

Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2021

Present:

Councillor Hacking - In the Chair
Councillors Shaukat Ali, Andrews, Battle, Chambers, Connolly, M Dar, Douglas, Evans, Grimshaw, Hilal, Sheikh, Whiston and Wills

Also present:

Councillor Rahman, Deputy Leader
Councillor Midgley, Executive Member for Health and Care
Councillor Rawlins, Executive Member for the Environment
Councillor Cooley, Lead Member for Disabled People
Councillor Davies, Ward Councillor for Deansgate
Mark Todd, Peterloo Memorial Access Campaign
Dennis Queen, Greater Manchester Coalition of Disabled People

Apologies:

Councillor Azra Ali, S Judge, Rawson and Wilson

CESC/21/22 Minutes

Decision

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 25 May 2021 as a correct record.

CESC/21/23 Peterloo Memorial

The Committee received a report of the Director of City Centre Growth and Infrastructure which provided an update on the decision taken in respect of the Peterloo Memorial following the public meeting on 3 March 2021, and the comments received during and after the meeting.

The main points and themes within the report included:

- Background information;
- The public meeting which took place on 3 March 2021; and
- Comments submitted by people who were unable to attend the meeting.

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

- To note that the Committee had asked for a review of planning processes to identify the failings in this case and ensure that they were not repeated in future and that the Executive Member for the Environment would be taking this forward;
- How would the Council ensure that people and organisations it commissioned were also committed to accessibility;

- To thank those involved in trying to find a solution to this, in particular the campaign group, and to welcome that the Council was working to ensure accessibility for other memorials, such as the Glade of Light; and
- That the Memorial should be promoted to all communities as not everyone was aware of the event that it marked.

The Deputy Leader assured Members that, when the Council commissioned work or a service from an external organisation, accessibility would be stipulated in the conditions of the contract. He advised that the Council could also influence external organisations to take into account accessibility where they had to engage with the Council through the planning process or because they wanted to use public land. He stated that the Peterloo Massacre was an important moment in Manchester's history and that it was important that as many people as possible knew about it. He reported that a review of statues and monuments in the city was currently taking place and that most people who had responded wanted to understand the history around them, both good and bad.

Mark Todd, speaking on behalf of the Peterloo Memorial Access Campaign and the Greater Manchester Coalition of Disabled People, advised that this had now gone past the point of trying to work with the artist and the architect to find a solution. He reported that he and the other campaigners had developed a detailed proposal for a solution to make the Memorial fully accessible to disabled people and that they wanted to work with the Council to see if this could be delivered.

The Lead Member for Disabled People proposed that she meet with Mark Todd, the Deputy Leader and the Executive Member for the Environment to look at this new proposal. The Chair welcomed this, advising that it was best that this was pursued outside of the scrutiny process now, in order for it to be progressed more quickly.

The Ward Councillor for Deansgate welcomed the opportunity for this to be looked at from a fresh approach. She suggested that, in addition to informing the public about the events of Peterloo, perhaps through QR codes, the mistakes that had been made with the Memorial could also be recorded. She expressed regret that, while Deansgate Councillors had raised the issue of accessibility during the process, they had perhaps been too easily satisfied with the response and thanked the campaigners for their work and patience. The Chair suggested that the Deansgate Councillors be invited to the meeting to discuss the new proposal, to which the Lead Member for Disabled People agreed. A Member suggested that the Council's partners could be approached to provide a contribution towards the costs of making the Memorial fully accessible.

Decisions

1. To note the report.
2. To welcome that the campaign group and representatives from the Council will be meeting to explore the new proposal being put forward.

CESC/21/24 Support for the culture sector in response to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic

The Committee received a presentation from the Director of Culture which provided an update on support for the culture sector in response to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic since the Committee last considered this at its meeting on 11 March 2021. The Committee was also provided with a copy of the previous report, including the Culture Recovery Plan, as background information.

The main points and themes within the presentation included:

- Positive impacts of the original Culture Recovery Plan;
- Emergency grant funding received;
- Priorities going forward;
- Approach;
- Stimulus Programme; and
- Resources,

In response to a question from the Chair about the postponement of the lifting of restrictions and the uncertainty that the sector was having to deal with, the Director of Culture confirmed that it was making things difficult for organisations but advised that most of them had anticipated that the timeline for lifting restrictions could change. He reported that, for example, the Manchester International Festival had put in place plans for the festival taking place under either Stage 3 or Stage 4 of the lifting of restrictions. He advised that the main challenge was the financial impact and recruiting freelance crew and security staff as many people who worked in this sector had now taken jobs elsewhere which were more secure.

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

- How the Committee would continue to monitor this area and the next steps being taken, including the work of the Cultural Recovery Board and the impact of the funding being allocated, noting that the Committee might look at some of this in a future report;
- The impact of the pandemic on mental health and the effect that culture could have in ameliorating this;
- The impact of the restrictions and the delay in lifting them on small music venues and nightclubs and support for these businesses;
- Monitoring and responding to shifting patterns of behaviour, such as people working from home; and
- To thank staff, the Executive and partners for the work they had done during the pandemic.

The Director of Culture advised that discussions had taken place with the NHS about the campaign for encouraging people to return to cultural venues and it had been decided to go for a more subtle approach about the joy that cultural events could give

to people, rather than explicitly referencing health. He informed Members that direct support was being provided to help small venues apply to various cultural relief funds and that they had been working closely with the Music Venues Trust. He reported that Manchester had been more successful in obtaining cultural relief fund grants than anywhere else and that some venues and individuals had also received funding through the local emergency fund. He advised that the levels of collaboration between different organisations and venues had been higher in Manchester than elsewhere. He also reported that plans were constantly being updated.

The Principal Policy Officer advised that a fuller picture of the impact of the pandemic and the recovery would be known when the next Cultural Impact Survey, relating to 2020, was carried out and through the following one, which would cover 2021. He advised that, while the level of public appetite for returning to cultural venues could be seen, at present venues were having to operate at a reduced capacity, due to the restrictions, and that this was only financially viable because of the additional funding they were receiving so there was still a risk at the dates when various support schemes were due to end.

Decision

To note the update.

[Councillor Whiston declared a personal interest as a Board Member of Community Arts North West.]

CESC/21/25 The impact of climate change as it relates to the responsibilities for the Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee

The Committee received a report of the City Solicitor which aimed to provide a discussion point for the Committee as to the areas within their responsibility where the impact of climate change was of particular relevance. It was also for the Committee to determine which areas within its remit it would like to receive more information on and debate further.

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

- Background information;
- Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) actions of relevance to the Committee's remit; and
- A framework for considering climate change.

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

- The retrofitting of housing, including the challenges related to properties which were privately rented;
- Family poverty, including fuel and the costs relating to electric vehicles;
- Recycling, noting that while this did not fall within the Committee's remit, the Committee could look at recycling within the leisure estate;

- The use of disposable plastics; and
- The importance of engaging people from all communities in action on climate change.

The Executive Member for the Environment advised that there were clear targets in relation to being plastic-free, that the Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee would be looking at these issues and that Members of this Committee could receive the reports and, where it related to the remit of this Committee, attend the meetings.

The Chair advised that this item had been a starting point from which items for the work programme could be identified and which could be referred back to during the year.

Decision

To note that the points raised would be taken into account when planning the work programme.

CESC/21/26 COVID-19 Update

The Committee received a presentation of the Consultant in Public Health and the Head of Neighbourhoods which focused on the vaccination programme and how communities had worked together to support its roll-out.

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

- First and second dose coverage;
- Inequalities in vaccine coverage broken down by ethnicity, ward and deprivation;
- Work to increase coverage; and
- The important role of volunteers.

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

- To thank everyone involved for their work, including the volunteers;
- Positive experiences of vaccination centres;
- Vaccination of students and what could be done to encourage more young people to be vaccinated;
- In the prioritised wards, what had been the response to the direct engagement with residents to encourage vaccine take-up;
- That there was confusion among some residents about how effective the vaccines were against the Delta variant and that this should be made clearer in vaccination campaigns;
- The difference in vaccine take-up rates between different groups and could mosques, churches and temples be used as vaccination sites over a longer period;

- That there should be more walk-in vaccination centres, as some people were not registered with a GP, and that schools and colleges should be considered as locations for these; and
- Take-up of the second dose.

The Consultant in Public Health informed the Committee that her service was working closely with the universities to get as many students vaccinated as possible before they went home for summer and that in the eight prioritised wards vaccines had been offered to people aged 18 and over earlier than nationally. She also explained work taking place to promote vaccination to young people more broadly and reported that a Young People's Engagement Plan had been developed. The Executive Member for Health and Care stated that she would send Members more information about this work. She advised that the response of young people to the vaccination programme had been positive so far and that messages about testing and self-isolating also needed to be communicated to this age group. A Member asked that some data on why particular areas were being targeted be shared to tackle some of the myths about this.

The Head of Neighbourhoods advised that the response to the direct engagement with residents had been mixed because the people being approached were the ones who had not responded to the vaccination campaign so far. She advised that her service would be offering more help to enable people to access the vaccine, for example, helping people with booking an appointment or with their transport needs if they were struggling to get to a vaccination site.

The Consultant in Public Health advised that two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine provided a very good level of protection against serious illness and death from the Delta variant and that one dose still had some effectiveness. She advised that she would take forward the point that the vaccination campaign should communicate more about its effectiveness against the Delta variant.

The Consultant in Public Health advised that in each ward consideration was being given as to where was the best place in that area for a pop-up or walk-in vaccination centre and that schools were considered. She reported that more people could be vaccinated at a fixed site than at a pop-up vaccination site but it was recognised that pop-ups were popular so a balance between the two was needed. She advised that take-up of the second dose was generally good but that it varied across different communities and different parts of the city and also depending on the vaccine, as coverage in the media about the Astra Zeneca vaccine had deterred some people. She advised that people who had not attended for their second dose were being contacted to find out why and discuss any concerns they had.

Decision

To note the report.

CESC/21/27 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 highlighted that suggestions for reports from the work programming session which had taken place last month had been added to the work programme and that the suggestions from today's item on Climate Change would also be taken into account when planning the work programme. In response to a Member's request for a further report on Cultural Recovery, the Chair advised that the Committee usually received a report on the Cultural Impact Survey and it was likely that it would continue to do so.

Decision

To note the report.

Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2021

Present:

Councillor Reid – in the Chair
Councillors Abdullatif, Bano, Hewitson, Lovecy and Nunney

Co-opted Voting Members:

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

Co-opted Non Voting Members:

Mr L Duffy, Secondary Sector Teacher Representative

Also present:

Councillor Bridges, Executive Member for Children's Services
Councillor Cooley, Ward Councillor for Brooklands
Councillor Foley, Ward Councillor for Didsbury East

Apologies:

Councillors Alijah and McHale

CYP/21/24 Minutes

Decision

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 26 May 2021.

CYP/21/25 Update on impact of COVID-19 on children and families with a focus on family poverty

The Committee received a report of the Director of Education which reported on the impact and consequence management of COVID-19 on children and their families. The report had a particular focus on family poverty and the impact of the pandemic on this. The report outlined the work that had been put in place to try to mitigate this, particularly in relation to the provision of food.

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

- Responding to COVID-19 cases;
- School attendance;
- Family poverty and the impact of the pandemic;
- Supermarket vouchers for children/young people;
- Welfare payments; and
- Holiday activity and food scheme.

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

- Concern that rising infection levels were resulting in increased disruption to children's education, the challenges this created for head teachers and teachers and what could be done to limit the number of pupils being instructed to self-isolate;
- Whether any Manchester schools were involved in the trial involving daily testing of close contacts;
- That when Ofsted undertook inspections it should be made clear to them the disproportionate effect that the pandemic had had on Manchester's schools and could a breakdown of communities whose attendance had most been affected by COVID-19 be produced to assist schools with this;
- Families travelling abroad over the summer holidays who could be required to self-isolate on their return to the UK;
- How were equality, diversity and inclusion being embedded in the revised Family Poverty Strategy; and
- How the grant funding of £3,827,200 for Holiday Activities and Food was being used.

The Director of Education informed the Committee that two Manchester schools were involved in the trial where pupils who were a close contact of a positive case came into school and had a lateral flow test on site each day. She reported that all schools were receiving regular updates and had a point of contact within the Schools Quality Assurance Team for support and guidance. She reported that schools also received support from the Council's Public Health Team and that her service was working closely with Public Health. She acknowledged that the number of pupils being required to self-isolate when there was a positive case varied between schools and advised that this was dependent on the size of the bubble, how schools defined a bubble and to what extent contact was recorded, for example, whether a record was made about who pupils had sat with at lunchtime, commenting that many schools had become good at identifying which specific children had had close contact with the pupil who had tested positive. She reported that the other actions that schools could take were promoting the importance of vaccinations in the community and increasing testing, advising that work was currently taking place around on-site testing in secondary schools and mobile testing units. In response to a question from the Chair, she advised that colleagues in Bolton had told her that on-site testing in schools had made a big difference in improving the situation there. She asked Members to encourage people in their wards to give consent for this testing.

The Director of Education agreed with the Member's comment about Ofsted inspections, stating that schools were being reminded that they could defer their next Ofsted inspection and that many had good grounds for doing so. She advised that it would be possible to produce data on the impact of COVID-19 on school attendance, broken down by different communities. In response to a Member's question, she reported that schools were required to provide remote learning for pupils who were self-isolating but that this did not have to be online learning. She advised that she expected that the government would issue guidance on how to record absence after the summer holidays due to a requirement to self-isolate after returning from abroad.

The Director of Inclusive Growth advised that the work to respond to the impact of the pandemic had resulted in better intelligence on inequalities between different

communities and different parts of the city and that this was being reflected in the delivery of the Family Poverty Strategy and in the delivery of other strategies, for example, economic recovery work. In response to another Member's question, she advised that 40 organisations had been involved in the Community Food Partnership and that the Trussell Trust was a valued member of this food response work.

The Head of Youth Strategy and Engagement outlined how the Council was working with partners to use the Holiday Activities and Food funding and match funding to support young people. She advised that discussions were taking place with businesses about how this work could be sustained into next year, if the funding ended in March 2022. She noted that the Committee was due to receive a report on this programme of activity at its July meeting. The Chair advised that it was important that ward-specific information be shared with Ward Councillors through Ward Co-ordination meetings.

Decision

To note the report.

CYP/21/26 The Lodge - Foyer Model Accommodation

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director for Children and Education Services which outlined proposals for the development of a property into foyer model accommodation for up to 30 young people, as part of the Council's commitment to working closely with housing providers and partners to ensure that all care leavers had access to sustainable and affordable accommodation to meet their needs.

The Committee was invited to comment on the report prior to its consideration by the Executive on 30 June 2021.

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

- Proposed accommodation model;
- Mosscares St Vincents Pledge and Social Value offer;
- Financial implications;
- Need;
- Procurement; and
- Next steps.

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

- To welcome the proposals set out in the report;
- Positive experiences of Mosscares St Vincents;
- Concern that accommodation for vulnerable young people could attract anti-social behaviour and child sexual exploitation and how this could be avoided;
- That the report stated that there was a good evidence base for foyer models of accommodation and could this evidence be shared with Members of the Committee;
- The importance of having positive stories about this to reduce the stigma that

young people living in Children's Homes or accommodation for Care Leavers could face; and

- How young people who had been placed out of area were made aware of the options for them when they left care.

In response to the concerns about the accommodation attracting anti-social behaviour and people wanting to exploit the young people, the Strategic Director for Children and Education Services outlined how young people's resilience was built up through the care system, through which they developed relationships with trusted professionals, and the preparations for young people leaving care, putting in place plans, working with the young people to ensure they were ready and providing more intensive support where this was needed. He also highlighted the role of the community, Neighbourhood Teams, the Complex Safeguarding Hub and Adult Social Care in addressing any issues that arose around the accommodation, including young people being at risk from sexual and criminal exploitation. He agreed to share with Members evidence that the foyers models of accommodation had been successful elsewhere. He reported that the Chief Executive of Mosscares St Vincents had been working with Greater Manchester Strategic Housing Providers to provide a broader offer of support to young people who were care experienced, including work experience and practical help. He advised that all our young people were prepared for leaving care, with suitable accommodation being identified from a range of different options and support for their transition to independence based on their needs.

Decisions

1. To endorse the recommendations to the Executive to:
 - (1) Comment on the report.
 - (2) Delegate authority to the Strategic Director – Children and Education Services, in consultation with the Executive Members for Children and Education to commission foyers model of accommodation for up to 30 children looked after, delivered by Mosscares St Vincents
 - (3) Delegate authority to the Strategic Director – Children and Education Services, in consultation with the City Solicitor to negotiate and formalise a ten year agreement with Mosscares St Vincent, with associated contract clauses to the annual value of £731,500 per annum.
2. To note that the Strategic Director for Children and Education Services will share evidence of the success of foyers models of accommodation with Committee Members.

CYP/21/27 Early Years – Tendered Day-care settings

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director for Children and Education Services which outlined a set of proposals to support the continued provision of high quality Early Years settings across the City. The report specifically provided an

overview of the impact of the current Early Years tendered day-care model (whereby providers offer day-care from a Council owned building), on the Council's duty to oversee sufficient day-care for preschool children across Manchester; the Early Years Budget and ongoing maintenance of Early Years buildings which remained part of the corporate estate.

The Committee was invited to comment on the report prior to its consideration by the Executive on 30 June 2021.

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

- Results of stock condition surveys;
- Review of Early Years buildings within the portfolio;
- Financial implications (revenue and capital);
- Further actions; and
- Support provided to Early Years settings during the pandemic.

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

- Whether the risk to tendered daycare settings referred to in the report stemmed from the pandemic or longer term issues;
- Concern about babies and young children not accessing Early Years provision either due to the pandemic or due to the rules on who was entitled to free daycare provision;
- Concerns about some private daycare providers, including the buildings used; and
- The proposal relating to Moss Side Sure Start Centre and Martenscroft Nursery School.

The Team Manager (Access and Sufficiency) advised the Committee that this issue pre-dated the pandemic and that there had been a high turnover of leases coming back to the Council since 2015. She reported that the Council had been monitoring the situation since then and had been concerned by some of the feedback that its daycare partners had been sharing about the difficulties they were facing in providing high quality, sustainable childcare. She also reported that re-tendering some of the sites had been challenging. She advised that the report reflected this evaluation and proposals for a new approach with daycare partners. The Strategic Director for Children and Education Services advised that the world had changed since the contracts were first set up and that the Council needed to listen to providers and respond to their issues to ensure that Manchester continued to have a range of daycare options across the city.

The Chair suggested that the Committee consider a wider item on Early Years at a future meeting, covering the full range of daycare provision. The Strategic Director for Children and Education Services suggested that this could also include the work of the Start Well Board. The Executive Member for Children's Services suggested that the Committee could also look at Think Family. The Chair proposed that the Ofsted Subgroup could visit some nurseries.

The Strategic Director for Children and Education Services informed Members that 97% of Early Years providers in Manchester had been judged as good or better by Ofsted and that Ofsted took into account the condition of the building. He advised that, if the Member had concerns about any provision in her ward, his service could check their Ofsted registration. The Team Manager (Access and Sufficiency) informed Members that daycare settings had access to support from the Council's Early Years Quality Assurance team, including forums and information-sharing. She acknowledged that families could find the funding arrangements for daycare provision complicated and advised that the Council used a range of means to communicate this information to families.

The Director of Education clarified that there were no proposed changes to Martenscroft Nursery School and that the proposed changes related to Moss Side Sure Start Centre, which Martenscroft was managing. She advised that the current building where the Sure Start Centre was located required significant investment so it was proposed to move the provision to St Mary's CE Primary School, while retaining its link to Martenscroft. The Chair advised that it was important that any changes were discussed at Ward Co-ordination meetings so that local Councillors were aware of what was happening. The Executive Member for Children's Services assured Members that he had contacted all the Moss Side Ward Councillors about this.

Decisions

1. To consider a wider report on Early Years at a future meeting.
2. To endorse the recommendations that the Executive:
 - 1.0 Note 17 of 37 leases have been surrendered since December 2015 and the potential impact on the council's ability to meet its 'sufficiency duty'.
 - 2.0 Note the continued negative budget implications on the Early Years budget which continues even if the status quo is maintained.
 - 3.0 Approve the recommendation for the use of each building moving forward.
 - 4.0 Approve the re-negotiation of the current leases by corporate estates with day care providers, making clear the responsibility of the lease holder and the corporate landlord in the re-negotiated lease.
 - 5.0 Support the proposal to include the Early Years estate portfolio in the Council's future Asset Management Programme, at an estimated cost of £0.7m per year.
 - 6.0 Approve a budget increase of £3m, funded by capital receipts, to fund the priority works.

CYP/21/28 Re-establishment of the Ofsted Subgroup

The Committee received a report of the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit which provided Members with the terms of reference and current work programme for the Ofsted Subgroup. The Committee was asked to re-establish the Ofsted Subgroup for the municipal year 2021 - 2022 and agree the terms of reference, work programme and membership of the Subgroup.

Decisions

1. To re-establish the Ofsted Subgroup for the 2021 - 2022 municipal year and agree the terms of reference and work programme.
2. That Councillor Lovecy be appointed as Chair of the Ofsted Subgroup and that Councillors Bano, Hewitson, Foley, Nunney and Reid be appointed to the Subgroup.
3. That meetings are likely to take place on Wednesday mornings at 10 am.

CYP/21/29 Overview Report

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

A Member suggested that the Committee look at climate change issues which related to its remit. The Chair advised that she would be speaking to the Chair of the Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee about Climate Change and Schools and suggested that the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee could look at pollution around schools.

Another Member suggested that the Committee look at the implementation of the Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) curriculum in schools when it became compulsory. She also suggested that the Committee look at policing in schools. The Chair advised that Youth Justice was within the remit of the Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee but that there could be some aspects which would be relevant to bring to her Committee. Another Member requested that the Committee look at Alternative Provision.

In response to a Member's suggestion that the Committee look at Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), the Strategic Director for Children and Education Services reported that the Director of CAMHS had attended the Committee's May meeting and he suggested that the Committee might want to look at the roll-out of the Mental Health in Schools Programme and the Thrive Hubs. The Chair suggested that mental health in schools could be the focus of a future report.

The Chair reported that the Scrutiny Support Officer had a list of all the items suggested at the work programming session in May and that Members could also contact her with any other issues that they wanted the Committee to look at.

Decision

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

Economy Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 24 June 2021

Present:

Councillor H Priest (Chair) – in the Chair

Councillors Baker-Smith, Doswell, Farrell, Johns, Moore, Noor and Raikes

Also present:

Councillor White, Executive Member for Employment and Housing

Apologies: Councillors Bayunu and Stanton

ESC/21/29 Minutes

Decision

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 May 2021 were approved as a correct record

ESC/21/30 Manchester Housing Strategy 2021

The Committee considered the report of the Interim Director of Housing and Residential Growth that provided a background and policy context, noting that the 2021 Housing Strategy would bring together two different historic documents into a single, holistic Strategy, namely the Housing Strategy (2015-21) and the Residential Growth Strategy (2015-25). The report described the process for developing a new Housing Strategy for Manchester.

The main points and themes within the report and accompanying presentation were: -

- Increasing housing supply across all tenures;
- Ensuring housing was affordable and accessible to those who needed it the most;
- Working in mixed tenure neighbourhoods and improving quality and management in the private rented sector; and
- Increasing the sustainability, safety and efficiency of new and existing stock.

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

- Reassurance was sought that the city's population growth trajectory had been modelled on different scenarios;
- How had the projected 25% increase in people living in temporary accommodation been derived and what was being done to address this;
- Clarification was sought on what would be the source of heating for all newly built homes in relation to tackling climate change;
- Purpose built student accommodation would need to be affordable to reduce the use of HMO's;
- How where areas for selective licensing assessed and determined;

- Was Manchester's definition of affordability linked to Local Housing Allowance rates and could this be incorporated into the Strategy;
- Had any work been undertaken on analysing the expenditure on temporary accommodation against the cost of providing affordable social housing;
- Had any work been undertaken in addressing the risks of over reliance on the development market
- The affordability of city centre living was questioned for families who earned the Manchester average yearly income;
- How were the housing needs of different communities across the city identified;
- What was the evidence for the lower demand of affordable private rental properties;
- How much further could the Council go with its Selective Licensing pilot before it reached the maximum 25% limit of all PRS stock and what was being done to extend this limit;
- It was felt that the cost of renting in Purpose Built Student Accommodation priced out local students and needed to be at a more affordable price point;
- More needed to be done to prevent private sector landlords from banking properties for HMO usage;
- It was felt that more needed to be done with Private Sector Landlords, who provided accommodation to students, insofar as they should be required to pay business rates on these properties as local communities were having to pay Council Tax for services that they did not necessarily use.
- What was being done to ensure developer viability assessments were a true reflection on the level of affordable housing that could be delivered on a site;
- What housing support was provided to those seeking asylum;
- Could the Committee have sight of the audit on temporary accommodation before the strategy came back for further scrutiny;
- What was being done to lobby government for increased funding and scope in addressing their inadequate building safety response;
- What levers did the Council have in helping maintain affordable private sector housing rental levels; and
- What levers did the Council have to help secure the necessary funding to enable the retrofitting of Council properties to address carbon reduction.

The Committee was advised that the population estimates were based on the Council's forecasting model which used local data not available to the ONS and it was felt that the estimates were accurate, but it was acknowledged that unexpected events such as the COVID pandemic could impact on these estimates. The Executive member for Employment and Housing acknowledged the impact COVID and Brexit could have on the city's population and agreed that the models of population growth needed to reflect a changing dynamic in the population.

The Interim Director of Residential Growth acknowledged the challenge presented by the use of temporary accommodation and advised that the Council's Homelessness team were looking at various options to reduce the number of people in temporary accommodation and the length of time in this type of accommodation. Addressing this would take time as it was reliant on the availability of housing stock. He advised that there was a piece of independent work ongoing that was comparing the cost of placing people in temporary accommodation against the cost of providing affordable

social housing. This information would be available in the next few months. He also advised that work was ongoing with Housing Association providers in terms of new sources for heating properties, such as air source/ground source heat pumps but acknowledged that behaviour change was a large hurdle to overcome in relation to this type of heating provision.

The Executive Member for Employment and Housing advised how areas and properties were identified for selective licensing schemes, which included case work, Council Tax records and other issues to tackle rogue landlords providing substandard private rented properties. He also advised that purpose built student accommodation was a response to tackling HMO's but acknowledged the challenge with this was affordability and this would need to be looked at through the planning process.

The Committee was advised that the Strategy would incorporate the local definition of affordable housing and the current situation in Manchester to reflect the various profiles across the city.

The Executive Member for Employment and Housing explained that only 27% of the Council's income was from its Council Tax base, with 75% of properties in bands A or B and it was acknowledged that this would not solve all the problems of austerity. In terms of affordable rent the funding made available by Government came with a stipulation that it was to be shared ownership which left Registered Providers in a difficult position, having to use different funding mechanisms to provide other types of rental options. He also advised that the current roll out of the Selective Licensing pilot would take the Council up to its 25% limit. It was felt at present the targeted approach was appropriate but advised that but a review of whether this could be city wide could be undertaken in the future. In terms of Landlords contributing to the city, this would require a change of legislation for landlords to pay business rates and there was already a fee that landlords were required to pay for HMO's and Selective Licensing.

The Executive Member for Employment and Housing advised that viability assessments came under the Planning Committee's remit but agreed the Council needed to do as much as it could to achieve affordable properties across the city. He acknowledged that a lot of work had been undertaken to help support those seeking asylum and agreed that a more detail response could be provided to Members following the meeting.

It was recognised that the funding provided by government to address the issue of safety of cladding on buildings was not adequate to cover the demand and need in the city. Work was ongoing to try and engage with the Housing Minister to highlight Manchester's specific issues and to challenge the government to hold developers and contractors to account.

The Committee was advised that to try and maintain appropriate levels of rent, there needed to be more supply in the housing market to what was currently available. A key part of the Strategy would need to look at this issue as well as the ability to secure the necessary funding to retrofit existing council housing to be carbon neutral.

Decisions

The Committee

- (1) Notes the report.
- (2) Requests that the Committee be provided with information on the following:-
 - The current local definition of housing affordability.
 - The evidence base for what's coming on-line in terms of affordable rent.
 - A response to question on accommodation for asylum seekers which is to be circulated to Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee Members as well.
 - The presentation on the Building Safety Fund

[Councillor Farrell declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest in this item as he is on the board of Directors for Northwards Housing].

[Councillor Johns declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest in this item as his property is affected by the government's building safety response in regards to cladding].

ESC/21/31 Refresh of the Manchester's Work and Skills Strategy

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Inclusive Economy that sets out the approach to refreshing the strategy, taking into account the challenging circumstances created in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and the wider strategic and policy context in the city. It introduced the themes which were likely to be the main focuses of the new strategy, the work that would need to be undertaken to fully understand and develop them, key issues and dependencies and an indicative timeline for delivery.

The main points and themes within the report included: -

- An explanation of the background to the Work and Skills Strategy 2016 – 2021 and its relationship to the Our Manchester Strategy;
- The strategic context with particular reference to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, noting that the lasting effects were still unknown and would take many years to become understood;
- Acknowledging that the digitisation on the economy and labour market was likely to accelerate due to the impact of the COVID-19;
- The implications of the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union (Brexit) and central Government policies;
- The context of how the Strategy could contribute to the Council declaring a climate emergency and its aim to be zero carbon by 2038;
- Work to address inequalities experienced across the city;
- Describing the pipeline of investment planned for Manchester;
- The policy context for the refresh of the Manchester's Work and Skills Strategy and the proposed approach, noting the SWOT analysis; and
- Next steps.

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

- How did this Strategy interact with the Council's Social Value policy;
- Members advocated the proposal of the co-production and co-design of the Strategy;
- How were priority sectors identified and were these aligned with those identified by GMCA;
- How were SMEs being linked with opportunities from the "Planned for Jobs" scheme;
- Assurance was sought that various scenario planning was taking place in connection to population growth and work and skills shortages in the city;
- It would be good to see the Living Wage be more prominent in the Strategy;
- How could the Council ensure stakeholders did what was expected to make the Strategy successful;
- It was felt that Elected Members should be included in the consultation of the Strategy;
- More information was requested on the GM Independent Inequalities Commission, centred around timescales and how this was being developed;
- It was suggested that more work needed to be done with employers within the hospitality sector to make the employment opportunities more attractive

The Director of Inclusive Economy advised that the Strategy and the Social Value Strategy had close links. The work of the Strategy and the Work and Skills team played a large part in delivering the social value outputs and outcomes that related to work and skills. The refreshed Social Value strategy also had an enhanced focus on employment and some of the groups who were not previously sighted as benefitting from Social Value now had been. She also advised that there was an evidence base that underpinned priority sectors which had existed for some time and there was a strong correlation with the GMCA priority sectors. It was stated that Manchester contributed more to these sectors than any other GM authority. In terms of work with SME's there was a GM commission programme looking at skill shortages and needs and employing apprentices.

The Committee was advised that it was too early in the process to give any specific details on how the co-design process would work or look like, but it was acknowledged that it would build on previous good practices of engagement with communities and organisations across the city.

The Director of Inclusive Economy acknowledged the need for various scenario planning and this needed to be picked up in the evidence base. The Living Wage and Good Employer Charter would be critical to the success of the Strategy and it was reported that before and during COVID, businesses had been keen to step up an make offer that would make a difference to residents in the city. She also advised that the Inequalities Commission had reported its finding and agreed to share with Committee Members.

Decision

The Committee endorse the proposed approach to the refresh of the Manchester Work and Skills Strategy.

ESC/21/32 Economy COVID19 Sit Rep Report

The Committee considered the report of the Director of City Centre Growth and Infrastructure that provided Members with 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.

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

- Was there any information on what office space businesses were going to require with the anticipated lifting of COVID restrictions as it was recognised that employees would not likely be returning to working in an office every day of the week; and
- Was there any levers to ensuring that the appointed contractor for the regeneration of North Manchester General Hospital sub contracted out work to local businesses in the north Manchester area in the first instance

The Director of City Centre Growth and Infrastructure advised that a lot of small to medium sized businesses were keen for its staff to return to the office but a number of the large agency offices were delaying a return of its staff until the Autumn. Larger businesses were also looking for more flexible work spaces and at present there was an increased demand for collaborative spaces compared to traditional office spaces. She advised it was too soon to say what would happen come autumn and only as the vaccination programme rolled out and restrictions were lifted would there be a representative picture of what was required.

The Director of Inclusive Growth advised that a Social Value Framework for North Manchester was to be established which all parties, including MFT, the Mental Health Trust and FEC would sign up to in order to focus on a delivery of a consistent set of delivery outcomes. She advised that an update on this could be included in the next update on either North Manchester Hospital or Victoria North.

Decision

The Committee notes the report

ESC/21/33 Overview Report

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

Decision

The Committee note the report.