

**Manchester City Council
Report for Information**

Report to: Environment & Climate Change Scrutiny Committee - 24 June 2021

Subject: Introduction to the Neighbourhood Climate Change Officers

Report of: Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods)

Summary

The report summarises progress since the 3 Climate Neighbourhood Officers were appointed in March and April 2021, how they are approaching their roles and initial areas which they have identified for development.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Environment and Climate Change Committee note and comment on the report.

Wards Affected: All

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

The Council's Climate Change Action Plan 2020-25 sets out the actions that will be delivered to ensure that the Council plays its full part in delivering the city's Climate Change Framework 2020-25 which aims to half the city's CO2 emissions over the next 5 years.
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Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	The transition to a zero-carbon city will help the city's economy become more sustainable and will generate jobs within the low carbon energy and goods sector. This will support the implementation of the Our Manchester Industrial Strategy and Manchester Economic Recovery and Investment Plan.
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	Manchester is one of a small number of UK cities that have agreed a science-based target and is leading the way in transitioning to a zero-carbon city. It is envisaged that this may give the city opportunities in the green technology and services sector.

A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	Transitioning to a zero-carbon city can help to tackle fuel poverty by reducing energy bills. Health outcomes will also be improved through the promotion of more sustainable modes of transport and improved air quality.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	Becoming a zero-carbon city can help to make the city a more attractive place for people to live, work, visit and study.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	A zero-carbon transport system would create a world class business environment to drive sustainable economic growth.

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Background documents (available for public inspection): None

1.0 Introduction:

- 1.1 The report summarises progress since the 3 Climate Neighbourhood Officers were appointed in March and April 2021, how they are approaching their roles and initial areas which they have identified for development. The posts have been established on a 2-year fixed term basis.

2.0 Background:

- 2.1 The Council's Climate Change Action Plan 2020-25 Workstream 5 is a cross cutting theme concerned with influencing behaviour as a catalyst for change. A key component of the plan is working at the neighbourhood level to work with communities on reducing their carbon imprint.
- 2.2 The Council's Neighbourhood Teams have been engaging with Councillors and communities on how the carbon imprint can be reduced at the local level. Wards have produced their own climate change action plans or embedded carbon reduction activity into their ward plans. Work is progressing to ensure that each ward has a Climate Change Action Plan.
- 2.3 To build the capacity of the Council to support communities to develop local Actions, three Climate Change Neighbourhood Officer posts have been appointed. These posts are based in each of the Neighbourhood Teams (North/South/Central). The focus of the Officers is not on detailed project delivery (which will remain the responsibility of the Neighbourhood Manager and Officer) but offering help and support in developing approaches to carbon reduction. The Climate Change Officers will give advice and direction and ensure that Councillors and communities have support and information to develop locally based climate change initiatives.

Their key tasks are to:

- Capture climate change activity across the wards such as improved walking routes, increase recycling, biodiversity, and meat free days, etc.
- Engage with key stakeholder groups involved locally such as community champions, VCSE, RPs, businesses, MLCO, other MCC teams to engage them in the climate change agenda.
- To identify opportunities to link initiatives across wards, pursuing common themes or objectives.
- To link in with The Zero Carbon and Resilient Communities Programme (In Our Nature), to trial a range of carbon reduction pilots within specific neighbourhoods. The Programme has received 15-month lottery funding and is supported by Manchester Climate Change Agency and other specialist climate change partners as well as the Neighbourhood Teams.
- Identify the learning from In Our Nature to pass onto other neighbourhoods across the city and to develop a set of case studies that capture the best examples of what can be done and replicated elsewhere.
- To establish a set of simple indicators to be used across our Ward Climate Change Actions Plans so we can monitor the cumulative impact of the plans and demonstrate their impact.

3.0 Review of current position

3.1 The Climate Neighbourhood Officers each conducted a review of their respective team's progress since the council's climate emergency declaration in July 2019. The reviews considered areas of strength, areas for development and identified where there are opportunities to do more.

3.2 All three localities demonstrate strong partnership working and extensive relationships with internal and external stakeholders and residents on the climate change agenda. There is a strong will within communities and organisations to engage and play their part in meeting the challenges of climate change.

3.2 Examples of partnership approaches are:

- The Wythenshawe Sustainability Working Group (which leads on zero-carbon workstreams).
- Team Around the Neighbourhood (TAN) groups are integrating climate action into their priorities e.g., Greening activities to be included within offers of social prescribing, Clean Air Day campaign and events.
- The waste consolidation project in the city centre – a collaboration between MCC, TfGM and CityCo in which a preferred low carbon commercial waste provider has been selected and will be recommended to businesses in the St Ann's/King St area.
- My Wild City project in the South area will connect communities and housing providers.
- The North Nature Network is a high-profile project which provides an opportunity to link climate projects to ecological conservation and biodiversity in North Manchester.
- "Doing Zero" project, supported by Standard Practice and SICK! Festival which links Harpurhey to Nairobi in a sustainable food activity
- Manchester Settlement which is developing a "green hub" at their base in Openshaw.
- GMP officers support for Junior PCSOs campaign days to get school pupils to walk or cycle to school.
- Asset Recovery Incentive Scheme (ARIS) funding from GMP has been used for greening projects.
- The Universities have well established and active climate change societies and a volunteering programme which is helping to drive forward positive change in the behaviour of the wider student population.
- Southway Housing are about to embark on gas boiler replacement programme in the Arrowfield Estate in Chorlton Park to provide heat pumps. This provides an opportunity to engage residents in broader climate change activity.
- Transport hub in Chorlton and Chorlton Park.
- Our Streets Chorlton is a £200k lottery funded community-led project enabling Chorlton residents to reduce local and short car journeys and therefore reduce their carbon emissions.

- 3.3 There are many examples of successful greening projects citywide (Action 11 in Manchester Climate Change Agency's 15 climate actions). Examples include:
- Support for existing allotments and friends of parks groups - to improve their infrastructure such as fencing, composting toilets, poly tunnels, rainwater harvesting and composting.
 - Our Streets Chorlton is developing a portable pocket park for use on streets in the area.
 - Manchester Active and Sow the City partnership is delivering a food growing project in Beswick, Newton Health and Miles Platting in which 700 boxes are being delivered to homes to encourage home grown food.
 - The Nature of Hulme report completed in 2018 has been a catalyst for bring residents together and generating projects around how residents interact with nature and the benefits natural spaces bring to people's lives.
- 3.4 Most wards allocated some of their NIF budget to climate activities in the last year, and there are plans to ensure that all wards allocate a portion of NIF to climate action in 2021/22. Where possible we have looked for other sources of funding or in-kind support from social value contributions or Corporate Social Responsibility to assist with climate projects. We anticipate that NIF will continue to be an important source of funding for future climate change activities and projects which are not able to access the lottery funding.
- 3.5 There are good examples of innovation and collaboration with schools and universities, including:
- AHRC and Met Office funded project, 'Community Climate Resilience through Folk Pageantry', led by, Dr Jenna Ashton, University of Manchester. It is an arts-led and social justice research project that focuses on community knowledge and creativity, responding to Manchester's climate policies and community contexts.
 - School hedging research project with University of Lancaster.
 - Invent.Make.Sense – a collaboration with University of Manchester and Manchester Met to make low-cost air quality sensors.
 - The Junior PCSO project which started in Hulme and is spreading to schools across the area.
 - Clean Air Day – the teams are providing support to schools to deliver assemblies and workshops and anti-idling banners.
 - Longer term school engagement relates to the government accredited "ModeShift STARS" and other active travel initiatives such as "walk to school week" or "walking school buses" or holding road closure "School Street" trial sessions.
- 3.6 Links are being made across wards to connect communities and extend the impact of localised activity. Examples include:
- All Wythenshawe Waste Warriors and Real Food Wythenshawe are examples of joining up action across the wider area.

- North Nature Network is a project to connect nature corridors across Charlestown, and Moston in Baileys Wood, Boggart Hole Clough and Moston Brook.
- My Wild Hulme and My Wild Ardwick is connecting green space and creating nature friendly corridors. This will be extended across the whole central area.

The above projects demonstrate that there is a large amount of commitment from within our communities and local organisations to deliver carbon reduction projects.

4.0 Areas for development

Following the baselining work undertaken key initial areas for intervention or development have been identified, which will direct the work of the Neighbourhood Climate Change Officers. These are:

- 4.1 Communities are diverse in language, ethnicity, faith and cultures. Our approach to engagement and communication needs to be appropriate and accessible. Those communities for which there are barriers to engaging with the climate change agenda need to be identified and communication channels reviewed so that people are not excluded from participation. For example, a range of communication methods will be adopted that do not depend solely on social media. It's important that people are not overwhelmed by the debate, so deterring engagement. Small changes in behavior can have a significant impact if replicated across the population.
- 4.2 More information about the relative impact of different forms of climate action will be shared within the Neighbourhood teams and more widely with partners and residents. This will generate a debate and understanding about the most positive and meaningful changes that can be made. This also links well with In Our Nature and the wider work of Hubbub and the Tyndall Centre.
- 4.3 With the support of the Tyndall Centre it is planned to identify a set of proxy measures to demonstrate impact on climate change can be identified from activities.
- 4.4 Working with the Manchester Environmental Education Network it is planned to run joint-workshops for young people to assist develop their capacity and input.
- 4.5 Greening and growing projects are popular and well understood as climate mitigation measures. It is planned to extend messages and campaigns to include a wider range of issues such as fast fashion, the food we eat, active travel, renewable energy, and conserving energy at home.
- 4.6 The roll out of the Selective Licensing programme presents an opportunity to work with landlords on improving the energy efficiency of privately rented properties.

- 4.7 There is more potential to link up activities across wards, across teams, working with partners, and the VCSE. It is planned to introduce climate conversations into all our relationships, not just with people and groups that already have a focus on the environment. The Climate Change Officers are already making links with Manchester Cares, North Manchester Together Working Group, and the GM Coalition for Disabled People.
- 4.8 The Neighbourhood Teams have undertaken carbon literacy training but so far it has not included partners and residents. There is a need to consider how we develop capacity to hold joint sessions with local partners, TANs and residents to generate joint working, discussion and more ambitious action.
- 4.9 Through the NIF application process and communications it is planned to provide more information about our carbon target and how every activity and every group can play their part in reaching net zero by 2038.
- 4.10 The Neighbourhood Climate Change Officers are a key resource in delivering in influencing behaviour within our Neighbourhoods as a catalyst for change. The climate emergency requires immediate action and the roles to have maximum impact over the next couple of years. The legacy the roles at the end of the two-year period include:
- A strong awareness within our neighbourhoods and local organisations of the need for everyone to play their part for the city to meet its climate change targets.
 - Identification and engagement of communities for which there are currently barriers to participating in the climate change agenda and an understanding on how the agenda is relevant to everyone.
 - The creation of an easily accessible tool kit to support communities of tried and tested initiatives through the zero-carbon programme and other local initiatives on how to make an impact.
 - A list of measures identified so that the impact of community activity on climate change can be identified.
 - Team Around the Neighbourhoods trained and developed to have the capacity and understanding to better support local climate change activity.

5.0 Recommendations

- 5.1 The recommendations are summarised at the beginning of the report.