon reduction a key consideration in the Council's planning and budget proposals.

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

- The background and context;
- Directorate budget approach;
- Directorate Revenue Budget 2021/22 and proposed savings;
- Changes to the report since it was last considered at the Committee's meeting on 4 November 2020;
- The impact on the workforce and Manchester residents; and
- Next steps.

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

- Whether the proposed savings rated as "red" in the table appended to the report could be looked at again and whether there were any alternatives that could be considered;
- Concern about the proposal relating to the Children and Parent Service, outlined at point 4.56 in the report, noting the considerable benefits of early intervention in improving outcomes for children and families and reducing the need for more expensive interventions later on;
- The impact of COVID-19 on families and on Children's Services;
- Request for further clarification on the information relating to residential placements, including the plans for Lyndene Children's Home;
- Concern about the proposed cut to funding for interventions to support the improvement of maintained schools outlined at points 4.47 and 4.48 in the report; and
- Request for further clarification on the savings relating to Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) and the impact of these.

The Strategic Director of Children and Education Services informed the Committee that, as the majority of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) was allocated to schools and 47% of the Children's Services budget was spent on care provision for children, the opportunities and areas of the budget where savings could be made was limited. He advised that these areas were interconnected so changes in one area of the service would have an impact elsewhere and that none of these proposals were without risk.

In response to Members' comments about the impact of the pandemic, the Strategic Director of Children and Education Services advised that there had been an increase in requests for advice and support and an increase in referrals to Children's Services, which had included an increase in issues relating to domestic abuse but that the number of children becoming Looked After had not significantly increased so far. He advised that it was a challenging situation as it was more difficult to predict future demand. He also outlined some of work that was currently being developed to support children and families during this time, including short break provision for children attending special schools, sessions for children and young people, similar to the summer holiday provision, and help with paying utility bills for families who were struggling financially.

The Strategic Director of Children and Education Services informed Members that Lyndene was a commissioned children's home and that the children and young people being placed there predominantly had additional health needs, learning disabilities and autism spectrum disorder. He outlined work taking place with health colleagues to commission specialist provision and re-purpose the home to improve outcomes for these children. He suggested that the Committee might want to look at this work further at a future meeting.

In response to a Member's question, the Strategic Director of Children and Education Services clarified that it was proposed to re-purpose three Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) workers to work with foster families to reduce the risk of foster care placements breaking down. He informed Members that unplanned endings of foster care placements could result in significantly increased costs if the young person had to be placed in a residential children's home.

The Strategic Director of Children and Education Services reported that, as Manchester was now receiving more UASC, this enabled the work to support them to be more intelligence-led and for better commissioning arrangements, based on contracts for supporting a number of young people rather than buying ad hoc support for individual children. He informed the Committee that the Home Office had also recently increased the grant payment to the Council for UASC. Therefore, he advised, that the savings in this area did not represent a reduction in the quality of support provided to these young people. He suggested that the Committee might want to look at the work taking place to secure settled status for these young people.

In response to a Member's question, the Strategic Director of Children and Education Services outlined the support provided to Care Leavers and advised the Committee that a report providing more information on this would be submitted to the next meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel.

The Chair noted the improvements that had been made in Children's Services in recent years, expressed disappointment that the Council had been put in this financial position due to the level of funding provided by the national government and expressed concern that this could impact on these services in future.

Decisions

1. That the Committee does not support the proposal for the revised parenting commission at 4.56 in the report, which would reduce the number of families receiving this support, and believes that this reduction in early intervention would result in increased costs later on.
2. That the Committee does not support the proposed cut to funding for interventions to support the improvement of maintained schools outlined at points 4.47 and 4.48 in the report, particularly in light of the impact that COVID-19 is having on children's education.
3. To receive further information on the plans to re-purpose Lyndene Children's Home in a future report.

4. That the Committee will monitor the impact of the transformation of CAMHS.

CYP/21/03 Update on Schools and Their Response to COVID-19

The Committee received a report of the Director of Education which provided a further update on the impact of COVID-19 on schools in the city and how this had been responded to during the Autumn term 2020. Members were also provided with an update on how the situation had changed since the report had been published.

Some of the main points and themes highlighted by the Director of Education included:

- The remote learning offer;
- How the COVID Winter Grant was used to make provision over Christmas for children and young people eligible for Free School Meals;
- The announcement the previous week that schools and colleges would only be open for vulnerable children and children of critical workers, with other children accessing remote learning from home;
- The cancellation of GCSE and A-level examinations, noting that the Council and schools were still awaiting further guidance on how pupils' grades would be assessed; and
- Testing for COVID-19 in schools.

The Executive Member for Children and Schools expressed concern about how the situation had been managed by the Department for Education (DfE) and outlined the challenges that schools had faced.

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

- Sharing the Executive Member's concern about the way the situation had been managed by the national government, in particular the Secretary of State for Education, including that decisions were being made late and were not well communicated;
- The impact of this on schools and pressure on schools' senior leadership teams;
- To thank officers and the Executive Member for their work supporting schools during this challenging time;
- The challenges that schools were facing due to the high number of families who met the criteria for being critical workers;
- To highlight that schools and colleges offering vocational qualifications to students in Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 were informed that the examinations did not have to go ahead less than 12 hours before they were due to start;
- That it was important to remember and to continue to remind government that Manchester schools had been dealing with high infection rates since September 2020, including over 17,000 pupils having to self-isolate, and the impact this had had;
- Request for more information on COVID-19 testing in schools, including whether it would be voluntary;

- The challenges of remote learning, including pupils' access to the internet and devices and whether the expectations for the amount of remote learning taking place were sustainable;
- The impact of the pandemic on pupils in Years 10 and 12 who were due to take GCSE and A-level examinations in 2022;
- Concern that there was a lack of consistency between schools about requiring staff to come into the school building to deliver online lessons; and
- That providing food parcels to families who were entitled to Free School Meals instead of vouchers or money was inappropriate and stemmed from negative attitudes towards and lack of trust in working class families.

The Director of Education clarified that COVID-19 testing in schools was currently voluntary and only for secondary and college-age students who were attending school. She reported that, even where families had internet access, many did not have a separate device for each school-age child to use and that feedback indicated that secondary-age children were being given priority for this in many families; however, she advised that remote learning did not have to take place online. She reported that children who did not have access to remote learning or a quiet space at home to work were now classed as vulnerable pupils who could continue to attend school but that this added to the challenges schools were facing with the number of pupils who met the eligibility criteria for attending school. She advised Members that, even if pupils were awarded fair GCSE and A-level grades which took into account the additional challenges children in this region had faced, they would still have missed out on their education and parts of the course content.

The Executive Member for Children and Schools supported the Committee's comments regarding Free School Meals. He expressed concern about the quality of some of the food parcels provided to families and that benefits were not sufficient for people to be able to feed their children. He advised Members that both schools and families were in a difficult position regarding the issue of which children should be in school and that there needed to be better communication to employers about who should or should not still be going into work and appropriate financial support put in place. He informed Members of the positive feedback from schools about the support they had received from the Council during the pandemic.

In response to Members' questions, the Director of Education reported that Alternative Provision was required to remain open for all pupils and that supplementary schools could stay open, although many supplementary schools had chosen to move to remote learning, and that both these types of settings were being provided with support and guidance by her team. She outlined how the Council was working to achieve a consistent approach across the city, liaising with trade unions and sending Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and other communications to all schools.

Decisions

1. To thank the Director of Education and her team for all the support they have provided to schools during the pandemic and to ask her to pass those thanks on.

2. To agree that the Chair of the Committee writes to the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Education to raise concerns that the Secretary of State is not fit for the post.

CYP/21/04 Our Manchester Strategy Reset - Draft Strategy

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of Children and Education Services which provided an update on the draft *Our Manchester Strategy – Forward to 2025* reset document. A draft of the reset Strategy was appended to the report. The report noted that achieving Manchester’s zero carbon target was reflected throughout the work on the Our Manchester Strategy reset and would be clearly captured in the final reset document.

The main points and themes within the report included:

- The background to the Our Manchester Strategy reset;
- Our Manchester Strategy – Forward to 2025;
- Final design and communications; and
- Next steps.

A Member expressed concern that, although the COVID-19 pandemic was referred to in the Strategy, it did not fully reflect the impact of the pandemic across all areas of the Strategy. The Deputy Leader advised Members that it was difficult to fully reflect how the situation would develop as it was still changing but that it was important to ensure that the city was in the right position to react to changes and to enable local residents to benefit. He reported that the Strategy was subject to change and that the Council had tried to engage on it with residents who would not normally respond. He informed Members that the Strategy aimed to set down key principles and a vision of where the city should be in five years’ time.

Decision

To note the report and to thank everyone for their work on the Strategy.

CYP/21/05 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 the Committee that he had discussed with another Committee Member the impact of the pandemic on the mental health of young people and their families, including both positive and negative aspects, and a suggestion that the Committee should receive a report about this at a future meeting. He advised that he would discuss this with officers after the meeting.

Decision

To note the report and agree the work programme, subject to the above comment.

Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 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, Appleby, Butt, Flanagan, Hassan, Hughes, Jeavons, Kilpatrick, Lynch, Lyons, Whiston, White and Wright

Apologies: Councillor Razaq

Also present:

Councillor Akbar, Executive Member for Neighbourhoods
Councillor Rahman, Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure
Jo Walby, CEO, Mustard Tree
John Ryan, Hub Manager, Shelter

NESC/20/51 Minutes

Decision

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

NESC/20/52 Homelessness Update

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Homelessness that provided an update on the work that was taking place to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping in the city.

The main points and themes within the report included: -

- The numbers of homeless presentations by month in 2020;
- Number of homelessness presentations by recorded area of where the applicant presented from;
- Data on the number of Section 21 and Evictions;
- An overview of the Housing Solutions Service;
- Facilities to support and accommodate Homeless People;
- Voluntary sector providers who support homeless people with accommodation and other services;
- An update on the Bed Every Night scheme;
- Describing the 2020/2021 Cold Weather Plans
- 'Everyone In' - accommodation during the Covid Crisis update;

- Next Steps Accommodation Programme (NSAP) overview;
- Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme (RSAP) overview;
- Information on the 'Protect Programme', a new scheme to help protect some of the most vulnerable people in our communities from COVID-19;
- Inspections of Temporary Accommodation information;
- The length of time people stayed in temporary accommodation; and
- Information on the work of the Homeless Partnership and Prevention Work.

The Committee heard from Jo Walby, CEO, Mustard Tree and John Ryan, Hub Manager, Shelter who had been invited to the meeting to discuss their experience of responding to homelessness in Manchester.

Jo Walby provided an overview of the history and work of Mustard Tree, describing that they aimed to combat poverty; support the homeless and offer support around training and employment. She stated that during the pandemic they had used their furniture vans to deliver food to vulnerable and shielding residents. She described that they had worked closely with Officers from the Council to coordinate this activity. She said that Mustard Tree also offered support to those that were digitally excluded to access welfare benefits and other means of support.

Jo Walby described that they had experienced an increased number of people seeking advice and support on the issue of debt and Mustard Tree were using the Hardship Fund that they had available to pay off rent arrears and avoid evictions. She commented that issues of mental health, addiction and relationship breakdown were all contributing to the issue of homelessness within the city, noting that funding cuts had been experienced in drug and alcohol services and she called upon the Government for an equality of funding for these services. She commented that she predicted that there would be an increase in homelessness in the new year.

Jo Walby paid tribute to the Homelessness Team within Manchester City Council and when asked what the Council could do to support the work of Mustard Tree she stated that the issue of eradicating homelessness should be a high priority for the Council and the Planning Policy, and all other available Council strategies should prioritise addressing homelessness.

John Ryan, Hub Manager, Shelter provided an overview of the service that Shelter provided that included offering advice on debt; welfare benefits; housing and homelessness. He described that Shelter had experienced a significant increase in the number of people accessing the service, especially on the issue of homelessness and the threat of homelessness.

John Ryan described the work of Inspiring Change Manchester, a programme that had been established to make sure that when the most vulnerable people did seek help in a crisis, there was no 'wrong door' and that agencies could work together to put in place the support needed, no matter what the first point of contact. He explained that this had been designed with the voice of people who had lived experience of multiple needs.

John Ryan stated that the reasons for people approaching Shelter for advice was varied and included debt, rent arrears, domestic violence and young people having to

leave the family home. He stated there were difficulties experienced by people accessing homeless accommodation, especially women and young single people without high need. He further described that loneliness and mental health were significant contributing factors.

When asked what the Council could do to support the work of Shelter, John Ryan stated the need and importance of building affordable homes at scale, adding that this would also support the ability to move families on from temporary accommodation to more appropriate housing. He further called for an immediate end to the Right to Buy scheme to protect the availability of affordable homes. He called for adequate funding for services, including the Entrenched Rough Sleeper Service and Housing First. He described that the reduction and cuts to those services designed to support vulnerable people had a significant impact on their mental and physical health, which eventually placed increased pressure on services and contributed to the increased numbers of homeless.

John Ryan stated that he also predicted an increase in the numbers of homeless in the new year period when it is expected that the suspension of the ability of private landlords to issue a Section 21 (Notice to Quit) is lifted. In response to a question from a Member he stated that Discretionary Housing Payments had prevented many people becoming homeless in the Private Rented Sector.

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

- Noting that debt was a major contribution to homelessness and there was an increase in the number of people who were working homeless and sleeping in cars;
- Calling for an increase in the provision of affordable homes in Manchester;
- What provision is available to those entrenched rough sleepers who may have previously refused assistance by services;
- Had Discretionary Housing Payments contributed to reducing rent arrears and subsequent evictions and what would be the implications if this were to be removed;
- Noting the potential increase in Section 21 notices being issued by Private Landlords following the temporary suspension the role of the Housing Solutions Service was important;
- Requesting an update report on the revised Housing Allocations Policy that had previously been reported to the Committee;
- Noting that giving food and money directly to people who were sleeping rough was an understandable and immediate response by people who witnessed a person sleeping rough, however this was not the most appropriate way to resolve homelessness, how could citizens wishing to help best support them;
- Requesting a further breakdown by reason on the figures presented that detailed the number of homeless presentations;
- Requesting that in future update reports submitted to the Committee comparative annual data on the numbers housed in temporary homeless accommodation should be reported;
- What was being done to move people on from temporary accommodation;
- Welcoming the reported activities to support people access substance misuse and mental health services;

- Recognising that short term funding streams to address homelessness impeded the ability to plan and deliver services long term;
- Who should the public contact out of office hours to seek support for someone they discover rough sleeping;
- Noting that despite a manifesto promise the government had failed to address the issue of homelessness and had failed to fund local authorities appropriately;
- Requesting further details on the findings from the inspections of temporary accommodation, including details of any hazards identified;
- What support was available to people who were homeless but had no recourse to public funds; and
- Would Manchester continue to contribute to the funding of the Bed Every Night service.

The Director of Homelessness described that the Homelessness Service discharged the statutory duty of the local authority in regard to homelessness, however it was recognised and understood that a wider 'safety net' for the homeless and those at risk of homelessness was required. He stated that the service was a member of the wider Homeless Partnership that consisted of public, private, charity, faith sector, education and voluntary sector organisations that was detailed within the report.

The Director of Homelessness described that Manchester provided a Cold Weather Provision that was above the statutory requirement, commenting that this provision allowed for services to engage with people in a meaningful manner and work to stopping them returning to the streets. He described that the Homeless Service approach, and the challenge he has given the service is to look at outcomes rather than process as the method of delivering improved outcomes for those people in Manchester experiencing homelessness.

The Director of Homelessness informed the Committee that the dedicated Section 21 team had Officers with specialist knowledge of this area of tenancy law and had been successful in challenging notices that had been issued incorrectly by landlords. He stated that this engagement with landlords had allowed officers the opportunity to negotiate with landlords on behalf of the tenant to maintain the tenancy or work with the tenant to find alternative solutions and prevent homelessness. He stated that they were looking to retain this service within the budget considerations. He further informed the Members that conversations were ongoing with the Combined Authority around the issue of the future funding arrangements of the Bed for every Night (ABEN) scheme.

The Director of Homelessness acknowledged the comment made regarding the immediate response to offer a homeless person food or money; however, this was often counter productive. He advised that residents wishing to support homeless people should contribute to the many different charities offering practical help and support to the homeless in Manchester and he made reference to the Big Change Manchester campaign and day of action campaigns to raise awareness of this issue.

In response to the question relating to those homeless people without recourse to public funds, they would be directed to charitable organisations for advice and support.

In response to the question regarding out of hours contacts, the Director of Homelessness informed the Members that after 8pm the contact number was diverted to the Longford Centre provision, this could also be diverted to the Women's Direct Access Centre as appropriate. The Chair requested that contact details should be circulated to the Members following the meeting.

The Director of Homelessness further commented that the information as to the reasons for presentations and information relating to the inspection of temporary accommodation would be provided, commenting further that people placed in temporary accommodation were provided with the details of a dedicated officer.

In regard to a specific request from a Member for further information on the Protect Programme that was referenced within the report, the new scheme to help protect some of the most vulnerable people in our communities from COVID-19, the Chair requested that this information is provided by Officers to the Member following the meeting.

The Strategic Lead for Homelessness did advise that the Protect Programme was designed to work with people who sleep rough who were entrenched, and this work was being supported by dedicated social workers and mental health workers to provide a wrap around service. She further described the challenge to plan and deliver innovative schemes and programmes due to the short term funding arrangements provided to local authorities stating that long term funding was required.

The Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure stated that Manchester remained committed to helping and supporting the most vulnerable residents in the city. He stated that the Government had imposed austerity on the city and repeated cuts to enable the delivery of appropriate services. He said that despite the Government's manifesto pledge to address homelessness they had repeatedly failed to fund this action. He stated that he further called upon the Government to support the building at scale of affordable housing to meet the demand.

The Chair concluded this item of business by expressing her appreciation to the invited guests, the Executive Member, all staff working with the homelessness service and the Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise Sector who were working to support the most vulnerable residents in the city.

Decisions

The Committee;

1. Note the report and place on record their appreciation to all staff and volunteers working to tackle homelessness and offer support to the most vulnerable residents within the city.
2. Recommend that the Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure write to the Government to lobby for an adequate funding settlement to support the delivery of work to tackle homelessness.

3. Recommend that the Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure write to all Manchester MPs to raise awareness of this issue and request their support in the lobbying of Government for an adequate funding settlement for Manchester.
4. Recommend that an update report on the revised Housing Allocations Policy be included on the Committee's Work Programme for consideration at the March 2021 meeting.

**NESC/20/53 Compliance and Enforcement Service - Performance in
2019/20**

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

The main points and themes within the report included: -

- An overview of the teams that make up the Compliance and Enforcement services;
- Information and data on overall demand;
- An update on Proactive Activity;
- A breakdown by ward of the number of fly-tipping cases by month with comparisons against the previous year's figures;
- Information on where the additional investment to tackle fly-tipping had been spent;
- Data by ward on the number and nature of calls to the Out of Hours service during the first Covid-19 lockdown period; and
- Case studies.

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

- Waste and fly tipping in areas of North Manchester remained an issue;
- What work was being undertaken with the Universities to address Anti-Social Behaviour caused by students;
- What action was being taken to address waste generated by HMOs (Houses in Multiple Occupation);
- Further information was sought on the work of the Biffa Investigation Team;
- Data on the types of enforcement action by ward was requested;
- Noting the prevalence of commercial waste, often in district centres and asking what was being done to address this;
- Did Officers engage with Letting Agents when seeking to address issues;
- Clarification was sought on the reported number of prosecutions generated as a result of the 2-year pilot scheme that saw the introduction of 8 overt mobile CCTV cameras and 6 concealed cameras that were deployed across the city to tackle fly tipping;
- Was the money from fines issued following a successful prosecution invested back into the service;

- Issue arose related to terraced properties and the imposition of communal bins as opposed to individual household bins;
- What were the priorities for the service next year;

In response to the questions raised the Head of Compliance, Enforcement and Community Safety explained that the Biffa Investigation Team, in addition to removing fly tipping would seek to identify any persons who were responsible for the fly tipping and using the evidence obtained enforcement action could be taken against those who illegally disposed of their waste.

The Head of Compliance, Enforcement and Community Safety stated that any money from fines was retained by the Treasury, only monies generated through the issuing of a Fixed Penalty Notices and and civil penalty notices could be retained by the local authority.

The Neighbourhood Compliance Manager (Neighbourhoods) addressed the question regarding the rates of prosecutions generated by the investment into CCTV cameras by describing the challenges in obtaining evidence as a result of criminality, however he expected the figures to increase as the judicial system had been delayed due to the impact of the pandemic.

The Head of Compliance, Enforcement and Community Safety stated that a lot of work had been undertaken with landlords of HMO properties around a range of issues, including student behaviour and appropriate waste management and the report provided examples of these. She further stated that the teams would work with all parties to resolve issues, including commercial premises and letting agents and that when appropriate, enforcement action would be taken.

In response to the comments regarding ongoing issues in the Cheetham Hill area the Head of Compliance, Enforcement and Community Safety commented that a lot of targeted work had been delivered in the area in an attempt to resolve the ongoing issues. She acknowledged the comment from the local Member and advised that Officers would contact the Member following the meeting to discuss further.

In response to the question regarding the priorities for the service next year, the Head of Compliance, Enforcement and Community Safety advised that they would be similar to this year with a continued focus on addressing issues of waste and fly tipping, further adding that residents needed to take responsibility for disposing of their waste in an appropriate and responsible manner.

The Head of Compliance, Enforcement and Community Safety stated that the service had responded well during the pandemic and she remained confident that the service would continue to be flexible, working collaboratively with partner agencies to respond to the challenges of the pandemic and any changes announced as the lockdown was eased and Tiers introduced. This includes flexing shift patterns of the LOOH to meet the demands of the service.

The Executive Member for Neighbourhoods stated that he wished to place on record his appreciation to all of the staff working within the various Neighbourhood Teams for all of their continued hard work and dedication to residents during the previous

challenging year. He further stated that target hardening work had been delivered in North Manchester to address fly tipping hotspots and to support this a communication campaign would be delivered. In relation to the issues raised regarding terraced properties he stated that the Passageway Container Service Improvement Programme, as reported to the Committee at their meeting of 7 October 2020 would address the concerns raised by the Member.

Decisions

The Committee;

1. Note the report and express their appreciation to all of the staff working within the various Neighbourhood Teams for their continued hard work and dedication to residents during the previous challenging year.
2. Recommend that post Covid Neighbourhood Teams work with partners, including registered housing providers and local businesses to actively engage with residents and stake holders on the issue of responsible waste management.

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

NESC/20/54 Overview Report

The report of the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit which contained key decisions within the Committee's remit and responses to previous recommendations was submitted for comment. Members were also invited to agree the Committee's future work programme.

A Member recommended that in addition to the items already scheduled a report be included for consideration at the February 2021 meeting that describes the progress made to date against the Council's Climate Change Action Plan. In addition to this, the report would include details of progress to deliver on the specific actions as prescribed within the Motion that was adopted in July 2019 when the Council declared a climate emergency.

A Member recommended that a progress report on the delivery of the Extension to Selective Licensing Schemes, previously reported to the Committee be considered at the March 2021 meeting.

The Committee endorsed these recommendations.

Decision

To note the report and agree the work programme, subject to the above and noting the decision taken during consideration of a previous agenda item to include an item on the revised Housing Allocations Policy, to be added for consideration at the March 2021 meeting.

Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 13 January 2021

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, Appleby, Butt, Flanagan, Hassan, Hughes, Jeavons, Kilpatrick, Lynch, Lyons, Razaq, White and Wright

Apologies: Councillors Sadler and Whiston

Also present:

Councillor Murphy, Deputy Leader
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/21/01 Minutes

Decision

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2021 as a correct record.

NESC/21/02 Neighbourhoods Directorate Budget Proposals 2021/22

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) that provided a further update to the Scrutiny committee on the savings proposals being proposed as part of the 2021/22 budget process and reflected any feedback from the November Scrutiny committees. The savings proposals would be considered by all six Scrutiny Committees for those areas within their remit, prior to going out to public consultation.

The Committee was invited to consider and comment on the savings proposals identified prior to being considered by Executive.

The main points and themes within the report included: -

- Funding announcements in the government's spending review on 25 November 2020 and provisional local government finance settlement on 17th December 2020 suggested the Council would not be facing the worst-case scenario for 21/22, which was a shortfall of around £100m;
- It was now expected that savings in the region of £50m, as previously identified, would be sufficient;

- Providing a further update to the Scrutiny committee on the savings proposals being proposed as part of the 2021/22 budget process and reflected any feedback from the November Scrutiny committees;
- Savings within the overall Neighbourhoods directorate included proposals of £7.376m requiring an FTE (full-time equivalent) reduction of 2. Due to lead in time around investments etc, the £7.376m would be phased over the period 2021/22- 2024/25, with an initial £6.683m being delivered in 2021/22;
- Charging residents for replacement waste bins would not be considered for 2021/22;
- Outlining the Budget Savings Proposals; and
- Noting that as part of implementing the savings proposals an Equality Impact Relevancy Assessment would be undertaken for each of the proposals.

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

- Welcoming the withdrawal of the option to charge residents for the replacement of waste bins;
- Further information was requested on the proposals for the animal welfare service;
- Stating that the Government had failed to fund local authorities appropriately over many years and had failed to reimburse Councils for the additional financial pressures incurred as a result of COVID-19; and
- Further information was sought on the reported introduction of new charges for providing advice to businesses.

The Deputy Leader stated that he agreed with the comments from the Members regarding the ongoing failure of the Government to adequately fund the Council. He stated that rather than fairly fund services they were relying on Councils to introduce a rise in the Council Tax charge. He stated this was a punitive and regressive approach adopted by the Government. He stated that despite this the Council remained committed to delivering the best services on behalf of the residents of the city with the funds that were available.

In regard to the removal of any proposal to charge residents for the replacement of waste bins in this round of budget considerations, the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods stated that the importance of this was recognised and how this contributed to the Councils recycling targets and the impact on the levels of flytipping. He stated that whilst any cuts to services were always unpalatable, he expressed caution that this option may need to be revisited in future years budget considerations, adding that the Committee would be kept informed of any future proposals.

The Head of Compliance, Enforcement and Community Safety stated that if the animal welfare service proposal was agreed, work would be progressed to develop a service specification prior to the tendering of this contract.

The Head of Compliance, Enforcement and Community Safety also provided examples of the type of opportunities that existed to generate revenue through providing advice to businesses e.g. in respect of a food business providing a pre-

inspection visit to advise on measures needed to ensure compliance before the official inspection and rating.

The Chair stated that an audit of all road safety measures around schools should be undertaken and capital funding be used to fund the delivery of appropriate signage and road markings to improve road safety around all Manchester schools where any deficiencies were identified.

Decision

The Committee;

1. Endorse the savings proposals identified to the Executive;
2. Recommend that the Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport considers undertaking an audit of all road safety measures around schools and capital funding be used to fund the delivery of appropriate signage and road markings to improve road safety around all Manchester schools where any deficiencies are identified.

NESC/21/03 Homelessness Directorate Budget and Savings Options 2021/22

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Homelessness provided the high level budget context and priorities for Homelessness across 2021/22 and the feedback from the budget conversation, which had been used for the development of savings options 2021/22 and investment requirements to fund population driven and other budget pressures

The Committee was invited to consider and comment on the savings proposals identified prior to being considered by Executive.

The main points and themes within the report included: -

- Funding announcements in the government's spending review on 25 November 2020 and provisional local government finance settlement on 17th December 2020 suggested the Council would not be facing the worst-case scenario for 21/22, which was a shortfall of around £100m;
- It was now expected that savings in the region of £50m, as previously identified, would be sufficient;
- The overall approach to the budget strategy had been to align with the 4 key strategic aims of the service and to utilise the investment to maintain frontline delivery in support of these aims, keeping service reductions to a minimum;
- The budget strategy for Homelessness had been to contain the cost of rising need for temporary accommodation within available resources whilst also prioritising resources towards service developments that would achieve the service's priority to prevent and reduce the incidence of homelessness;
- Noting that the greatest risk for the priorities of the service and the budget strategy was the continuing rise in need which was likely to be exacerbated by the impact of Covid-19 and the uncertainty of short term funding;

- The Service Transformation Programme would form the core of the approach to tackling and reducing homelessness over the next three years. It would be the framework in which reductions in temporary accommodation and rough sleeping would be achieved through a radical reorganisation of the Homelessness Service and its activities.
- Savings Options and Proposals; and
- Workforce Impact.

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

- What was the impact of recent changes to the lifting of the restriction on evictions in the Private Rented Sector, introduced as a result of COVID-19 on homelessness services;
- Consideration should be given to providing in-house temporary homelessness accommodating as this would allow for better control of quality and management;
- Further information was sought on the delivery of the A Bed Every Night (ABEN) scheme;
- Noting the Protect Programme funding that had been awarded as a result of COVID-19, was there a commitment from Government to continue funding this programme; and
- Could the Council's reserves be used to support homelessness services.

The Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure stated that despite the promises made to Manchester and all other local authorities that financial assistance would be made available to support councils to accommodate homeless people during the pandemic this had not been provided. He described this as a failure of government, however despite this Manchester had responded to the situation and sought to support the most vulnerable residents in the city and he now called upon the government to fund Manchester appropriately and fairly.

The Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure reiterated that the proposals did not represent a cut in services, but rather savings were to be achieved through a service redesigning. He described that that the reasons for homeless presentations were varied, however recognised that the removal of the protection from eviction would have an impact on the number of presentations. The Members were also advised that the proposals also protected the current ABEN spaces and there was no requirement to draw down on the Council's reserves.

The Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure described the challenge to plan and deliver innovative schemes and programmes to tackle homelessness due to the short term funding arrangements provided to local authorities, stating that long term funding was required. He informed the Committee that the Manchester Homelessness Partnership had written to the Secretary of State to lobby on this issue.

In response to the question regarding the suggestion of providing in-house temporary accommodation, the Executive Director of Adult Social Services stated that a response to this would be provided following the meeting.

The Chair stated that the work of the homelessness team and all voluntary organisations was important and valued in addressing homelessness in Manchester. She stated the importance of the preventative work undertaken and stated that the Committee should be kept informed of any changes to the service,

Decision

The Committee endorse the savings proposals identified to the Executive.

NESC/21/04 Our Manchester Strategy Reset – Draft Strategy

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) that provided an update on the draft *Our Manchester Strategy – Forward to 2025* reset document. The draft of the reset Strategy is appended to this report.

Our Manchester Strategy – Forward to 2025 would reset Manchester's priorities for the next five years to ensure we could still achieve the city's ambition set out in the *Our Manchester Strategy 2015 – 2025*.

The main points and themes within the report included: -

- Describing the background to the Our Manchester Strategy reset;
- Providing an overview of the Our Manchester Strategy – Forward to 2025;
- Describing the final design and communications; and
- Next Steps.

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

- Some Members debated as to whether as a result of the ongoing pandemic it was an appropriate time to proceed with the reset;
- Had any analysis of the previous strategy been undertaken;
- Members welcomed the ambitious strategy as it was required to tackle issues of poverty and health inequality;
- Noting that the consultation response rate had been good, despite the challenges presented by COVID-19;
- Had the demographic characteristics of respondents been recorded to ensure the views obtained reflected the city;
- How were outcomes measured and reported; and
- Did the Our Manchester Forum hold partners, such as Greater Manchester Police (GMP) and local health service providers to account.

The Deputy Leader reiterated that this was not a new strategy, but rather a reset of an existing strategy to reflect on how the city would recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. He stated that the report set out how the city was taking a lead on this issue and being on the 'front foot' as the city emerged from the pandemic. He described that there had been a lot of involvement in this programme of work, including consultation with local Members.

The Policy and Partnerships Manager informed the Committee that information on the benchmarking data and respondent demographic data, where available had been

reported to the November 2020 meeting of the Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee. She further advised that it was important to note that the *Our Manchester Strategy* was not a Council strategy, but rather a city wide strategy that involved a range of partners, adding that the outcomes and progress was reported in the comprehensive State of the City report.

The Policy and Partnerships Manager further advised the Committee that a comprehensive communications strategy had been established to maintain links and channels of ongoing dialogue with the different groups across the city who had contributed to the strategy. She stated this provided a mechanism to reflect on what they said to ensure their voice was captured and obtain feedback.

In response to the question regarding holding partners to account, the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) advised that formal structures existed for overseeing the performance of partners such as GMP and health service.

Following the discussion, the majority of the Members agreed that the final version of Our Manchester Strategy – Forward to 2025 should be taken for consideration by the Executive in February 2021.

Decision

The Committee recommend that the final version of Our Manchester Strategy – Forward to 2025 should be taken for consideration by the Executive in February 2021.

NESC/21/05 Manchester Green and Blue Strategy and Implementation Plan, including: Annual update and a report on the Tree Action Plan

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director, Development that provided the annual update on the delivery of the Green and Blue Implementation Plan (G&BI) together with information on the delivery of the Tree Action Plan.

The main points and themes within the report included: -

- The work on the green and blue agenda is an essential component of creating a climate resilient city and delivering Manchester's Climate Change Action Plan;
- The report addressed the current context within which this agenda was being delivered including the impact of Covid and the need to deliver an economic recovery that was both inclusive and environmentally sustainable;
- Providing a background to the G&BI Strategy and Implementation Plan;
- Describing the Manchester's Tree Action Plan;
- The role of the G&BI Board and the G&BI stakeholder Group;
- The role of G&BI in delivering the Council's Climate Change Action Plan;
- The Impact of Covid;
- Key delivery highlights from the G&BI Strategy on progress in 2020; and
- Future Priorities.

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

- Welcoming the recent delivery of trees in the Old Moat ward and what were the plans for the delivery of phase 1 and phase 2 of Tree Action MCR;
- Noting the scale of ambition to plant trees, had consideration been given to training Council staff and staff in schools to equip them with the skills to help them maintain trees;
- The species of trees should be the most appropriate for their intended location;
- Consideration should be given to planting the species of the Manchester Poplar tree at appropriate sites;
- There was no mention within the report of Bee network investment in the north of the city;
- Every attempt should be made to protect tree's, especially those that were lost as a result of development and consideration should be given to designating areas as conservation areas to offer that additional protection to trees from development;
- Noting that the delivery of green infrastructure was often an element of any planning consent granted, what measures were taken to ensure these were delivered;
- Noting the delivery of Mayfield Park, stating that this was a good example of partnership working to deliver viable green space to the residents of the city;
- Noting the importance of quality green space had been highlighted during the pandemic;
- How could Council owned land be used to promote and support local community wellbeing and green initiatives; and
- What work was being done with Registered Housing Providers around this agenda.

The Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport stated that there were a range of initiatives to be delivered in the north of the city, making reference to the Northern Gateway Development and the Rochdale Canal towpath scheme that would see the route improved for both walking and cycling, enhancing access to Manchester's waterways. When completed the Rochdale Canal would provide a traffic free environment for local residents to walk and cycle along. She further commented that a schedule of projects to be delivered was planned and she would welcome feedback and suggestions from Members on these.

The Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport commented that the designation of conservation areas would be considered as part of the Local Plan and she encouraged local Members if they deemed it appropriate for an area within their ward to progress this through via ward coordination.

The Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport commented that the informed consideration was given as to the variety of tree species that were selected for any given location, adding that they were selected to maximise carbon capture and promote biodiversity.

The Principal Planning Policy Officer responded to questions by advising that within the first phase of Tree Action MCR, wards had been identified that typically had fewer trees, including a lower percentage of street trees. Many of these wards were in the central part of Manchester, so the list had been amended to include some wards in the North and South to allow a wider geographical spread. Wards not included in

Phase 1 would have the opportunity for tree planting in Phase 2, adding that every ward would receive tree planting. She commented that this was in addition to the ongoing programme of works described within the report relating to community orchards.

The Principal Tree Officer commented on the challenges presented by disease to the Manchester Poplar, however noted the comments from the Member regarding a disease resistant variety and suggested he discussed this with the Member following the meeting. In response to the suggestion regarding training to support the ongoing maintenance of trees, he stated that they were a small team however this would be taken away from this meeting and discussed with City of Trees.

The Director of Planning, Building Control and Licensing advised Members that where trees were to be lost as a result of development there was a condition that the developer replace these with a ratio of two trees planted for every one lost, adding that this was to be increased to three. In regard to any specific concerns regarding the delivery and maintenance of green space by developers she stated she would discuss this further with the Member following the meeting. She further welcomed the positive comments regarding the delivery of green space from the development of the Mayfield area, adding that the lessons learnt from the scheme would inform future regeneration projects.

The Senior Policy Officer stated that positive relationships existed with local Registered Housing Providers and good practice regarding green and blue projects and initiatives was shared between them, however acknowledged more needed to be done to capture and report this activity. The Chair recommended that the information that was provided to Registered Housing Providers was circulated to members of the Committee. In response to the question relating to the use of land to facilitate and support community projects he recommended that Members discussed this with their local Neighbourhood Teams.

Decision

The Committee:-

1. Recommend that Officers, in consultation with the Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport explore the options for delivering a programme of tree maintenance training. This training to be made available to all relevant partners, including staff working in schools.
2. Recommended that the green and blue information that is provided to Registered Housing Providers is circulated to members of the Committee for information.

NESC/21/06 Monitoring and Compliance – Construction Sites

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods); the Director of Planning, Building Control and Licensing and the Head of Compliance, Enforcement and Community Safety that had been submitted to provide information that had been requested by the Committee.

The main points and themes within the report included: -

- Known active construction sites across the authority;
- The city's start and end times for construction works to be undertaken and the rationale for those times;
- How many neighbouring local authorities and other core cities had the same permitted construction times as Manchester; and
- Information on the monitoring of construction sites and the approach taken to enforcement, including examples of types of breaches identified and how these were addressed.

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

- The need to manage development to achieve the correct balance to support the development of the city and mitigate the impact and disruption to local residents, adding that city centre ward Members had supported resident campaigns on this issue;
- How wre compaints managed, to date how many developers had been issued with a fine and what was the approach if disturbacnes and complaints arose from devleopments in neighbouring authorities;
- Noting that trees were often removed as part of preliminary land clearance activity prior to any formal planning consent and conditions;
- How many enforcement officers were employed;
- Noting the contuned lack of communication wth local residents and Members to advise them of works to be undertaken, espically work undertaken at night;
- The impact of temporary road closure on local neighbourhoods; and
- Noting that the understaning amongst devlopers as to their responsibilities to local residents as part of the agreed Management Plans, with particualr reference given to inconsiderate parking.

In response to the questions and comments raised by the Committee, the Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport acknowledged the concerns expressed relating to the impact on city centre residents as a result of development. She gave a commitment that she would progress the discussions on how best to address this with Members outside of the meeting, stressing that it was important to strike the correct balance. She stated that all complaints would be investigated and addressed with the developer concerned.

The Director of Planning, Building Control and Licensing recognised that complaints did arise from Manchester residents as a result of development work being undertaken in neighbouring authorities. She advised that she would liaise with her opposite colleagues in Salford to discuss this further. The Licensing and Out of Hours Manager gave an assurance that all noise complaints would be invesigated and an agreeable resolution sought in all cases, even those that crossed boundaries.

The Director of Planning, Building Control and Licensing advised the Committee that certain preparatory works were permitted on land prior to a formal planning application submission and consent being granted, however if Members had

concerns regarding any activity they should contact her department at the earliest opportunity and a site visit could be arranged.

The Director of Planning, Building Control and Licensing stated that works after 6pm was only permitted if the developer had a satisfactory communication strategy in place to relay this information to local residents. A Member commented that from her experience she was not confident this was happening, especially for those residents living in flats. The Director of Planning, Building Control and Licensing further advised that road closures were permitted to allow for the delivery of a development scheme and the Considerate Constructors Scheme was a tool to address the issue of parking.

In response to the specific question regarding fines and enforcement, the Licensing and Out of Hours Manager stated that there were two Licensing and Out of Hours Teams (City Centre and City Wide), whose duties included responding to noise complaints from construction sites. These two teams comprised of 35 FTE officers working a seven-day shift pattern, including evening and night cover. He stated that to date no fines had been issued to developers as cases had been resolved informally by engaging with the developer when complaints had been received.

The Section Planning Manager advised the Committee that there were five Planning Enforcement Officers and stated that both teams worked closely together to resolve issues.

The Chair commented that the Considerate Constructor Scheme was a voluntary scheme and consideration needed to be given to establishing a bespoke Manchester Considerate Constructors Scheme that had to be adhered to by contractors and be included as a mandatory condition of any planning consent. The Committee supported this recommendation.

The Chair further recommended that a briefing session be arranged for Members of the Committee to provide an overview of a range of activities that included, but not restricted to planning and related enforcement; roles and responsibilities and Traffic Regulation Orders. The Committee supported this recommendation.

Decision

The Committee:-

1. Recommend that the Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport give consideration to establishing a bespoke Manchester Considerate Constructors Scheme that had to be adhered to by contractors and be included as a mandatory condition of any planning consent.
2. Recommend that Officers, in consultation with the Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport arrange a briefing session for Members of the Committee that provides an overview of a range of activities that included, but not restricted to planning and related enforcement; roles and responsibilities and Traffic Regulation Orders.

NESC/21/07 Overview Report

The report of the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit which contained key decisions within the Committee's remit and responses to previous recommendations was submitted for comment. Members were also invited to agree the Committee's future work programme.

In concluding the meeting the Chair wished to place on record her appreciation and gratitude to all staff and partners across the city for their ongoing resolve, dedication and commitment to support the residents of the city during the pandemic.

Decision

To note the report and agree the work programme.

Economy Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 3 December 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 H Priest (Chair) – in the Chair
Councillors Green, Hacking, Johns, Noor, Raikes, Shilton Godwin and Stanton

Also present:

Councillor Leese, Leader
Councillor N Murphy, Deputy Leader

Apologies: Councillor K Simcock

ESC/20/46 Minutes

Decision

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 November 2020 were approved as a correct record.

ESC/20/47 Manchester Digital Strategy

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Inclusive Economy, which provided an overview to the development of the Manchester Digital Strategy and its alignment to the city's strategic priorities. The Committee also received a presentation that detailed the work to date to create the Strategy and its emerging priorities.

Key point and themes of the report included:-

- A strategy was required to drive the cohesive vision of digital across the city;
- Supporting all Manchester residents to be able to access opportunities digitally is key to building a more inclusive city;
- The proposed emerging Strategy was currently based around four pillars which aligned to the Developing A More Inclusive Economy – Our Manchester Industrial Strategy;
- Strategic alignment was essential to ensure successful implementation of the Digital Strategy's aims both within the Council and across the city;
- The city's digital sector continued to be one of our key growth sectors, both in terms of increasing jobs and gross value added;
- Whilst there were many employment opportunities in this growth area, it was essential to increase digital skills levels and improve digital infrastructure to ensure all of Manchester's residents and neighbourhoods could access them; and

- Following the Committee's comments, the draft Strategy would go out for public consultation in early 2021.

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

- What was meant by the phrase deploying digital connectivity as a utility and to what extent could the Council support this;
- There was concern that there would not be enough capacity to upskill Manchester residents in using digital;
- Was there any capacity within the strategy to ensure that the Council and its partners procured from organisations that were committed to being carbon zero or carbon negative;
- Further information was requested on Fibre Manchester and the required physical infrastructure to enable the Strategy to be delivered;
- To what extent did the Strategy address access to the necessary technology for all residents in the city, such as fibre broadband to all properties;
- Who would be held accountable for the progress of the Strategy; and
- Would there be a joined-up GM approach to procuring the necessary digital devices for those who were subject to digital poverty.

The Digital Strategist informed the Committee that the Council would be joining with Tameside and potentially a further three GM Councils to enable the delivery of the physical infrastructure across the city and region through the use of digital co-operatives. This would allow for smaller operators to enter the market and provide more choice for residents at lower prices. He clarified that in terms of ownership of the infrastructure, this would belong to the co-operative or a co-operative member. He added that viewing digital connectivity as a utility simply meant that it would be available everywhere, in some places free and in other at an affordable rate. In terms of the Green Economy, there were many organisations within the industry that were operating as Carbon neutral and reinvesting in renewable energy and it would be these types of organisations that the Council should align itself with going forward.

The Director of Inclusive Economy advised of the steps that were being taken to help residents get connected and develop the necessary digital skills, including the work of schools and colleges with students in terms of blended learning. She added that at present she was not aware of any GM wide procurement approach but would investigate the possibility of this and outlined how the Council and MAES had provided a vast number of residents with the necessary equipment to enable them to become digitally included.

The Deputy Leader agreed to take on board all the comments made by the Committee as the Strategy was developed and agreed to report back as to how the digital offer could be improved for Manchester residents.

Decisions

The Committee:-

- (1) Notes the report.

- (2) Notes that a number of themes emanating from this item will likely form future agenda items in the next Municipal Year.

ESC/20/48 HS2 Phase 2b Western Leg Design Refinement Consultation Response

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director, Growth and Development that informed the Committee and the Executive of a Design Refinement Consultation (DRC) being carried out by HS2 Ltd on the western leg of Phase 2b of HS2 (Manchester-Crewe). The consultation sought views on updates to station designs at both Manchester Piccadilly and Manchester Airport, in addition to a route alignment change, in order to reduce the impact on the existing train care facility at Ardwick, and to facilitate the integration of Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) at both Piccadilly and Manchester Airport high speed stations.

The report outlined the Council's proposed response to the consultation. The draft response was attached as an appendix and should be read in conjunction with the report.

The main points and themes within the report included: -

- Providing an introduction and background to the report;
- Describing the context of the response; and
- Providing a summary of the main issues to which the city continued to seek resolution, and which the Council and its partners expected further collaborative engagement on.

The Committee heard from Councillor Lovecy, Member for Rusholme ward. She described that local Councillors continued to oppose the proposed location of the vent shaft on Fallowfield Retail Park. She stated that this would have a detrimental impact on local schools; it would result in the loss of a Park and Ride scheme that would have an adverse impact on air quality. She stated that the current proposal would also result in a loss of local retail provision that would have a negative impact on the local community. She stated that these arguments, in particular that from the local schools, needed to be strengthened within the response.

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

- Supporting the local Councillors in opposing the ventilation shaft that was still proposed to be located on Fallowfield retail park and that alternative, more appropriate sites should be considered by HS2 Ltd;
- Supporting the call for an underground station to be built at Piccadilly station;
- What more could be done to support the case of the Council; and
- The views of the Economy Scrutiny Committee needed to be taken into consideration and reflected within the response.

The Leader stated that it was important to continue to argue for the need to build an underground station at Piccadilly to accommodate HS2 and address issues of capacity at the site, noting that a surface station would be inappropriate. He further commented that the design of the HS2 Airport Station needed to be fully integrated

with local development plans and existing planning policies, including Metrolink and Northern Powerhouse Rail.

The Head of City Centre Growth & Regeneration stated that discussions continued with HS2 Ltd to discuss the issue of the planned ventilation shaft that was still proposed to be located on Fallowfield retail park. She described that alternative locations had been suggested; however, these had been rejected on the grounds of visual disamenity and antisocial behaviour.

The City Centre Growth and Development Manager informed the Committee a summary would be provided in response to the consultation; however, individual responses would not be provided to issues raised. She stated that officers and Members would continue to work and engage with HS2 Ltd to seek to influence the design. She advised that she was aware that a local MP had requested an urgent meeting with Ministers to discuss the issue of Fallowfield retail park and the location of the vent shaft.

The Head of City Centre Growth & Regeneration advised that having regard for Councillor Lovecy's comments the response would be reviewed to strengthen the points that she had addressed. The Strategic Director, Growth and Development further commented that the views of Committee would also be incorporated into the final submission.

Decisions

The Committee:-

- (1) Recommend that having regard for the views and comments expressed by the Committee and that of the local ward Member, Section 8 of response relating to the Birchfield Road Ventshafts be reviewed to reflect the opposition of schools to these proposals.
- (2) Having regard to recommendation 1, endorse the recommendation that the Executive:
 - Note the proposed refinements within Manchester in the HS2 Design Refinement Consultation;
 - Note and comment on the City Council's draft submission in response to the consultation; and
 - Delegate authority to the Strategic Director – Growth & Development, in consultation with the Leader and Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport, to finalise the response and submit to HS2 Ltd.

ESC/20/49 Update on COVID-19 Activity

Further to Minute ESC/20/38 (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 and 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:-

- There had been a failure of government in providing appropriate financial support to the city and wider region for the length of time that people have been living under strict restraints;
- It would be useful to have year on year comparative data on footfall in the city and district centres to help in the longer term thinking of recovery;
- There was concern about the impact of the pandemic on the hospitality sector especially for the months following Christmas as trade was usually quiet in these months; and
- There was concern in relation to the number of people claiming unemployment related benefits in the city centre and the impact this might have on private renters.

The Director of Inclusive Economy advised that the increase in unemployment increased rapidly in April and May and although this has levelled off it was still increasing. She outlined the work that was being undertaken to address the increase in unemployment in the city.

The Strategic Director confirmed that year on year data of footfall could be provided and could be reported in future Economy Dashboards. It was also reported that the Business Sounding Board would be launching a campaign in the new year around supporting restaurants, cultural venues and hotels, building on the eat out to help out model, but more specific to Manchester.

Noting the concerns raised, the Leader commented that the full economic recovery of the city would likely take three to five years and that areas that had been placed in Tier 3, such as Manchester, received no further financial support than those in Tiers 1 or 2. As such it was important that the City was placed into Tier 2 as soon as possible to enable businesses to trade and survive.

Decision

The Committee notes the report.

ESC/20/50 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. Members were also invited to agree the Committee's future work programme.

Decisions

The Committee:-

- (1) Note the report.
- (2) Note that the Chair will finalise the Work Programme for the February and March 2021 meetings in consultation with Officers.

Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 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, Chambers, Collins, M Dar, Doswell, Douglas, Grimshaw, Hitchen, Kirkpatrick, Moore, Rawlins, Rawson and Russell

Also present:

Councillor Murphy, Deputy Leader
Councillor Craig, Executive Member for Adult Health and Wellbeing
Councillor Rahman, Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure
Councillor Akbar, Executive Member for Neighbourhoods
Councillor Watson, Lead Member for Age Friendly Manchester
Councillor Cooley, Ward Councillor for Brooklands
Elaine Unegbu, Chair of the Age Friendly Manchester Older People's Board
Marie Greenhalgh, Vice Chair of the Age Friendly Manchester Older People's Board

CESC/20/48 Minutes

Following on from the Committee's recommendation at its November meeting, the Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure confirmed that the public meeting about the Peterloo Memorial had been postponed. He reported that the new date had not yet been finalised but that work was taking place with the Equalities Team to ensure that the meeting would be accessible.

Decision

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

CESC/20/49 Manchester's Age Friendly Recovery

The Committee received a report of the Consultant in Public Health (Ageing Well Lead) which outlined how COVID-19 and the impacts of restrictions in place this year had disproportionately affected older people. It also outlined a set of proposals, developed by the Age Friendly Manchester Older People's Board, the Age Friendly Manchester Team and senior officers in the Council, that were designed to help address the barriers many of Manchester's mid to later life residents reported that they faced. The report also stated that the Age Friendly Manchester Older People's Board – and more broadly the Age Friendly Assembly - was a strategic partner in the delivery of the Manchester Climate Change Framework 2020-2025. A key principle within the framework was that older people as residents of Manchester had a role to

place in reducing the contributors to and impacts of climate change. It was expected that this would contribute to Manchester's zero carbon target.

The main themes within the report included:

- Ageism;
- Care homes;
- Neighbourhoods;
- Employment; and
- The Our Manchester Strategy Reset.

Elaine Unegbu, Chair of the Age Friendly Manchester Older People's Board, highlighted the issue of ageism, how this had been exposed by the pandemic and its impact on the health and wellbeing of older people, including isolation, loneliness and depression. She reported that the language of vulnerability and stereotypical images of older people perpetuated negative attitudes and that a different approach was needed with positive narratives to combat ageism, everyone having a role to play and honest, sustained conversations taking place.

Councillor Watson, Lead Member for Age Friendly Manchester, spoke to the Committee about older people living in care homes. She reported that this group of older people had not been involved in the Board before now and the Board was working to address this. She drew Members' attention to the recommendations within the report related to care homes, advising that care homes and their residents needed to become part of and able to participate in the local neighbourhood. She advised that community integration was being considered from the start within the new LGBT-Affirmative Extra Care Scheme that was being built in her ward and that all older people's accommodation should be like this. She also reiterated the importance of thinking about the language used to describe older people.

Marie Greenhalgh, Vice Chair of the Age Friendly Manchester Older People's Board addressed the Committee about the role of neighbourhoods in whether people aged well and experiences of health problems, social isolation and poverty. She outlined some of the challenges that older people had faced during the pandemic and highlighted the role of neighbourhood and community groups in addressing these. She drew Members' attention to the recommendations in the report relating to neighbourhoods. The Chair praised the work of Good Neighbour Schemes, including the one in his ward, particularly their invaluable work during the pandemic. A Member highlighted the work of The Place (Fallowfield Library) including the Forever Young group for older residents. The Programme Lead advised that there were a range of examples of good practice across the city and the aim was to make this good practice consistent across the city. In response to a Member's question, he advised that Members could sign up for a monthly bulletin to find out what was going on. A Member expressed concern that some older people who normally contributed to the work of community and voluntary organisations within their neighbourhood felt unable to do so during the pandemic.

Councillor Cooley spoke about employment in relation to people over the age of 55. She reported that a lot of people in this age group would find themselves unemployed, particularly as a result of the pandemic, and that it was important to

support this age group to find work, not just younger people, particularly as people were now expected to work longer. She recommended that the Council should lead the way on this, setting an example and working with partners to encourage them to offer apprenticeships and other work opportunities to older people. She also highlighted the contribution that people who had not been in paid employment made, for example, to family and community life, and advised that this should also be valued.

Elaine Unegbu welcomed that the Board had been involved in the Our Manchester Strategy reset and she emphasised the importance of ensuring that the voices of older residents were heard during engagement processes. She asked the Committee to note all the recommendations that had been made in the report and asked that they put them forward to the Executive.

A Member welcomed the recommendations and advised that the Council needed to further embed equalities across its policies.

Councillor Cooley stated that all Members should be raising the Age Friendly Manchester agenda at their ward co-ordination meetings and asking what was happening within their own wards.

In response to a Member's question about care home residents being able to have visitors, the Executive Member for Adult Health and Wellbeing reported that, while care homes in some parts of the country were using lateral flow tests, which were carried out by care home staff and gave results within 30 minutes, to test visitors for COVID-19, there were concerns about the accuracy of the results. She advised that it was proposed that in Manchester care home visitors would have to take another test which was sent to a laboratory for testing four days beforehand, followed by a lateral flow test on the day of the visit. She reported that it was hoped to have a process in place for this within a fortnight.

A Member expressed concern that, although people were living longer, they were spending longer periods of this in poor health and that there was a gap in healthy life expectancy between different areas of the country. The Programme Lead informed Members that work was taking place at a Greater Manchester level, through the Ageing Hub, to help people to age well and also to support people with long-term health conditions. He advised the Committee that the Council and partner organisations were looking at how ageing well could be incorporated into all neighbourhood plans across the city.

In response to a Member's question, Councillor Cooley confirmed that the information on baby boomers' income in point 7.13 of the report came from research by the Resolution Foundation.

A Member stated that the first draft of the Workforce Equality Strategy, which had been considered by the Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee at its November meeting, while referencing older employees, had focused more on creating job opportunities for younger people. She asked that the draft Strategy be amended to recognise the need to create opportunities for older people. The Executive Member for Neighbourhoods supported the Member's comment and

advised that he would speak to the Executive Member for Children and Schools, who currently also had responsibility for Human Resources, about the report recommendations relating to employment and how the draft Workforce Equality Strategy could be amended, in response to the point the Member had made.

The Programme Lead advised that the Age Friendly Manchester team would be working with the Director of Human Resources and Organisation Development to progress the Board's recommendations relating to employment. In response to a Member's question about the North Manchester Age Well in Employment Pilot, he advised that discussions were currently taking place about holding a socially distanced jobs fair. Elaine Unegbu advised that meaningful apprenticeships should be offered to older people.

A Member highlighted the importance of education opportunities for older people and that financial costs could be a barrier for some people. The Director of Inclusive Growth advised that employment for people over the age of 50 was a priority area for the Work and Skills Strategy. She informed Members that the Greater Manchester Working Well programme had been expanded by approximately £13 million. She advised that there had been a long-term underinvestment in adult education, including a lack of funding for adults taking qualifications beyond their first Level 2 qualification, other than loans which people could be reluctant to take; however, she advised that there had been an indication from the government that there would be more investment in adult education, including funding for adults to take A-level or equivalent qualifications. She advised that work was taking place regarding apprenticeships for older people but that there were some issues, in particular, the perception of apprenticeships as being for younger people and for roles in particular industries and the wage offered for apprenticeships which could be difficult for people with more financial commitments to manage on.

The Chair thanked the officers and guests. He recognised that Manchester was leading the way in this work, the achievements so far and the importance of continuing to build on that.

Decision

That the Committee welcomes the report and wishes to convey to the Executive that it strongly and unanimously supports the recommendations contained within it.

CESC/20/50 Driving Digital Inclusion and Bridging the Digital Divide in Manchester

The Committee received a report of the Director of Inclusive Growth and the Head of Libraries, Galleries and Culture which provided an update on the digital inclusion challenge within Manchester, the impact of COVID-19 on those who were excluded and the initiatives that were being developed to scale up efforts to tackle the challenges.

The main points and themes within the report included:

- How digital exclusion affected communities in Manchester;

- The Council's work so far to address this;
- Manchester Digital Inclusion Working Group;
- Get GM Digital Programme;
- Manchester Digital Inclusion Action Plan, focusing both on residents who did not have home internet access and those who did not have the skills or confidence to use it effectively; and
- The role of adult education providers.

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

- Help for people who were applying for Universal Credit;
- That some people who were digitally excluded would also not have any contact with the Council and its services and how those people could be reached;
- An example of how local people in one area had been connected to the internet via MiFi, a mobile Wi-Fi device; and
- To recognise the important role libraries were playing in enabling people to have digital access and to thank the staff for their work.

The Director of Inclusive Growth advised that the Council's Revenue and Benefits service was not notified of residents who were claiming Universal Credit but that the Council was working closely with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). The Citywide Services Manager (Reform) reported that a common issue that people contacted the Digital Support telephone line, set up in May 2020, for was help with applying for Universal Credit and that these queries were referred to Manchester Citizens Advice who could assist them with both the digital element and knowledge about the benefits system. The Work and Skills Specialist advised that the Council was working closely with Jobcentre Plus to support them to link with adult learning providers.

The Citywide Services Manager (Reform) informed Members that residents who had received Chromebooks had been identified either through contact with the Council's COVID Hub or through a referral from a partner agency, such as health services, but that it was difficult to reach people did not have contact with any agencies. The Work and Skills Specialist reported that some people had found out about the help available through word of mouth but that it would be useful to get information into more places where people went, such as cornershops.

The Chair reported that the Economy Scrutiny Committee had discussed the infrastructure element of digital inclusion at its most recent meeting but that MiFi had not been mentioned and that he would raise this with the Chair of the Economy Scrutiny Committee.

The Chair thanked officers for their contribution.

Decision

To note the report.

CESC/20/51 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 this Committee.

The main points and themes within the report 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.

The Executive Member for Adult Health and Wellbeing informed the Committee that, from the following month, the way this information was reported would change and that the reports would be shorter but that the Committee could ask for more information to be provided on specific areas.

In response to a Member's question, the Director of Inclusive Growth advised that domestic abuse support services had adapted the way they worked during the pandemic and that some had received additional resources during this period. She clarified that the report reflected that at present it was expected that the services could revert to a more business-as-usual approach from March 2021 but that this was being reviewed regularly.

In response to a Member's question, the Director of Inclusive Growth advised that she would check where the request for more funding from the DWP for the Test and Trace payments was up to and let the Member know.

A Member asked if there was any further progress on identifying satisfactory accommodation for homeless people who might test positive for COVID-19. The Chair requested that the Executive Member for Adult Health and Wellbeing provide a response directly to the Member concerned.

A Member highlighted that some Manchester residents had concerns about the vaccines for COVID-19. The Executive Member for Adult Health and Wellbeing outlined plans to understand and address these concerns and advised that there would be a more detailed plan for this after Christmas.

Decision

To note the report.

CESC/20/52 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 informed Members that the Committee would receive reports on the Budget, the Parks Investment Programme and a further COVID-19 update at its next meeting and that the Equalities Update was likely to be considered at the February meeting, dependent on the amount of budget information the Committee had to consider at that meeting.

A Member commented that she had not received the information which had been circulated to the Committee about the review of symbols across the city. The Chair asked that this be re-circulated.

Decisions

1. To note the report and agree the work programme, subject to the above amendments.
2. To ask the Scrutiny Support Officer to re-circulate the information about the review of symbols across the city.