

Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 14 October 2021

Present:

Councillor Igbon – in the Chair

Councillors Flanagan, Foley, Holt, Hughes, Lyons, Sadler, Shilton Godwin and Wright

Apologies: Councillors Hassan, Jeavons, Lynch and Razaq

Also present:

Councillor Rawlins, Executive Member for Environment

Richard Elliott, Interim Policy and Strategy Advisor, Manchester Climate Change Agency

Samantha Nicholson, Director, Manchester Climate Change Agency

Jo Wall, Strategic Director, Local Partnerships

ECCSC/21/19 Minutes

A Member enquired when the requested list of all organisations in Manchester that had signed up to the MCCA and a list of all those that had not, and where available the reasons for not signing up would be provided. (See ECCSC/21/16 Manchester Climate Change Agency Progress Report 2021/22).

The Executive Member for Environment stated that she would action this request following the meeting.

Decision

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2021 as a correct record.

ECCSC/21/20 Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing Update

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) that provided an update on progress in delivering waste, recycling, and street cleansing services, describing how the activity contributed to the climate change agenda and key priorities for the future, including an update on the English Resources and Waste Strategy (2018).

Key points and themes in the report included:

- An introduction to the service area;
- Impact of the Pandemic (COVID-19) and Brexit;
- Biffa Performance Update;
- Bin collections;
- Electric Refuse Collection Vehicles (eRCV);
- Fly tipping and the Fly Tip Intervention Investment;
- Keep Manchester Tidy campaigns, including case studies;

- Recycling Campaigns and Initiatives; and
- Conclusions and Next Steps

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

- Questioning the cleansing scores given to cycle lanes, noting the prevalence of littering from motor vehicles;
- The need for a specific campaign to tackle the issue of litter discarded from motor vehicles;
- Noting that assisted collections were important for those residents that required them;
- More needed to be done to engage with businesses to reduce commercial waste and excessive packaging;
- What was the process to review the Biffa contract ahead of the break point and would Members be involved in these discussions;
- That a rebalancing of services between the city centre and district centres should be addressed through any contract negotiations;
- The issue of returning bins remained an ongoing issue;
- More emphasis was required on behaviour change and waste with the need to repair, reduce and recycle more;
- Behaviour change need to be included in each ward plan, including utilising the local Neighbourhood Teams to engage with local schools and business;
- Noting the importance of Carbon Literacy Training;
- Noting the challenges of missed bin collections, particularly in relation to apartment blocks and the need to recognise the need for improved communications between management agencies and caretakers and crews;
- Was the CRM (Customer relationship management) system fit for purpose to report issues;
- Noting issues that had arisen where crews were unable to access locations due to development works or irresponsible parking;
- Biffa needed to work closely with Housing Providers to support the education of residents in regard to what could be recycled and what could be placed in each bin;
- Noting that delays in issuing permits for skips to be placed on the highway were contributing to waste accumulation;
- Discussing if it would be more beneficial to allow commercial waste to be taken to Household Recycling Centres in attempt to save money and reduce the incidents of fly-tipping; and
- Paying tribute to the Biffa crews for their work, particularly during the unique challenges presented by COVID-19.

In reply the Contract Manager, Waste stated that both Biffa and Council Officers conducted NI195 monitoring, a national standard of all areas, including cycleways, both straight after clean and between cleaning cycles, however he accepted that the standards could deteriorate between cleaning.

The Strategic Lead, Waste, Recycling and Street Cleaning stated that discussions regarding the Biffa contract would be an opportunity to discuss the service in the context of the budget.

The Strategic Lead, Waste, Recycling and Street Cleaning stated that assisted collections and the returning of bins had been impacted by COVID-19 and the disruption this had had on the crews. She reassured the Members that officers were working with Biffa to address both these issues, noting the importance of these for residents was recognised.

The Strategic Lead, Waste, Recycling and Street Cleaning commented that options for increasing and promoting repair and recycling opportunities were being explored, including the increased use of social media to advertise local schemes and connect residents. She further recognised the comments regarding behaviour change regarding waste and recycling and noted that tailored initiatives at a ward level could greatly assist in this activity.

The Strategic Lead, Waste, Recycling and Street Cleaning advised that commercial waste was not appropriate for Household Waste and Recycling Centres, noting that it was the duty of all commercial businesses to have a waste management strategy. The Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) advised it was important to recognise that there was often criminality associated with fly-tipping. She made reference to the recent press reports where prosecutions had been taken against perpetrators, adding that these had been achieved by working collaboratively with different agencies, including Greater Manchester Police.

The Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) addressed the point raised regarding the CRM system by advising that this system would be replaced as part of the wider digital strategy, commenting that senior officers from the service were involved in this process to ensure the replacement service was fit for purpose.

The Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) stated that the issue raised by the Member regarding the delay in issuing permits for skips would be relayed to the Highways Department for attention. She further commented that access issues were considered when development permissions were granted.

The Neighbourhood Officer updated the Committee on the work underway with seventeen local schools to deliver the Eco Schools programme, in addition to projects that had been delivered with children during the school holidays. She further commented that there was a national Keep Britain Tidy campaign directly designed to address the issues associated with student accommodation.

The Executive Member for Environment encouraged Members to undertake a visit to the Longley Lane Household Recycling Centre and she would arrange visits for Members. She further supported the discussion regarding the inclusion of waste and recycling behaviour change in all ward plans. She further commented that discussions were ongoing with local Universities and landlords to tackle the waste issues associated with student accommodation. She also advised the Members that discussions were ongoing at a Greater Manchester level to explore the options for improved messaging regarding the recycling opportunities at recycling centres.

Decision

The Committee recommend that the Executive Member for Housing and Employment discuss with all local housing providers the options for supporting their residents to increase their recycling.

ECCSC/21/21 Climate Change Action Plan Quarterly Progress Report, Q2 July - September 2021

The Committee considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer that provided a progress update on delivery of the Council's Climate Change Action Plan for Quarter 2 2021-22 (July-September 2021).

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

- Reiterating the call for the need to emphasise the urgency of the issue of climate change and the need for all citizens and organisations to take immediate action to address this;
- Recommending that a report be submitted for consideration at an appropriate time that collated all of the other Scrutiny Committees' items on the issue of climate change;
- More information on the modelling that was used to agree and set the suite of targets reported;
- The need to reduce business travel, noting the use of technology during the pandemic to conduct meetings;
- More information was requested on the active travel scheme for staff, with particular reference to the implementation of a mileage scheme for cyclists;
- Was the assistance scheme to purchase a bicycle only applicable to Halfords, noting the need to support local independent traders;
- Any cycle purchase scheme should also use the Council's procurement policies to ensure Social Value was achieved and this should be subject to the appropriate audit process;
- The cycle purchase scheme should also include e-bikes;
- All staff should be encouraged to cycle to work;
- Noting the figures reported in regard to the use of single use plastics at events, and calling for this to be rolled out and publicised;
- Asking that consideration be given to including the Net Zero Carbon New Build Policy that had been launched by the Manchester Climate Change Partnership into local building regulations;
- An update was sought in relation to the Civic Quarter Heat Network;
- Noting that that Carbon Budget spend to date was recorded in the Annual Report that was submitted to the Committee;
- The need to engage all stakeholders and sources of expertise that existed within the city to drive and progress this area of work to deliver the required savings for the city;
- The continued call for all staff to complete the Carbon Literacy training; and
- Consideration should be given to establishing a Climate Clock in the city, similar to that in Glasgow, noting that a Climate Clock was a graphic to demonstrate how quickly the planet was approaching 1.5°C of global warming, given current

emissions trends. It also showed the amount of CO₂ already emitted, and the global warming to date.

The Strategic Lead (Policy and Partnerships) stated that consideration was being given as to the Net Zero Carbon New Build and how this could be incorporated into the Local Plan. He further advised that the data and outcomes from the single use plastics events were being used to highlight the scale of the issue and was a powerful tool to influence local business, adding that such events were gaining in popularity. In response to the comment made regarding business travel, he commented that this would continue to be monitored, and IT was used wherever possible to minimise the need for any such travel. The Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer added that there were occasions where in person meetings were required; however, she recognised the comments from the Committee and suggested that a further update on business travel be included in the next reporting cycle. The Executive Member for Environment added that a carpool service was also available for staff to use.

In response to the comment regarding the need to understand the methodology and modelling used to establish and report targets, Officers stated that a training session would be arranged for Members to discuss this further.

The Executive Member for Environment commented that all Scrutiny Committees were encouraged to consider climate change through the lens of their respective remits, and she agreed to update the Committee on this activity. The Chair commented that she would also liaise with the other Scrutiny Chairs on this issue, adding that she had recently had a conversation with the Chair of the Health Scrutiny Committee on this very subject. The Chair further added that she would discuss the issue of Social Value and the cycle purchase scheme with the Chair of the Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee.

The Strategic Lead (Resources & Programmes) informed the Members that the cycle purchase scheme was not restricted to Halfords and there was a mileage scheme for staff. He stated that he would circulate the information to Members following the meeting.

The Director, MCCA addressed the comments made by a Member regarding the Council's Carbon Budget and the trajectory of savings reported. She advised that 75% of the Council's direct emissions were attributed to the estate and that a detailed plan to decarbonise the estate was established, adding that the Committee had a report on this issue scheduled on their work programme.

The Director, MCCA advised that there was a Carbon Budget for the city, describing that this had been established utilising the expertise of the Tyndall Centre at the University of Manchester. The Strategic Lead (Policy and Partnerships) added that there was an extensive range of partnership working across the city to address climate change.

The Director of Commercial Operations informed the Members that the Civic Quarter Heat Network should be operational from November.

Decisions

The Committee recommend that;

1. The Executive Member for Environment give consideration to establishing a Climate Clock in the city, similar to that in Glasgow;
2. The Executive Member for Environment and Officers arrange a briefing session for Members on the modelling that was used to agree and set the suite of targets reported in the Action Plan.

ECCSC/21/22 Development of Manchester Climate Change Framework 2.0 – Update on Consultation and Development of the Detailed Action Plan

The Committee considered the report of the Manchester Climate Change Agency (MCCA) that provided an update on progress in developing an updated Climate Change Framework for the city (Framework 2.0). It reviewed the responses to the first round of consultation with communities and businesses that would help to inform the Framework and summarised the emerging objectives and proposed actions required to deliver the scale of carbon reduction required across the city. The Framework was intended to provide a more detailed definition of the urgent actions required across the city if Manchester was to remain within its adopted carbon budget and remain on track to be a zero-carbon city by 2038 at the latest.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- An introduction and background;
- Describing the 5 key components of Framework 2.0;
- Describing the process to support the development of the Framework and Action Plan;
- Objectives of the draft Action Plan; and
- An update on activities to involve Manchester Communities and Businesses.

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

- An update report was requested that described the outcomes of the Community Assembly;
- The need to prioritise actions and engage with local businesses on the issue of carbon reduction;
- What was the difference between this reported exercise and previous reports;
- The need to be given the opportunity to scrutinise reports in a timely manner; and
- Noting that Manchester Climate Change Youth Board had launched their manifesto on 7 October 2021 and that a full presentation would be delivered to full Council.

In response to the question regarding the Community Assembly, the Director, MCCA informed the Committee that in November 2021, the Citizens' Mandate would be taken to the international COP26 Climate Change Conference in Glasgow, along with an Impact Assessment Report of the process and a film capturing the process, where

it would be presented to delegates and groups from across the world with the help of the COP26 Coalition. The report was due to be completed by 29 October 2021.

In reply to the question regarding the difference between this reported exercise and previous reports, the Interim Policy and Strategy Advisor, MCCA described that Framework 2.0 was a 'deeper dive' across different sectors with the aim of developing specific actions. The Executive Member for Environment commented that it was useful to consider Framework 1 as the theory and Framework 2 as the actions.

In response to the specific issue regarding scrutiny, the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer advised that she discuss this further with the Executive Member for Environment.

Decision

To note the report.

ECCSC/21/23 Large Scale Renewable Energy Generation Feasibility Summary Study

The Committee considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer that described that the Council's Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) has a target to reduce direct emissions of CO₂ by 50% over the five-year period of 2020-25. In addition, the Council has a target to be zero carbon by 2038.

Action 1.4 of the CCAP targets 7,000 tonnes of annual CO₂ by 2025 savings to be delivered via a "feasibility and business case for a large-scale energy generation scheme from large scale Solar PV or Onshore or Offshore Wind on Council land and buildings, or sites in third party ownership".

Local Partnerships were appointed in November 2020 to deliver the feasibility study and their study, "Feasibility Study and Options Appraisal for Large Scale Energy Generation for Manchester City Council", was completed in April 2021 and was appended to the report.

The Feasibility Study concluded that the Council has two options: either purchase a solar PV facility or negotiate a suitable power purchase agreement (PPA). Both options were assessed to be better than the "do nothing" option.

The Committee was invited to comment on the report prior to it being considered by Executive.

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

- The need to visualise and articulate what a tonne of CO₂ looks like relative to the amount that is produced;
- Noting the recent energy crisis and the importance of future proofing;
- The need to lobby for increased onshore wind developments;
- The need to promote the Solar Together Greater Manchester group-buying scheme;

- All opportunities for job creation and addressing fuel poverty should be utilised through any development; and
- All opportunities for delivering small local renewable energy schemes should be explored and supported.

The Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer advised that the proposed development was the optimum size had been designed with due consideration given to future proofing. She stated that the feasibility study that underpinned the proposal could be shared with Members. She stated that the work would be progressed to deliver this programme and updates reports would be submitted to the Committee for consideration at an appropriate time.

The Strategic Lead - Resources & Programmes stated that the scale of the proposal was necessary to meet the challenge to address the emissions from the Council's estate. He did acknowledge the comments regarding small local renewable energy schemes. The Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer informed the Members that work was underway at a Greater Manchester level to look further at small local renewable energy schemes.

The Strategic Director, Local Partnerships acknowledged the comments regarding wind power and commented upon the challenge to deliver these due to Government legislation compared to delivering solar powered schemes. She further commented that it had been evidenced that established solar panel installations benefited the local bio diversity.

Decision

The Committee recommend;

1. That the Executive Member for Environment take every opportunity to lobby for the increased delivery of onshore wind power.
2. That the Executive Member for Environment review the information that is provided to residents regarding climate change to ensure a visual representation of carbon tonnage is included.

The Committee also endorse the recommendations that the Executive;

1. Note the options in Section 3.1 available to the Council; and
2. Agree that the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer and the Chair of the Zero Carbon Coordination Group establish a delivery team to develop the options further, with a view to returning to the Executive with a proposal.

ECCSC/21/24 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 commented that further information was required that reported the impact on air quality and emission reductions of any proposals to reduce the speed limit on the Mancunian Way. The Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) stated that any proposed changes would be subject to a formal consultation process.

A member commented that regular reports on the issue of Clean Air should be included as an item on the work programme. The Chair advised that she had noted the comment and would discuss this further with officers following the meeting.

Following discussions at the meeting of the Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee of January 2021 an update was sought on the recommendation to establish a bespoke Manchester Considerate Constructors Scheme. The Chair advised that she had noted the comment and would discuss this further with the Executive Member for Environment following the meeting.

Members discussed the scope of the 'Neighbourhood Working to address climate change' report that was scheduled for the November meeting and how the carbon reductions would be reported against a range of activities. The Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) advised that she had noted the comments and would discuss this with the officer preparing the report.

Decision

The Committee note the report and agree the work programme, noting the above comments.